

Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God, **by planting his banner in the Christian church. If the followers of Christ could be deceived**, and led to displease God, then their strength, fortitude, and firmness would fail, and they would fall an easy prey. 4SP 42.2

One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the testimonies of God's Spirit.—Letter 156, 1903. PM 360.1

I was shown that almost every fanatic who has arisen, who wishes to hide his sentiments that he may lead away others, **claims to belong to the church of God**. Such a name would excite suspicion at once, for the most absurd errors are concealed under this name. This name is too indefinite for the remnant people of God. The influence of such a name would lead to the supposition that we had a faith we wished to cover up. 4bSG 55.2

Every conceivable message is coming to counterfeit the work of God, and always bearing the inscription of truth upon its banner. And **those who are prepared for anything new and sensational**, will handle these things in such a manner that our enemies will charge all that is inconsistent and overdone upon Mrs. E. G. White, the prophetess.... 3SM 404.3

There will be counterfeit messages coming from persons in all directions. One after another will rise up, appearing to be inspired, when they have not the inspiration of heaven, but are under the deception of the enemy. All who receive their messages will be led astray. Then let us walk carefully, and not open wide the door for the enemy to enter through impressions, dreams, and visions. God help us to look in faith to Jesus, and be guided by the words He has spoken.—Letter 66, 1894. 3SM 404.4

This discourse of Jesus cooled the enthusiasm of the people. If, by becoming his disciples, **they must live righteous lives, deny self, and suffer humiliation, they had no desire to rally under his banner**. Alas for Israel! They knew not the time of their visitation! They refused their Saviour, because **they longed for a conqueror who would give them temporal power**. They wanted the meat which perishes, and not that which endures unto everlasting life. Their ambition was for earthly riches and glory, and they had no relish for the words of Christ that taught personal purity, and a thorough reformation of life. 2SP 285.1

If it were not for the poverty of Christ, and the fact that the poor and humble are ranked beneath his banner, **many would connect themselves with him and glorify his name**. If he had bestowed honors and riches upon those who became his disciples, how gladly would the proud Pharisees, the chief priests and scribes,

have paid him homage. *Many in these days would accept the truth if there was no self-denial connected with it. If they could have the world with Christ, they would enlist in his army.* But to follow him in his humiliation, with no prospect of an earthly reward thereby, is more than their feeble faith can endure. They turn back crest-fallen, as did the scribe from the rebuke of Jesus. 2SP 306.1

Aaron's calm assurance in a wrong course gave him greater influence with the people than Moses could have had in leading them in a right course and in subduing their rebellion. What terrible spiritual blindness had come upon Aaron that he should put light for darkness and darkness for light! What presumption in him to proclaim a feast to the Lord over their idolatrous worship of a golden image! Here is seen the power that Satan has over minds that are not fully controlled by the Spirit of God. Satan had set up his banner in the midst of Israel, and it was exalted as the banner of God. 3T 300.1

The iniquity and spiritual darkness that prevailed under the supremacy of Rome were the inevitable result of her suppression of the Scriptures; but where is to be found the cause of the widespread infidelity, the rejection of the law of God, and the consequent corruption, *under the full blaze of gospel light in an age of religious freedom?* Now that Satan *can no longer* keep the world under his control by withholding the Scriptures, he resorts to *other means* to accomplish the same object. To destroy faith in the Bible serves his purpose as well as to destroy the Bible itself. By introducing the belief that God's law is not binding, he as effectually leads men to transgress as if they were wholly ignorant of its precepts. And *now*, as in former ages, *he has worked through the church to further his designs. The religious organizations of the day have refused to listen to unpopular truths plainly brought to view in the Scriptures, and in combating them they have adopted interpretations and taken positions which have sown broadcast the seeds of skepticism.* Clinging to the papal error of natural immortality and man's consciousness in death, *they have* rejected the only defense against the delusions of spiritualism. The doctrine of eternal torment has led many to disbelieve the Bible. And as the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and as the only way to *free themselves* from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, *many popular teachers declare* that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus *they cast* away the law and the Sabbath together. As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become well-nigh universal. *The teachings of*

*religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity *that exists in the Christian world.* {GC 586.2}{GC 281.3}{GC 603.2}{GC 390.2, 389.2; TM 61.3; 7BC 979; PP 124.1}*

“I will influence popular ministers to turn the attention of their hearers from the commandments of God. That which the Scriptures declare to be a perfect law of liberty shall be represented as a yoke of bondage. The people accept their minister's explanations of Scripture and do not investigate for themselves. Therefore, by working through the ministers, I can control the people according to my will. TM 472.4

To exalt a minister as perfection because he has not displeased any one by reproving errors, *not only brings a snare upon the minister, but brings disaster upon the people.* He who does not hurt the spiritual self-complacency of the people is almost deified by them, while a devoted, faithful servant of God, who lays bare the errors of the church-members, is supposed to be defective, because he does not see what they suppose are their personal merits. He reproveth wrongs which really exist, and this is counted an indignity, and his authority and instruction are cast aside and trodden under foot of men. These extremes in the way the people look upon ministers are found among the professed children of God; and who will now examine their hearts, and tenderly, earnestly and faithfully set these things in order? {RH, July 25, 1893 par. 8}

“Wherefore the Lord saith, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay; for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not, or shall the things framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? Is it not a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?” [Verses 9-17.] 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 4

Here are represented some of the very things that have been taking place in Battle Creek in the introduction of strange suppositions. The Lord has marked how some of the men who acted a prominent part in the leading out of the work have gradually allowed themselves to be led by Satan's devisings. “Is it not a very little while,” the prophet asks, “and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,

and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?" [Verse 17.] 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 5

In these words is outlined the true condition that exists among many of our people. There has come into the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists *false sentiments, an inclination on the part of some ministers and physicians to abolish the light that God has been sending. Some of our leading men have been denying the faith and giving heed to fanciful and erratic teachings.* This is a scheme of Satan to call the mind away from the truth and lead men to give time and thought to the *study of theories that confuse the mind and leave an indistinct understanding of the way of the Lord.* 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 6

I am instructed to say, *Repeat not these errors or false teachings,* but write the truth, speak the truth. Let the Word of God speak in every place, vindicating *the truth for this time.* The truth will triumph. *When objectionable sentiments are introduced, repeat them not in your discourses, but hold to the affirmative.* The message I am instructed to give at this time is one that I have been charged again and again for many years to give. It is this: Advance the truth. 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 7

Satan has been well pleased with the work of those men and women who have used their influence *to undermine the confidence of our people in the messages the Lord is sending through the Spirit of prophecy.* I have been instructed that those who have engaged in such a work should *not be chosen to occupy positions as leaders;* for the influence they exert, and their misstatements concerning this agency in which they have no faith, *will result in making unbelief popular in our churches.* Let no man or woman be entrusted with responsibility in the church who will use the advantages such a position would give them *to advocate sentiments of unbelief, thus sowing the tares of heresy among believers.* *And it has sometimes been the case that when men have been reproved for this kind of work, they have begun a warfare against the messages sent, by making light of the warnings and reproofs.* 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 8

What can be done to make these men with strong traits of character realize that they need to be *reconverted?* Unless this experience comes to them, *they will never become members of the royal family,* children of the heavenly King. They are wrapping themselves up in a garment of self-confidence. The messages that the Lord sends them, that they may understand how much they need to be taught of Him, *they cast aside as idle tales, thus placing themselves where they will accept their own suppositions as divine revelations.* With their deficient experience, they are unfitted to understand the dealings of the Lord with His people. 23LtMs, Ms 27, 1908, par. 9

I saw that the two-horned beast had a dragon's mouth, and that his power was in his head, and that the decree would go out of his mouth. Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but separate and distinct from

them. ***She has had her day, and it is past***, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, ***were the next to come on the stage*** and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints. I saw that as the mother has been declining in power, the daughters had been growing, and soon they will exercise the power once exercised by the mother. SpM 1.4

Isa. 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ***I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation***, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” 2Thess. 2:3. . . and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 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, shewing himself that he is God.” Ps. 74:4 ***Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations***;

they set up their ensigns for signs.

About this time, fanaticism began to appear. Some who had professed to be zealous believers in the message rejected the word of God as the one infallible guide and, claiming to be led by the Spirit, gave themselves up to the control of their own feelings, impressions, and imaginations. There were some who manifested a blind and bigoted zeal, denouncing all who would not sanction their course. Their fanatical ideas and exercises met with no sympathy from the great body of Adventists; yet they served to bring reproach upon the cause of truth. GC 395.1

Satan was seeking by this means to oppose and destroy the work of God. The people had been greatly stirred by the advent movement, thousands of sinners had been converted, and faithful men were giving themselves to the work of proclaiming the truth, even in the tarrying time. The prince of evil was losing his subjects; and in order to bring reproach upon the cause of God, ***he sought to deceive some who professed the faith and to drive them to extremes. Then his agents stood ready to seize upon every error, every failure, every unbecoming act, and hold it up before the people in the most exaggerated light, to render Adventists and their faith odious.*** Thus the greater the number whom he could crowd in to make a profession of faith in the second advent while his power controlled their hearts, the greater advantage would he gain by calling attention to them as representatives of the whole body of believers. GC 395.2

Satan is “the accuser of the brethren,” and it is his spirit that inspires men to watch for the errors and defects of the Lord's people, and to hold them up to notice, while their good deeds are passed by without a mention. He is always

active when God is at work for the salvation of souls. When the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord, Satan comes also among them. In every revival he is ready to bring in those who are unsanctified in heart and unbalanced in mind. When these have accepted some points of truth, and gained a place with believers, he works through them to introduce theories that will deceive the unwary. No man is proved to be a true Christian because he is found in company with the children of God, even in the house of worship and around the table of the Lord. ***Satan is frequently there upon the most solemn occasions in the form of those whom he can use as his agents.***” GC 395.3

We have evidence in God's word of the liability of His people to be greatly deceived. ***There are many instances where what may seem to be a sincere zeal for the honor of God has its origin in leaving the soul unguarded for the enemy to tempt and to impress the mind with a perverted sense of the real state of things.*** And we may expect just such things in these last days, for Satan is just as busy now as he was in the congregation of Israel. The cruelty and strength of prejudice are not understood. After the congregation had the evidence before their sight of the destruction of these leaders in rebellion, ***the power of suspicion and distrust which had been let into their souls was not removed.*** They saw the ground open and the leaders of rebellion go down into the bowels of the earth. This fearful exhibition surely ought to have cured them and led them to the deepest repentance for their abuse of Moses. 3T 353.2

I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. ***God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness.*** EW 124.3

I saw that we have no time to throw away in listening to fables. Our minds should not be thus diverted, but should be occupied with the present truth, and seeking wisdom that we may obtain a more thorough knowledge of our position, that with meekness we may be able to give a reason of our hope from the Scriptures. While false doctrines and dangerous errors are pressed upon the mind, it cannot be dwelling upon the truth which is to fit and prepare the house of Israel

to stand in the day of the Lord. EW 125.1

Whenever the study of the Scriptures is entered upon ***without a prayerful, humble, teachable spirit***, the plainest and simplest as well as the most difficult passages will be wrested from their true meaning. The papal leaders select such portions of Scripture as best serve their purpose, interpret to suit themselves, and then present these to the people, while they deny them the privilege of studying the Bible and understanding its sacred truths ***for themselves***. The whole Bible should be given to the people just as it reads. It would be better for them not to have Bible instruction at all than to have the teaching of the Scriptures thus grossly misrepresented. GC 521.2

The spirit in which you come to the investigation of the Scriptures will determine the character of the assistant at your side. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance. But ***if the Bible is opened with irreverence, with a feeling of self-sufficiency, if the heart is filled with prejudice, Satan is beside you, and he will set the plain statements of God's word in a perverted light***. TM 108.1

Young men should search the Scriptures for themselves. They are not to feel that it is sufficient for those older in experience to find out the truth; that the younger ones can accept it from them as authority. The Jews perished as a nation because they were drawn from the truth of the Bible by their rulers, priests, and elders. Had they heeded the lessons of Jesus, and searched the Scriptures for themselves, they would not have perished. TM 109.2

The truth and the glory of God are inseparable; ***it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by erroneous opinions***. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light. GC 597.2

Note: Beware of: ravening wolves Matt. 7:15. false prophets Matt. 24:11,24; 1John 4:1. false apostles 2Cor. 11:13. false brethren 2Cor. 11:26; Gal. 2:4. false teachers 2Peter 2:1; Titus 1:11; 2Tim. 4:3.

Romans 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

The aim of the great rebel has ever been ***to justify himself and to prove*** the divine

government responsible for the rebellion. To this end he has bent all the power of his giant intellect. He has worked deliberately and systematically, and with marvelous success, leading vast multitudes to accept *his version* of the great controversy which has been so long in progress. For thousands of years this chief of conspiracy has palmed off falsehood for truth. But the time has now come when the rebellion is to be finally defeated and the history and character of Satan disclosed. In his last great effort to dethrone Christ, destroy His people, and take possession of the City of God, the archdeceiver has been fully unmasked. Those who have united with him see the total failure of his cause. Christ's followers and the loyal angels behold the full extent of his *machinations* against the government of God. He is the object of universal abhorrence. GC 670.1

The Judas Effect on the Church.

“From that time he” Judas “*expressed doubts that confused* the disciples. He *introduced controversies and misleading sentiments, repeating* the arguments urged by the scribes and Pharisees against the claims of Christ. All the little and large troubles and crosses, the difficulties and the apparent hindrances to the advancement of the gospel, Judas interpreted as evidences against its truthfulness. He would introduce texts of Scripture that had no connection with the truths Christ was presenting. These texts, separated from their connection, perplexed the disciples, and increased the discouragement that was constantly pressing upon them. Yet all this was done by Judas in such a way as to make it appear that he was conscientious. And while the disciples were searching for evidence to confirm the words of the Great Teacher, Judas would lead them *almost imperceptibly on another track.* Thus in a very religious, and apparently wise, way he was presenting matters in a different light from that in which Jesus had given them, and attaching to His words a meaning that He had not conveyed. His suggestions were constantly *exciting an ambitious desire for temporal preferment*, and thus turning the disciples from the important things they should have considered. The dissension as to which of them should be greatest *was generally excited by Judas.* DA 719.2

Note: As Cain introduced an alternative system of doubts, so today they are introducing Sunday theology in the SDA church causing skepticism about the SDA pioneers.

The fate of Balaam was similar to that of Judas, and *their characters bear a marked resemblance to each other.* Both these men tried to unite the service of God and mammon, and met with signal failure. Balaam acknowledged the true God, and professed to serve Him; Judas believed in Jesus as the Messiah, and united with His followers. But Balaam hoped to make the service of Jehovah the

steppingstone to the acquirement of riches and worldly honor; and failing in this he stumbled and fell and was broken. ***Judas expected by his connection with Christ to secure wealth and promotion in that worldly kingdom which, as he believed, the Messiah was about to set up.*** The failure of his hopes drove him to apostasy and ruin. Both Balaam and Judas had received great light and enjoyed special privileges, but ***a single cherished sin poisoned the entire character*** and caused their destruction. PP 452.1

It is a perilous thing to allow an unchristian trait to live in the heart. One cherished sin will, little by little, debase the character, bringing all its nobler powers into subjection to the evil desire. The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the indulgence of one evil habit, one neglect of the high claims of duty, breaks down the defenses of the soul and opens the way for Satan to come in and lead us astray. The only safe course is to let our prayers go forth daily from a sincere heart, as did David, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Psalm 17:5. PP 452.2

There have ever been two classes among those who profess to be followers of Christ. While one class study the Saviour's life and ***earnestly seek to correct their defects and conform to the Pattern, the other class shun the plain, practical truths which expose their errors.*** Even in her best estate the church was not composed wholly of the true, pure, and sincere. ***Our Saviour taught that those who willfully indulge in sin are not to be received into the church;*** yet He connected with Himself men who were faulty in character, and granted them the benefits of His teachings and example, that they might have an opportunity ***to see their errors and correct them.*** Among the twelve apostles was a traitor. Judas was accepted, not because of his defects of character, but notwithstanding them. ***He was connected with the disciples, that, through the instruction and example of Christ, he might learn what constitutes Christian character, and thus be led to see his errors, to repent, and, by the aid of divine grace, to purify his soul "in obeying the truth."*** ***But Judas did not walk in the light so graciously permitted to shine upon him. By indulgence in sin he invited the temptations of Satan. His evil traits of character became predominant. He yielded his mind to the control of the powers of darkness, he became angry when his faults were reprov'd, and thus he was led to commit the fearful crime of betraying his Master. So do all who cherish evil under a profession of godliness hate those who disturb their peace by condemning their course of sin. When a favorable opportunity is presented, they will, like Judas, betray those who for their good have sought to reprove them.*** GC 43.2,

Note: The Judas effect: "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.” GC 608.2

Mercy's pleading resisted, the impulse of evil bore final sway. *Judas, angered at an implied rebuke and made desperate by the disappointment of his ambitious dreams, surrendered his soul to the demon of greed and determined upon the betrayal* of his Master. From the Passover chamber, the joy of Christ's presence, and the light of immortal hope, he went forth to his evil work—into the outer darkness, where hope was not. Ed 92.2

“Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him.” John 6:64. Yet, knowing all, He had withheld no pleading of mercy or gift of love. Ed 92.3

Seeing the danger of Judas, He had brought him close to Himself, within the inner circle of His chosen and trusted disciples. Day after day, when the burden lay heaviest upon His own heart, *He had borne the pain of continual contact with that stubborn, suspicious, brooding spirit*; He had witnessed and labored to counteract among His disciples *that continuous, secret, and subtle antagonism*. And all this that no possible saving influence might be lacking to that imperiled soul! Ed 92.4

“Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it;” “

For love is strong as death.” Song of Solomon 8:7, 6. Ed 93.1

So far as Judas himself was concerned, Christ's work of love had been without avail. But not so as regards his fellow disciples. To them it was a lesson of lifelong influence. Ever would its example of tenderness and long-suffering mold their intercourse with the tempted and the erring. And it had other lessons. *At the ordination of the Twelve the disciples had greatly desired that Judas should become one of their number*, and they had counted *his accession an event of much promise* to the apostolic band. He had come more into contact with the world than they, he was a man of good address, of discernment and executive ability, and, having a high estimate of his own qualifications, he had led the disciples to hold him in the same regard. *But the methods he desired to introduce into Christ's work were based upon worldly principles and were controlled by worldly policy.* They looked to the securing of worldly recognition and honor—to the obtaining of the kingdom of this world. The working out of these desires in the life of Judas, *helped the disciples to understand the antagonism between the principle of self-aggrandizement and Christ's principle of humility and self-sacrifice*—the principle of the spiritual kingdom. In the fate of Judas they saw the

end to which self-serving tends. Ed 93.2

For these disciples the mission of Christ finally accomplished its purpose. Little by little His example and His lessons of self-abnegation molded their characters. His death destroyed their hope of worldly greatness. The fall of Peter, the apostasy of Judas, their own failure in forsaking Christ in His anguish and peril, swept away their self-sufficiency. They saw their own weakness; they saw something of the greatness of the work committed to them; they felt their need of their Master's guidance at every step. Ed 93.3

Note As the Apostles “greatly desired Judas to become one of their number, and had counted his accession of much promise” so Israel wanted Saul to be their king. As Cain introduced an alternative system of doubts, so today they are introducing Sunday theology in the SDA church causing skepticism about the SDA pioneers.

Satan represented to the holy pair that *they would be gainers by breaking the law of God. Do we not today hear similar reasoning? Many talk of the narrowness of those who obey God's commandments, while they themselves claim to have broader ideas and to enjoy greater liberty.* What is this but an echo of the voice from Eden, "In the day ye eat thereof"—transgress the divine requirement—"ye shall be as gods"? Satan claimed to have received great good by eating of the forbidden fruit, but he did not let it appear that by transgression he had become an outcast from heaven. *Though he had found sin to result in infinite loss, he concealed his own misery in order to draw others into the same position.* So now the transgressor seeks to disguise his true character; he *may claim to be holy;* but his exalted profession only makes him the more dangerous as a deceiver. He is on the side of Satan, trampling upon the law of God, and leading others to do the same, to their eternal ruin. PP 55.1

We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater *from the church itself* than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will do more than any other class to promote and honor, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. *But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement. The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan's devices.* ST May 17, 1883, par. 4

The Complete Testimony Of The Early fathers

By J N Andrews

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"5. And now mark the work of apostasy: This work never begins by thrusting out God's institutions, but always by bringing in those of men and at first only asking that they may be tolerated, while yet the ones ordained of God are sacredly observed. This, in time, being effected, the next effort is to make them equal with the divine. When this has been accomplished, the third stage of the process is to honor them above those divinely commanded; and this is speedily succeeded by the fourth, in which the divine institution is thrust out with contempt, and the whole ground given to its human rival."

The Work of Satan through Judas's.

The history of Judas presents the sad ending of a life that might have been honored of God. Had Judas died before his last journey to Jerusalem he would have been regarded as a man worthy of a place among the twelve, and one who would be greatly missed. The abhorrence which has followed him through the centuries would not have existed but for the attributes revealed at the close of his history. But it was for a purpose that his character was laid open to the world. It was to be a warning to all who, like him, should betray sacred trusts. DA 716.1

A little before the Passover, Judas had renewed his contract with the priests to deliver Jesus into their hands. Then it was arranged that the Saviour should be taken at one of His resorts for meditation and prayer. Since the feast at the house of Simon, Judas had had opportunity to reflect upon the deed which he had covenanted to perform, but his purpose was unchanged. For thirty pieces of silver—the price of a slave—he sold the Lord of glory to ignominy and death. DA 716.2

Judas had naturally a strong love for money; but he had not always been corrupt enough to do such a deed as this. He had fostered the evil spirit of avarice until it had become the ruling motive of his life. The love of mammon overbalanced his love for Christ. Through becoming the slave of one vice he gave himself to Satan, to be driven to any lengths in sin. DA 716.3

Judas had joined the disciples when multitudes were following Christ. The Saviour's teaching moved their hearts as they hung entranced upon His words, spoken in the synagogue, by the seaside, upon the mount. Judas saw the sick, the lame, the blind, flock to Jesus from the towns and cities. He saw the dying laid at His feet. He witnessed the Saviour's mighty works in healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead. He felt in his own person the evidence of Christ's power. He recognized the teaching of Christ as superior to all that he had ever heard. He loved the Great Teacher, and desired to be with Him. ***He felt a desire to be changed in character and life, and he hoped to experience this through***

connecting himself with Jesus. The Saviour did not repulse Judas. He gave him a place among the twelve. He trusted him to do the work of an evangelist. He endowed him with power to heal the sick and to cast out devils. But Judas did not come to the point of surrendering himself fully to Christ. He did not give up his worldly ambition or his love of money. While he accepted the position of a minister of Christ, he did not bring himself under the divine molding. He felt that he could retain his own judgment and opinions, and he cultivated a disposition to criticize and accuse. DA 716.4

Judas was highly regarded by the disciples, and had great influence over them. He himself had a high opinion of his own qualifications, and looked upon his brethren as greatly inferior to him in judgment and ability. They did not see their opportunities, he thought, and take advantage of circumstances. The church would never prosper with such shortsighted men as leaders. Peter was impetuous; he would move without consideration. John, who was treasuring up the truths that fell from Christ's lips, was looked upon by Judas as a poor financier. Matthew, whose training had taught him accuracy in all things, was very particular in regard to honesty, and he was ever contemplating the words of Christ, and became so absorbed in them that, as Judas thought, he could not be trusted to do sharp, far-seeing business. Thus Judas summed up all the disciples, and flattered himself that the church would often be brought into perplexity and embarrassment if it were not for his ability as a manager. Judas regarded himself as the capable one, who could not be overreached. In his own estimation he was an honor to the cause, and as such he always represented himself. DA 717.1

Judas was blinded to his own weakness of character, and Christ placed him where he would have an opportunity to see and correct this. As treasurer for the disciples, he was called upon to provide for the needs of the little company, and to relieve the necessities of the poor. When in the Passover chamber Jesus said to him, "That thou doest, do quickly" ([John 13:27](#)), the disciples thought He had bidden him buy what was needed for the feast, or give something to the poor. In ministering to others, Judas might have developed an unselfish spirit. But while listening daily to the lessons of Christ and witnessing His unselfish life, Judas indulged his covetous disposition. The small sums that came into his hands were a continual temptation. Often when he did a little service for Christ, or devoted time to religious purposes, he paid himself out of this meager fund. In his own eyes these pretexts served to excuse his action; but in God's sight he was a thief. DA 717.2

Christ's oft-repeated statement that His kingdom was not of this world offended Judas. He had marked out a line upon which he expected Christ to work. He had planned that John the Baptist should be delivered from prison. But lo, John was left to be beheaded. And Jesus, instead of asserting His royal right and avenging the death of John, retired with His disciples into a country place.

Judas wanted more aggressive warfare. He thought that if Jesus would not prevent the disciples from carrying out their schemes, the work would be more successful. He marked the increasing enmity of the Jewish leaders, and saw their challenge unheeded when they demanded from Christ a sign from heaven. ***His heart was open to unbelief, and the enemy supplied thoughts of questioning and rebellion.*** Why did Jesus dwell so much upon that which was discouraging? Why did He predict trial and persecution for Himself and for His disciples? The prospect of having a high place in the new kingdom had led Judas to espouse the cause of Christ. Were his hopes to be disappointed? Judas had not decided that Jesus was not the Son of God; but he was questioning, and seeking to find some explanation of His mighty works. DA 718.1

Notwithstanding the Saviour's own teaching, Judas was continually advancing the idea that Christ would reign as king in Jerusalem. At the feeding of the five thousand he tried to bring this about. On this occasion Judas assisted in distributing the food to the hungry multitude. He had an opportunity to see the benefit which it was in his power to impart to others. He felt the satisfaction that always comes in service to God. He helped to bring the sick and suffering from among the multitude to Christ. He saw what relief, what joy and gladness, come to human hearts through the healing power of the Restorer. He might have comprehended the methods of Christ. But he was blinded by his own selfish desires. Judas was first to take advantage of the enthusiasm excited by the miracle of the loaves. It was he who set on foot the project to take Christ by force and make Him king. His hopes were high. His disappointment was bitter. DA 718.2

Christ's discourse in the synagogue concerning the bread of life was the turning point in the history of Judas. He heard the words, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." John 6:53. He saw that Christ was offering spiritual rather than worldly good. He regarded himself as farsighted, and thought he could see that Jesus would have no honor, and that He could bestow no high position upon His followers. He determined not to unite himself so closely to Christ but that he could draw away. He would watch. And he did watch. DA 719.1

From that time he expressed doubts that confused the disciples. He introduced controversies and misleading sentiments, repeating the arguments urged by the scribes and Pharisees against the claims of Christ. All the little and large troubles and crosses, the difficulties and the apparent hindrances to the advancement of the gospel, Judas interpreted as evidences against its truthfulness. He would introduce texts of Scripture that had no connection with the truths Christ was presenting. These texts, separated from their connection, perplexed the disciples, and increased the discouragement that was constantly pressing upon them. Yet all this was done by Judas in such a way as to make it appear that he was conscientious. And while the disciples were searching for evidence to confirm the words of the Great Teacher, Judas would lead them

almost imperceptibly on another track. Thus in a very religious, and apparently wise, way he was presenting matters in a different light from that in which Jesus had given them, and attaching to His words a meaning that He had not conveyed. His suggestions were constantly exciting an ambitious desire for temporal preferment, and thus turning the disciples from the important things they should have considered. The dissension as to which of them should be greatest was generally excited by Judas. DA 719.2

When Jesus presented to the rich young ruler the condition of discipleship, Judas was displeased. He thought that a mistake had been made. If such men as this ruler could be connected with the believers, they would help sustain Christ's cause. *If Judas were only received as a counselor, he thought, he could suggest many plans for the advantage of the little church. His principles and methods would differ somewhat from Christ's, but in these things he thought himself wiser than Christ.* DA 719.3

In all that Christ said to His disciples, there was something with which, in heart, Judas disagreed. Under his influence the leaven of disaffection was fast doing its work. The disciples did not see the real agency in all this; but Jesus saw that Satan was communicating his attributes to Judas, and thus opening up a channel through which to influence the other disciples. This, a year before the betrayal, Christ declared. "Have not I chosen you twelve," He said, "and one of you is a devil?" John 6:70. DA 720.1

Yet Judas made no open opposition, nor seemed to question the Saviour's lessons. He made no outward murmur until the time of the feast in Simon's house. When Mary anointed the Saviour's feet, Judas manifested his covetous disposition. *At the reproof from Jesus his very spirit seemed turned to gall. Wounded pride and desire for revenge broke down the barriers, and the greed so long indulged held him in control. This will be the experience of everyone who persists in tampering with sin. The elements of depravity that are not resisted and overcome, respond to Satan's temptation, and the soul is led captive at his will.* DA 720.2

But Judas was not yet wholly hardened. Even after he had twice pledged himself to betray the Saviour, there was opportunity for repentance. At the Passover supper Jesus proved His divinity by revealing the traitor's purpose. He tenderly included Judas in the ministry to the disciples. But the last appeal of love was unheeded. Then the case of Judas was decided, and the feet that Jesus had washed went forth to the betrayer's work. DA 720.3

Judas reasoned that if Jesus was to be crucified, the event must come to pass. His own act in betraying the Saviour would not change the result. If Jesus was not to die, it would only force Him to deliver Himself. At all events, Judas would gain something by his treachery. He counted that he had made a sharp bargain in betraying his Lord. DA 720.4

Judas did not, however, believe that Christ would permit Himself to be arrested.

In betraying Him, it was his purpose to teach Him a lesson. He intended to play a part that would make the Saviour careful thenceforth to treat him with due respect. But Judas knew not that he was giving Christ up to death. How often, as the Saviour taught in parables, the scribes and Pharisees had been carried away with His striking illustrations! How often they had pronounced judgment against themselves! Often when the truth was brought home to their hearts, they had been filled with rage, and had taken up stones to cast at Him; but again and again He had made His escape. Since He had escaped so many snares, thought Judas, He certainly would not now allow Himself to be taken. DA 720.5

Judas decided to put the matter to the test. If Jesus really was the Messiah, the people, for whom He had done so much, would rally about Him, and would proclaim Him king. This would forever settle many minds that were now in uncertainty. Judas would have the credit of having placed the king on David's throne. And this act would secure to him the first position, next to Christ, in the new kingdom. DA 721.1

The false disciple acted his part in betraying Jesus. In the garden, when he said to the leaders of the mob, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast" (Matthew 26:48), he fully believed that Christ would escape out of their hands. Then if they should blame him, he could say, Did I not tell you to hold Him fast? DA 721.2

Judas beheld the captors of Christ, acting upon his words, bind Him firmly. In amazement he saw that the Saviour suffered Himself to be led away. Anxiously he followed Him from the garden to the trial before the Jewish rulers. At every movement he looked for Him to surprise His enemies, by appearing before them as the Son of God, and setting at nought all their plots and power. But as hour after hour went by, and Jesus submitted to all the abuse heaped upon Him, a terrible fear came to the traitor that he had sold his Master to His death. DA 721.3

As the trial drew to a close, Judas could endure the torture of his guilty conscience no longer. Suddenly a hoarse voice rang through the hall, sending a thrill of terror to all hearts: He is innocent; spare Him, O Caiaphas! DA 721.4

The tall form of Judas was now seen pressing through the startled throng. His face was pale and haggard, and great drops of sweat stood on his forehead. Rushing to the throne of judgment, he threw down before the high priest the pieces of silver that had been the price of his Lord's betrayal. Eagerly grasping the robe of Caiaphas, he implored him to release Jesus, declaring that He had done nothing worthy of death. Caiaphas angrily shook him off, but was confused, and knew not what to say. The perfidy of the priests was revealed. It was evident that they had bribed the disciple to betray his Master. DA 721.5

"I have sinned," again cried Judas, "in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." But the high priest, regaining his self-possession, answered with scorn, "What is that to us? see thou to that." Matthew 27:4. The priests had been willing to make Judas their tool; but they despised his baseness. When he turned to them with

confession, they spurned him. DA 722.1

Judas now cast himself at the feet of Jesus, acknowledging Him to be the Son of God, and entreating Him to deliver Himself. The Saviour did not reproach His betrayer. He knew that Judas did not repent; his confession was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation and a looking for of judgment, but he felt no deep, heartbreaking grief that he had betrayed the spotless Son of God, and denied the Holy One of Israel. Yet Jesus spoke no word of condemnation. He looked pityingly upon Judas, and said, For this hour came I into the world. DA 722.2

A murmur of surprise ran through the assembly. With amazement they beheld the forbearance of Christ toward His betrayer. Again there swept over them the conviction that this Man was more than mortal. But if He was the Son of God, they questioned, why did He not free Himself from His bonds and triumph over His accusers? DA 722.3

Judas saw that his entreaties were in vain, and he rushed from the hall exclaiming, It is too late! It is too late! He felt that he could not live to see Jesus crucified, and in despair went out and hanged himself. DA 722.4

Later that same day, on the road from Pilate's hall to Calvary, there came an interruption to the shouts and jeers of the wicked throng who were leading Jesus to the place of crucifixion. As they passed a retired spot, they saw at the foot of a lifeless tree, the body of Judas. It was a most revolting sight. His weight had broken the cord by which he had hanged himself to the tree. In falling, his body had been horribly mangled, and dogs were now devouring it. His remains were immediately buried out of sight; but there was less mockery among the throng, and many a pale face revealed the thoughts within. Retribution seemed already visiting those who were guilty of the blood of Jesus. DA 722.5

Note: Judas interfered with Jesus teaching by introducing alternative explanations. The Apostles took some time to overcome the affects Judas had on them, for they looked up to him. Most notable was at Simons house and the box of ointment Matt. 26:6-14. But look to today to many Judas's/millions in the church. What of them? They would be tares, goats, false prophets etc., And see what of those who defend them:—

When God says, “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, *that no man take thy crown,*” ¹³ it is well that we heed the admonition. If we do not, we may find, when too late, that we have allowed the world to rob us of our love for the Master; and that our judgment has become so darkened by sin and unbelief that, like Reuben, we fall far short of doing the work the Lord designed we should accomplish. Some one who, like Joseph, has been separated from those of the same faith, without the opportunities we have enjoyed, will by simple faith and trust in God, do the work we have failed to do, and receive the reward we might

have obtained. CIS 356.4

The forehead is the seat of the intellect; and when the honest in heart see and acknowledge the binding claims of God's law, they will keep holy the Sabbath. The seal placed in the forehead by the angel can not be read by man, for God alone can read the heart. Simply resting upon the seventh day from all physical work will not place the seal upon the forehead of any one. The resting is necessary, but with the rest must be also the holy and sanctified life that is in harmony with the holy and sanctified day. ⁴¹ CIS 363.3

Ezekiel saw an angel placing a "mark" upon the foreheads of those who were distressed because of the abominations practised by the professed people of God. ⁴² Those who are at ease in Zion drifting with the current, their hearts' affections centered on the world, will never receive the seal of the living God. CIS 364.1

There are few things more mournful than the steady descent of the haughty, jealous tribe of Ephraim from the pinnacle of success,-their leader the leader of the entire nation, and the center of the worship at Shiloh within their borders,-to the sudden captivity and total oblivion which closed its career. CIS 372.1