

God's Prophetic Movement, Message, and Mission and Their Attempted Neutralization by the Devil

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1 Peter 5:8, 9: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 503, 504: “Satan is ever at work endeavoring to pervert what God has spoken, to blind the mind and darken the understanding, and thus lead men into sin. This is why the Lord is so explicit, making His requirements so very plain that none need err. God is constantly seeking to draw men close under His protection, that Satan may not practice his cruel, deceptive power upon them.”

As Seventh-day Adventists at this 2014 Annual Council, we affirm without hesitation that God has given us a special mission for these closing hours of Earth's history, and the devil is furious.

We see this vividly portrayed in the book of Revelation. Chapter 10 foretells the experience of our Advent pioneers as they looked forward to Christ's return. After the disappointment, an experience described as “bitter in the stomach,” their attention was turned to Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary and the divine mandate to “prophecy again to many people, nations, tongues, and kings.”

This prophetic movement, described in Revelation 12:17 as God's remnant people who “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus,” is constituted in only one body of faith today: the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thus it is no surprise to see Satan warring against us with unbridled fury.

Chapter 13 outlines Satan's twofold war plan to destroy God's last-day people: 1. an ideological war of lies and errors challenging the truth; and 2. firefights — outright persecution culminating in a death decree against all who defy his presumed authority.

Yet, God's people are not merely victims of Satan's assaults. Revelation 14 reveals the Lord's counteroffensive — His remnant people demonstrating His character and proclaiming His final appeal to the world. The three angels' messages.

The powerful truth of these unique messages would break completely the deceptions of Satan if proclaimed as God intends. The message of the first angel gives the gospel to the world, announces that we are living in the time of the pre-advent investigative judgment, and calls on every nation, tribe, tongue and people to honor God as their Creator by keeping holy His seventh-day Sabbath. The second angel heralds Babylon's fall. While finally the third angel warns us — in language too plain to misunderstand — not to worship the beast, the image of the beast, or receive the mark of his rebellion, which is a sign of disloyalty to God's Word.

It is little wonder then that Satan is doing everything he can to attack the Seventh-day Adventist

movement in an attempt to neutralize our influence in the territory he claims as his own. As we pray for the converting power of the Holy Spirit and for a revival and reformation of genuine godliness, the devil opposes every of us every step of the way.

In *The Great Controversy*, page 396, we are told, “The prince of evil contests every inch of ground over which God’s people advance in their journey toward the heavenly city. In all the history of the church no reformation has been carried forward without encountering serious obstacles.”

Though large-scale persecution will certainly come, currently Satan is trying to work from the inside to weaken the church through dissension, discord, and conformity to the world.

Testimonies Vol. 3, page 434, tells us that “Satan is ever seeking to divide the faith and hearts of God’s people. He well knows that union is their strength, and division their weakness. It is important and essential that all of Christ’s followers understand Satan’s devices and with a united front meet his attacks and vanquish him. They need to make continual efforts to press together even if it be at some sacrifice to themselves.”

Satan also tries to neutralize our efforts by secular diversions such as competitive sports, the Internet, social media, television, entertainment and so many other distracting activities. He seeks to absorb people in financial deals and materialistic matters. He uses poor health habits and lack of respect for God’s natural laws to enfeeble the mind and benumb the senses. He uses skepticism about the veracity of the scriptural record of the origin of life and early history. He tries to bring in controversy and discord over Bible doctrine to sidetrack our evangelistic witness by getting us to distrust and fight each other.

He urges people to move independently from the main body of the church. (*Manuscript Release 20*, page 369). But the Spirit of Prophecy compares the church to a victorious army that should move together in unison. *Manuscript 37, 1886*, reminds us that “None must act independently of the center” and independent action “will do harm and bring in a disorderly state of things.”

We are even warned that at the end of time Satan will inspire individuals who will preach that reformation within the church consists in giving up our unique doctrines in order to make it easier for others to join us.

But listen to what *The Great Controversy*, page 509, says: “Conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world; it never converts the world to Christ. Familiarity with sin will inevitably cause it to appear less repulsive. He who chooses to associate with the servants of Satan will soon cease to fear their master.”

Brothers and sisters, our only hope is an abiding faith in the Word of God, trust in inspired counsel, fervent prayer, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Without these heavenly compass points, we would most certainly fall to Satan’s misdirection.

Don’t Use Interpretive Gymnastics on Bible

The historical-critical and higher critical methods of Biblical interpretation negatively affect a clear understanding of the themes and topics of the Bible. As we seek to know God’s will through a study of His Word, we must not place strange interpretations and employ interpretive

gymnastics to draw out conclusions that are not evident from a plain reading of the word.

On a recent trip, I learned an interesting African saying, “When you read the Bible upside down, you will get an upside down understanding.” *The Great Controversy*, page 598 says, “The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed. . . . If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error.”

The Acts of the Apostles, page 474, tells us exactly what methods the devil will use to dismantle and neutralize our mission: “As in the days of the apostles men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths. To many the Bible is as a lamp without oil, because they have turned their minds into channels of speculative belief that bring misunderstanding and confusion. The work of higher criticism, in dissecting, conjecturing, reconstructing, is destroying faith in the Bible as a divine revelation. It is robbing God’s word of power to control, uplift, and inspire human lives. By spiritualism, multitudes are taught to believe that desire is the highest law, that license is liberty, and that man is accountable only to himself.”

Jesus alerts us in Matthew 24:24 to Satan’s plans, “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even” — you and me — “the elect.”

In view of what we understand about last-day events, it is absolutely essential that we know what we believe and why we believe it. In *The Faith I Live By*, page 345, we are exhorted to study the Scripture, particularly the book of Revelation: “Let us give more time to the study of the Bible. We do not understand the Word as we should. The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. . . . When we . . . understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival.”

Today, we, as leaders of God’s church, must not turn away from our heaven-born mandate. Our responsibility as God’s humble leaders is to set an example of diligent Bible study and ceaseless prayer. Those who neglect study will be left to receive heresy as truth because God’s truth has not been rooted in the mind. (*The Great Controversy*, page 523).

The Great Controversy, page 593, says that, “None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.”

Friends, I urge all of us to study, memorize, and fortify our mind with God’s Word so we will not be turned from truth to error by Satan’s final deceptions (*Signs of the Times*, Nov. 11, 1889).

Time on this Earth is short. Probation is closing soon. Preparation to see God face to face by repentance and forsaking of sin needs to be done now. *The Great Controversy*, page 425, explains that: “Those who are living upon the Earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.”

However, do not misinterpret this quote and think for a minute that you do not need Christ and that by your own works you will gain salvation. Seventh-day Adventists believe that only through the grace and righteousness of Christ do we have eternal life.

However, when probation closes, the work of mediation is over. Your character will be set and your destiny eternally decided. That is why everyday we need to be revived and reformed through our Bible study and prayer connection with Christ. We must receive His all-encompassing righteousness through justification and sanctification as daily, through His power, we become more and more like Him.

We read in *Steps to Christ*, pages 62, 63: “We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Savior, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us.”

Addressing again this right relationship to Christ, we read in *Faith and Works* pages 25, 26: “When men learn they cannot earn righteousness by their own merit of works, and they look with firm and entire reliance upon Jesus Christ as their only hope, there will not be so much of self and so little of Jesus. . . . God works and cooperates with the gifts He has imparted to man, and man, by being a partaker of the divine nature, and doing the work of Christ may be an overcomer and win eternal life. . . . Divine power and the human agency combined will be a complete success, for Christ’s righteousness accomplishes everything.”

Christ’s righteousness is all encompassing. We have nothing of ourselves to boast. We are totally dependent on Him. Submission to God and humility before Him are needed for the decisions at this Annual Council and for the days ahead as we encounter the greatest efforts of Satan to hinder our work for God. It is only in total reliance on Christ, His righteousness and power that we will see victory. In this spiritual war, victory is in Christ and nothing else.

And brothers and sisters make no mistake: the war is very real. The attacks of the devil are not just theory, and we cannot withstand them without God’s continued strength.

Devil Tried to Neutralize My Family

Let me share with you some recent experiences in my own family. We have three wonderful daughters and sons-in-law with eight marvelous grandchildren. Many of you know of Edward, our little 2-year-old grandson, son of our first daughter, Emilie, and her husband, Kameron. You may have heard of Edward’s battle with cancer and its results during the last eight months.

While we praise God that he is now cancer-free, he still suffers from a host of neurological problems because he developed antibodies to the cancer which are now attacking his brain. We thank God that Edward is showing some improvement with treatment, but the extent of his future recovery remains uncertain.

Most of you do not know that the 15-month-old son of our second daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband, David, has been diagnosed with a rare genetic mutation; so rare, in fact, that only two other people in the world have had it.

Little James is so precious and our hearts ache when we recognize the gravity of his situation and the danger it poses to his future wellbeing. It is not an easy road, and I ask that you hold James and his parents up to the Lord in prayer.

And most recently our third daughter, Catherine, and her husband, Bob, were expecting their third child until three weeks ago, when they lost the baby, our ninth grandchild. After the premature delivery at four months, she held the perfectly formed little boy in her hand. When the Lord returns, Catherine's little son will be placed in her arms and he will grow up in heaven.

In the last year or so, the devil has attempted to neutralize every one of our three precious daughters, their families and us as parents. But he will not succeed. God is in control. He will be victorious. The faith of my daughters and their families and all of us is strong in the Lord!

Brothers and sisters, none of us is exempt from the attacks of the devil as he seeks to neutralize our work for the Lord. We are all in this together. There are many in this room who are going through far worse situations. We can only be strong as we rely completely on God's power to sustain us and help us to become more like Him.

As you look at how the world is falling apart in every area — politically, economically, socially, ecologically, and ecumenically — could there possibly be any doubt that we are seeing the signs of Jesus' soon return?

The devil will attempt to quell our effectiveness with terrible physical challenges. Pray for our dear members in West Africa — who are faced with the horrific Ebola virus — where thousands have been infected and died. Pray for those who are helping to alleviate suffering including our Cooper SDA Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia.

The devil wants to drown out the proclamation of the Advent message through wars and rumors of wars. Pray for the few church members we have left in Iraq and the handful of church members in Syria and thousands who are facing horrible treatment at the hands of fanatics. Pray for God's church in the Middle East as members share the Advent message under extremely difficult circumstances. Pray for our church members and others in Ukraine as they face terrible trauma in that war-torn area. Pray that God will use these difficult situations to more powerfully proclaim the three angels' messages.

Ecumenism and Charismatic Music

Pray for those in God's remnant church whose distinct witness is being neutralized by ecumenical activity.

This is my counsel, it's not an order: Stay away from any ecumenical associations and events that undermine the truth revealed in Revelation 13. We are to be leaders in public affairs and religious liberty. We are to make friends with people and organizations but avoid ecumenical entanglements purporting to bring unity. Real unity will only be realized when Christ returns to take us home.

We can see right before our eyes that the prophetic chapter of Revelation 13 is being fulfilled as Rome takes ever-greater opportunities to influence the world. Leaders in God's church, encourage your pastors to avoid inviting clergy of other faiths to preach to our churches on Sabbaths. While it is important to be friendly to those in other churches including clergy and provide opportunities for spiritual growth, we must not ask those who do not know God's full truth to preach sermons from our pulpits. Don't succumb to the temptation to be so cozy with other religious organizations that you fall into the devil's trap of neutralizing your own effectiveness through unbiblical ecumenical bonds.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." This is happening, now.

We are also told that society will become like Sodom and Gomorrah just before Jesus' return. This is happening now, as well. We are seeing the general, popular acceptance of the sins that brought down fire from heaven destroying cities.

Lying and deception of all kinds have entered every phase of our society. Predictions of financial collapse are heard on every hand. Natural and man-made disasters are seen throughout the whole world. *The Great Controversy* pages 587, 590, 592 and 607, tell us that disasters, moral decay, and financial woes in this very country will lead apostate ministers to rally citizens to demand the enactment of the Sunday law, and the world will follow this lead.

The devil is attempting to neutralize God's church through a tendency to accept charismatic and Pentecostal music and worship approaches that focus on the church members and those leading out in services rather than to focus on truly worshiping God. A false understanding of worship brings us to the core of the three angels' messages since those messages are to turn people back to the true worship of God and not a false, euphoric experience but rather a genuine spiritual connection with God through Bible study and prayer.

Just on Thursday, Pastor Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference, was sharing with me his great burden about this subject and a book which he has written. I hope all of you will carry a burden to turn people back to the true worship of God.

In addition, spiritualism will take greater prominence. Television programs depicting the workings of departed spirits in the affairs of the living are becoming commonplace. Spiritualism has entered into the lives of average citizens in many ways and its influence is spreading in every culture around the world. No one is exempt. *The Great Controversy*, page 554, tells us, "Spiritualism teaches 'that man is the creature of progression; that it is his destiny from his birth to progress, even to eternity, toward the Godhead.'"

What are children taught in public schools? Man is a creature of progression, ever evolving upwards. *The Great Controversy*, page 588, confirms that in the final conflict "the line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church

members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism.” It is becoming clearer and clearer that our only defense against the deceptions of the enemy is to fortify our minds with the Word of God.

God’s Counteroffensive in Revelation

As the conflict between truth and error develops in Revelation, we have this glorious picture of God’s counteroffensive outlined in Chapter 18:1-4: “After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven having great authority, and the Earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”

The work of the angel in Revelation 18 is a prophetic symbol of the latter rain. Under the Holy Spirit’s power and direction, God’s remnant people are to expose the sins of Babylon.

Of this fact Satan is well aware, and it is his studied objective in these closing moments of Earth’s history to attack God’s people, you and me, and neutralize the Seventh-day Adventist message. He wants to hold all whom he can in darkness and impenitence until Jesus’ work as our intercessor is completed in the heavenly sanctuary.

But the Holy Spirit equips and empowers the remnant to fulfill their mission! In *The Great Controversy*, page 612, we read the stirring description of God’s last-day people, their faces radiating the presence of the Spirit, hastening from place to place proclaiming the three angels’ messages; working miracles, healing the sick, and working signs and wonders; leading people to take their stand for God’s truth as the Spirit brings deep conviction upon hearts; and severing connections that once held them in bondage to error.

The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon God’s people. Satan, of course, wants to stop this revival and reformation among the remnant. In a counter move, Satan will bring a false revival in those churches under his influence. People will think that God is doing marvelous things among them, but the power is not from God. Through this false revival Satan will spread his influence through Christian churches (*The Great Controversy*, page 464).

So there will be two conflicting revivals, a true and genuine revival among the remnant, and a false revival among those who reject the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12. Because of the true revival, the remnant faces a deadly challenge and attack from the devil. He is as a roaring lion going around seeking whom he may devour. He is after everyone through direct physical attacks, spiritual complacency, congregational division, denominational dissension, personal unbelief, or Laodicean apathy. We need to lean completely on Jesus, on His Holy Word, and on the Spirit of Prophecy.

Read Bible and Spirit of Prophecy

On this point you might say, “Why does Wilson always refer to the Bible *and* the Spirit of Prophecy? Isn’t the Bible sufficient for all that we need to know?”

Of course, it is. As Seventh-day Adventists we believe in “sola scriptura.” We believe that God’s Word is the final authority of all Christian faith and practice. And it is in that very Word of God that the Lord reveals that His last-day people would be guided by the prophetic gift! The Spirit of Prophecy is a wonderful blessing to lead us back to the Bible and to make clearer its meaning and application in our lives.

I have felt a great burden as I have traveled and spoken around the world in so many of your fields these last four years to reignite through the power of the Holy Spirit a love for the Holy Word of God and the great blessings of the Spirit of Prophecy. My colleagues, I entreat you to let God speak to you through His Word and the Spirit of Prophecy during this Annual Council.

It is in the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus — the Spirit of Prophecy — that we find our identity as God’s remnant church and our marching orders as God’s end-time messengers. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been entrusted with the last proclamation of a saving message from God — a message for Mission to the Cities, a message of “comprehensive health ministry,” a message to “reach the world,” a message that embraces the wonderful programs of our departments, institutions, and entities, a message that encompasses all that we affirm in our 28 Fundamental Beliefs, and a message that Christ is soon to return in the clouds of glory! As our upcoming 2015 General Conference session theme tells us, “Arise. Shine. Jesus is coming!”

We need this reviving power from heaven. Let God’s Word ring with power from the lips of every one of us as we fully engage in personal and public evangelism in every form possible during this last great proclamation of Revelation 14 and 18.

The first step in the revival that will prepare God’s people for the latter rain is our recognition of personal sin and weaknesses. With this recognition, the remnant will seek a closer relationship with Jesus through genuine repentance and a turning away from sinful behavior. *The Great Controversy*, page 623, says, “It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Our precious Savior invites us to join ourselves to Him, to unite our weakness to His strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits.”

Beautiful Spirit at Annual Council

In these perilous closing scenes of Earth’s history, remember that the devil is attempting to neutralize anything and everything we do — even at this Annual Council. Through God’s power, let us be entirely respectful, Christ-like and loving in our discussions and exchanges during this Annual Council on whatever topic we may speak.

During the pre-meetings of this Annual Council, we have seen the Holy Spirit working to develop a beautiful spirit among the General Conference and division officers as we have addressed challenging items. This has been in direct response to intense prayer. God has led us in a wonderful way.

In fact, the General Conference and division officers voted this last Tuesday the following appeal to all of you at this Annual Council: “We, General Conference and division officers, appeal to all Annual Council attendees to accept each other as brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of

some differences of opinion that may be evident on certain subjects. We ask for Christ-likeness and humble respect for each other in our words and activities during this Annual Council and beyond. Our humble demeanor and attitudes, through God's power, will speak volumes to those who are watching. We earnestly appeal that we do all in our power to strengthen the church and this precious Advent movement. We lean completely on Christ for the unifying spirit that we need in proclaiming the three angels' messages in these last days of Earth's history."

As we act in a Christ-like manner, speak with great respect and love, we absolutely must maintain our hold on Christ and His Word as the shaking takes place around us. Only His Word will give us strength. *Last Day Events*, page 173, explains that, "We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands."

As we place ourselves on God's foundation, we will find strength and victory in His power, not our own. This is the only way to keep Satan from neutralizing all our efforts. *The Great Controversy*, page 530, says, "Satan is well aware that the weakest soul who abides in Christ is more than a match for the hosts of darkness, and that, should he reveal himself openly, he would be met and resisted. Therefore he seeks to draw away the soldiers of the cross from their strong fortification, while he lies in ambush with his forces, ready to destroy all who venture upon his ground. Only in humble reliance upon God, and obedience to all His commandments, can we be secure."

We cannot run the risk of delay. We must maintain our connection with Christ at all times to combat the trickery of the devil. Our God is almighty and will overcome all the obstacles thrown at us by Satan and his evil host. A mighty fortress is our God! He is the Alpha and Omega! He is the Mighty One, Master of everything. His name is Wonderful!

Dutch Tourist Baptized in Mongolia

As we travel around this globe, Nancy and I see God's power working in the lives of so many as the Lord calls men, women, young people, and children to a life of commitment and evangelistic outreach. There are many stories I could tell you, but we don't have time today to tell them all. One, however, I found particularly inspiring.

Very recently, I received an exciting e-mail message from some good friends from Australia, Peter and Nerida Koolik, who are volunteers building churches in Mongolia. God's work is blossoming in that secular and Buddhist country as Pastor Elbert Kuhn, mission president, and Pastor JaiRyong Lee from the division give spiritual and evangelistic direction.

Recently, a strong Mission to the Cities evangelistic program took place in the capital city of Ulan Bator. Named UB14, like NY13, the evangelistic outreach touched hundreds of lives including Belinda and Marcus Keizer, who enjoy extended road trips from their home in the Netherlands. Belinda is a Seventh-day Adventist member, but Markus put off the decision for baptism thinking that maybe there would be some place, some time when he would respond to the call of Christ.

Over the years they visited many beautiful places and met many wonderful people. Recently, they began to have more discussions about God and religion, and Markus finally gave his heart

to Christ. However, Markus thought that perhaps sometime on the road he would respond to a baptismal call, not knowing how God would lead them.

After five months on the road and experiencing God's leading they arrived in Ulan Bator without knowing about UB14. They went online and found the Central Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was the first church they decided to visit since leaving Holland and just at the right time.

They found an English-speaking taxi driver who took them to the Seventh-day Adventist church where they were surprised to hear an English-speaking pastor preaching. They were warmly welcomed to the church and attended the UB14 evangelistic meetings listening to guest speaker, Pastor Bob Folkenberg Jr, president of the Chinese Union Mission, lifting up Christ and the three angels' messages.

Markus said, "We heard Pastor Folkenberg speak about Jesus, the Holy Ghost and baptism. To us that was not a coincidence. It was as if God was saying, 'This is the opportunity you wished for, so stop running.'"

Markus responded to Pastor Folkenberg's call and decided to be baptized the next day.

Markus says, "It was a special moment for all of us. Having finally made the decision felt good, but the freezing cold and the storm and rain that rocked the car that night made us a bit scared for getting into that icy cold river. Being baptized in nature together with more than 100 Mongolian people, hearing some incredible stories, experiencing the warmth of the Adventist family we met and receiving a baptism certificate in Mongolian; in every possible way Sabbath, the 13th of September — a few days ago — was a memorable day and will definitely be the most special day of our trip."

Receiving God's Unlimited Power

Brothers and sisters, I say, "Praise God for the powerful way in which He is affecting people's lives all over this globe as they humble themselves before God!" He is moving upon this Earth and upon people in an unusual way.

If we fall at the feet of Christ forsaking our sins, seeking forgiveness, asking for His power to resist the neutralizing schemes of the enemy, God will provide us with unlimited power from heaven to live a new life just like Markus is now experiencing.

Our only defense against the neutralization of Seventh-day Adventists is to humble ourselves before our Maker, the Creator of this Earth in six literal days recently, and allow Him to re-create in us a new heart through revival and reformation.

The familiar quotation rings in our ears from *Selected Messages, Book 1*, page 121: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. ... A revival may be expected only in answer to prayer." *Evangelism*, page 701, assures us today that "the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and heaven is waiting to bestow it."

God will provide the power to live and proclaim the powerful Advent message. As the devil

seeks to neutralize Seventh-day Adventists, don't just stand by but through the power of the Holy Spirit, stand up for God's truth! Bear God's message boldly. The Lord wants the distinctive truths of the Seventh-day Adventist message to be proclaimed.

Stay away from anything that will undermine our message or cloud our distinctive beliefs. Don't be tempted by the devil to blend in with the crowd or be "politically correct." Don't proclaim a "generic" Christianity or a "cheap-grace Christ" which does not point to the distinctive biblical truths to be declared worldwide — the very reason for which the Seventh-day Adventist Church was organized.

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, page 470, declares most emphatically: "The message we have to bear is not a message that men need cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. ... We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and made us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God."

The Almighty has declared that we face a wily foe and only through relying on His Word may we have any strength or protection.

Ephesians 6:10-13 says: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Speaking about the battle against the devil, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 119, tells us, "The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend."

These Spirit of Prophecy statements help summarize the declaration of Revelation 18:1-4, and explain our responsibility as His remnant people. According to Bible prophecy, we are God's prophetic movement proclaiming God's prophetic message on God's prophetic mission. God has been waiting for us to experience the final revival that will enable Him to give us the latter rain. He has been waiting for the gospel commission to be completed and has been wanting to return for a long time.

The Desire of Ages, page 633, tells us that "by giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God."

Devil Loses, God Wins!

Brothers and sisters, Jesus is coming soon! As we near that wonderful day of Jesus' return, the devil's attempts to neutralize God's Word will be completely defeated by God's power and His everlasting biblical message of love and truth. The devil loses; God wins! This is the ultimate

message of the Great Controversy theme and it is our great privilege to allow God to use us in this last great spiritual effort to bring the truth of Jesus to every human being on the planet — to “reach the world” through God’s incredible power.

If you have any doubt as to God’s overriding power and ultimate triumph in the fight against the devil, read the last three chapters of Revelation revealing God’s incredible victory. Read the last three chapters of “The Story of Redemption.” Those chapters titled, “The Coronation of Christ,” “The Second Death,” and “The New Earth” will give you incredible comfort and assurance.

Our only future hope is in our personal connection with Christ. Our hope as God’s people, your hope and my hope, is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.

Are you willing to submit today to God’s power in your life, to bring about revival and reformation, to protect you from the roaring lion and his attempts to neutralize God’s remnant movement? As a Seventh-day Adventist leader on the brink of eternity, are you willing to empty your heart of self and allow Christ His rightful place? Heaven is depending on our allegiance and submission to our crucified, risen and soon-coming Savior, Jesus Christ. “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.”

Now let me ask each of you: Are you willing to allow Christ to fully control you now and in the exciting future God has prepared for His remnant church? If so, would you stand with me as we sing that marvelous testimony in Hymn No. 522 that our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness and that when darkness seems to veil His face, I rest on His unchanging grace? What a powerful testimony to the One who has called us to submit to Him and see His final victory fulfilled in the proclamation of the three angels’ message!