

“3AM” MINISTRIES



THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD

“3AM” MINISTRIES - UGANDA

threeministries@gmail.com |

A Compilation of our Wednesday Bible studies

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD

EXODUS 20:4-6

Table of Contents

The Second commandment	3
What is a graven image?	4
Paul's message about the nature of graven images.	6
Moses' message about the nature of graven images.	7
Further study on the second commandment: The forms of images...	10
Physical idolatry-worshipping visible images.	11
Invisible idols or intangible images.	12
The image made by Nebuchadnezzar	13
The Image of the beast.	17
Formation of the image of the beast.	19
What does the image of the beast mean unto us?	20
More cherished idols.	21
Idolatry in professed churches.	21
How do people worship the sun today?	24
The blasphemous claims of the papacy.	25
Idolatry in conference church systems.....	26
Further study on the second commandment:	29
Why is God a jealous God?	29
Visiting iniquity of fathers upon children.....	32
What is the glory of God?	32
Further study on the second commandment: Exodus 20:6.....	34
What is mercy?.....	34
To whom does God show mercy?	36
God's mercy towards the sinner.....	37
When does God's mercy End?	38

Wednesday, November 1, 2017

The Second commandment. Exodus 20:4-7

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

“...Nothing should be permitted to so hold the affections that God is thrust out of the mind. The second commandment will be easily disobeyed if the first is not kept...” {ST, July 2, 1894 par. 8}

Thus there is a relationship between the first and the second commandments. Failure to keep the first commandment will make it so easy to break the second one.

For in the first commandment, we are forbidden to worship creatures. Nothing created should be given the glory that is worthy of God. But Satan has blinded men that he has made them to turn the glory of God to creatures. Warning the Children of Israel about this, God said, “...Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.(Deuteronomy 4:19)

Nature is Not God, but Testifies of the glory of God.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1)

Nature is not God nor ever was God...It but bears a testimony of God's power, as His created works. There is a personal God, the Father; there is a personal Christ, the Son. . . . {3MR 347.4}

Nature declares the glory of God. The psalmist says: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3{3MR 348.1}

Some may suppose that these grand things in the natural world are God. But they are not God. They but show forth His glory. The ancient philosophers prided themselves upon their superior knowledge. But let us read the inspired apostle's word about the matter.

“Professing themselves(ancient philosophers) to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore.” {3MR 348.2} **Romans 1:20-23**

Some people go ahead to form images in the likeness of things which are in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth and bow down before to them. For these images are manmade. They are called graven images or idols. *The act of worshipping them is called idolatry.* In the second commandment, we are forbidden from making and worshipping idols/graven images.

What is a graven image?

The Bible itself will answer this question. it says;

“Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen(Deuteronomy 27:15)

To get the meaning of a graven image, we are going to use the proof text method in which the various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, etc., are seen to either be explained in their immediate connected words, or the terms in which they were expressed are found

defined in other scriptures; and when thus explained can be literally understood. For this reason, “ ..precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:”(Isaiah 28:10, 13)

Following this rule of reading the Bible, we see that from Deuteronomy 27:15, a graven image or molten image is the work of the hands of the craftsman i.e. a graven image is manmade and is put in a secret place. For what? To be worshipped as a god. The very first description of a graven image in Deuteronomy 27:15 is *that it is an abomination of unto Lord.*

Comparing this scripture (Deuteronomy 27:15) with other scriptures to get the full meaning of the term graven image, we read still in the Bible that:

“For the customs of the people are vain: **for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go.** ...Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. Jeremiah 10:3-5, 14-16

Some graven images can be decked with precious stones. More truth about them from the above scriptures is that they move not, speak not, breath not and that they are false gods. some are engraved from wood.

In Deuteronomy 4:16-18, God says,

“Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, The likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:

This tells us that graven images/idols are made in the likeness of given creatures and those who worship them think that in so doing, they are

worshipping the creator(God). In some denominations or fallen religious systems, people have broken the second commandment by making and worshipping images in the likeness of certain dead people whom they term as saints.

The devil has blinded these religious systems to always pray to these images which move not, speak not and breathe not. This is a strong delusion which with no double will lead them to destruction if they repent not.

Paul's message about the nature of graven images.

Now while Paul waited for them (Silas and Timotheus) at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry...Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. **Acts 17: 16, 22, 23**

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;...**For in Him we live, and move, and have our being**; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. **Acts 17:24, 25, 28**

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, **we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.** **Acts 17:29**

Whom do you liken to the creator?

For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? Psalm 89:6

God answers and says, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. (Isaiah 42:8) God emphasizes this and says, "

For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? **and I will not give my glory unto another.** Isaiah 48:11”

With hand outstretched toward the temple crowded with idols, Paul poured out the burden of his soul, and exposed the fallacies of the religion of the Athenians.... Pointing to their statuary and idols, he declared that God could not be likened to forms of man's devising. **These graven images could not, in the faintest sense, represent the glory of Jehovah. He reminded them that these images had no life, but were controlled by human power, moving only when the hands of men moved them; and therefore those who worshiped them were in every way superior to that which they worshiped.** {AA 237.2}

Paul drew the minds of his idolatrous hearers beyond the limits of their false religion to a true view of the Deity, whom they had styled the "Unknown God." This Being, whom he now declared unto them, was independent of man, needing nothing from human hands to add to His power and glory. {AA 237.3} what God do you serve? Is he the creator?

Does he speak? What about walking? Ok, does he breathe? These may not be important, you can finally answer this question, does he save?

Moses' message about the nature of graven images.

When Moses came down from mount Sinai and found the Israelites worshipping a golden image of a calf, he threw down the tables of stone, in utter discouragement and wrath because of Israel's great sin before God.

He afterward took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strowed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

The act of Moses in burning the calf and grinding it to powder, and making them drink of it, was to show them the utter worthlessness of

the god which they had been worshipping--that their god had no power at all. Men could burn it in the fire, grind it to powder and drink it, without receiving any injury therefrom. He asked them how, then, they could expect such a god to save them, or to do them any good, or any evil. Then he rehearsed to them the exhibitions which they had witnessed of the unlimited power, glory, and majesty, of the living God. {1SP 248.1}

Let us read Isaiah 45:20

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Isaiah 45:20

As we learnt from the first commandment, the lord our God is both a creator a creator and a Saviour and He declares unto us that “Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: **for there is no saviour beside me. (Hosea 13:4)**

As we end this study, **we should note that God cannot be likened to forms of man's devising. For it is idolatry and transgression of God's Law to render the glory of God and His worship to molten/graven images.** Graven images move not, speak not, are falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens and in them, there is no salvation. Our salvation is only and only in Christ.

The bible says that, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 what have you trusted for your salvation my brother and sister? **Look to Jesus.**

Lay before Him your sins and He is faithful and just to forgive you. For this cause He left the heavenly glory to come and die that if you believe in His atoning sacrifice for you, thou shalt perish but have eternal life. Will you deny this precious sacrifice He made for you?

Jesus Christ calls you not tomorrow but now and with His face full of love for you He says, “Come now, and let us reason together.” He does not call the righteous but the sinner and continues to say, “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (Isaiah 1:18-20)

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? **And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 2 Corinthians 6:15-16**

Wednesday Bible Study November 8, 2017

Further study on the second commandment: The forms of images.



Before we start today's study, here is an important message for you. Let us read it. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. **But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.** Psalm 1:1-2

A blessing is pronounced to anyone who delights in and meditates upon the law of God day and night. What occupies your mind day and night? Is it the law of God? Do you know what the law of God is? Let us continue with our series of bible study. We are still handling the second commandment.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

As earlier stated, graven images are manmade and a wide class of people do not know to what extend the second commandment goes. **An idol/image can be tangible or intangible** as we going to illustrate this point below. Worshiping any form is still idolatry and transgression of the law of God. Many professed Christians, because they do not bow down before a physical image/idol, they may not recognize how they

do break the second commandment. We are going to explore how idolatry can be cherished even among those who claim to be God's people.

Physical idolatry-worshipping visible images.

Some Examples of the tangible graven images.

Examples	Bible Reference
The golden calf made by Aaron	Exodus 32:1-4
The image of baal	2 kings 10:26
The calves at Bethel and Dan made by Jeroboam	1 kings 12:25-30
The image in the plain of Dura made by Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel 3:1-3
Image of Tamuz	Ezekiel 8:13, 7

Today physical idolatry is seen in some religious systems who mold images of wood, stone or any other material in the likeness of some dead people whom they term as saints.

They place these images in small buildings around their worshipping places where every member of that religious system has to first bow before them. My brother/sister, you are called to stop that image worship. Give glory only to God the creator and change not the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Change not the truth of God into a lie, and worship not and serve not the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever.

God hath highly exalted Jesus Christ, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.(see Philippians 2:9-11)

Invisible idols or intangible images.

What form of idolatry is portrayed here? Oh how few recognize such idol worship! Let us find it out.

No outward shrines may be visible, there may be no image for the eye to rest upon, yet we may be practicing idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. {5T 173.4}

Idolaters are condemned by the word of God. Their folly consists in trusting in self for salvation, in bowing down to the works of their own hands. God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great, but who fail to discern the binding claims of his law. {RH, March 15, 1906 par. 19}

Keeping False doctrines is idolatry.

In keeping the true doctrines of God, we do obey and worship Him in truth. Those who do not keep God's word but obey human traditions are hewing themselves cherished idols of doctrines and thereby do not worship God. The creator then declares that "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men..Mark 7:7-8" Cherishing false doctrines leads to vain worship.

In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Law-giver. It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone. Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The god of many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists--the god of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions--is little better than Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia. {GC 583.1}

In this study, we shall look at one case example of an idol doctrine called Sunday sacredness which is also referred to as an the idol Sabbath- The mark of the beast.

The men who are denying the Sabbath instituted by God Himself, who are trampling upon the commandments of God, are the devil's spies who seek to find accusation against those who will not reverence a man-made institution and worship an idol sabbath.... {3SG 292.1}...The Christian world are honoring a false Sabbath, and we are to show them its true character and foundation. We must make it plain to them that they are honoring a man-made institution in place of that which God himself has sanctified. Every rival to God must be made to appear as an idol. Solemn is our responsibility. {RH, January 31, 1893 par. 9}

The image made by Nebuchadnezzar is related to the mark of the beast in these last days.

Daniel 3:1-3 and Revelation 13:16-17



**THE SABBATH WILL
BE**

THE GREATEST ISSUE

Will you also bow down to the papacy?

"Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits; he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. He then made a decree that upon hearing all manner of musical instruments sound, all people must bow down and worship the graven image. This phenomenon has an application in these last days.

The image that was set at Dura by king Nebuchadnezzar does not apply to the image of the Beast but rather it applies to the mark of the beast that will be enforced. Small and great, rich and poor, free and bond shall be compelled to receive a mark in their forehead or right hand.

An idol Sabbath has been set up, as the golden image was set up in the plains of Dura. And as Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, issued a decree that all who would not bow down and worship this image should be killed, so a proclamation will be made that all who will not reverence the Sunday institution will be punished with imprisonment and death. Thus the Sabbath of the Lord is trampled underfoot. But the Lord has declared, "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness which they have prescribed" [Isaiah 10:1]. [Zephaniah 1:14-18; 2:1-3, quoted.] {14MR 91.3}

History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon.

All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation. {ST, May 6, 1897 par. 14}

The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. In a limited degree, it has already gone forth. In several places the civil power is speaking with the voice of a dragon, just as the heathen king spoke to the Hebrew captives. {ST, May 6, 1897 par. 15}

Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now.

What is the mark of the beast/Papacy?

The change of the Sabbath is the sign or mark of the authority of the Romish church. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false sabbath in the place of the true, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. The mark of the beast is the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God's appointment. {Ev 234.1}

Has anyone received the mark of the beast? If not, when does one receive it?

Sunday keeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. {FLB 286.6}

And it is not until the issue is . . . plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." {FLB 286.7}

If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false Sabbath, refusing to keep holy the Sabbath which God calls "My holy day," you receive the mark of the beast.

When does this take place?--When you obey the decree that commands you to cease from labor on Sunday and worship God, while you know

that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working-day, you consent to receive the mark of the beast, and refuse the seal of God. If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord. {RH, July 13, 1897 par. 6}

When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome, and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshiping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome,--"the mark of the beast." **And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast."**--The Great Controversy, p. 449. (1888) {Ev 233.4}

In the last conflict in the great controversy between good and evil, God has called us to give the final warning to the world. The Christian world are honoring a false Sabbath, and we are to show them its true character and foundation. We must make it plain to them that they are honoring a man-made institution in place of that which God himself has sanctified.

Every rival to God must be made to appear as an idol. Solemn is our responsibility. {RH, January 31, 1893 par. 9} **we are to warn people from worshiping an idol Sabbath. Read Revelation 14:9-12**

All false worship is spiritual adultery. The second precept, which forbids false worship, is also a command to worship God, and Him only serve. The Lord is a jealous God. He will not Be trifled with. He has spoken concerning the manner in which He should be worshiped. He has a hatred of idolatry; for its influence is corrupting. It debases the mind, and leads to sensuality and all kinds of sin (MS 126, 1901). {1BC 1106.3}

Other images

The Image of the beast.

But what is the "image to the beast"? And how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast (U.S.A) and is an image to the beast. It is also called an image of the beast. Then to learn what the image is like and how it is to be formed we must study the characteristics of the beast itself--the papacy. {GC 443.1}

An image using an optical knowledge is a representation of a real object, it is a picture. It is a copy of something or somebody as seen in a mirror. A mirror reflects the image of a person standing before it. An image has a likeness of the real object. We are going to use this ideology to understand what the image of the beast is. To understand what the image of the beast is, we must first know how the beast itself is.

How was the beast/papacy formed and How will U.S.A form of the image the beast?

Revelation 13:14-15

When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the consciences of the people, **she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy,** a church that controlled the power of the state and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of "heresy."

In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, **the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state** will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends. {GC 443.2}

It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy--the beast. Said Paul:

"There" shall "come a falling away, . . . and that man of sin be revealed." 2 Thessalonians 2:3. So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast. {GC 443.4}

Therefore, for the image of the beast/papacy to be formed, there will again be apostasy in the church. Which church? It is not the Catholic Church to fall from the truth again because it has been in apostasy/fallen state for many centuries.

The church that is going to fall is the one that has been professing to hold the Bible truth- the one that has been leading in Protestantism. The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the first centuries. "In the last days perilous times shall come.

Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. Therefore a falling away must occur before the formation of the image of the beast.

Apostate protestant churches will first unite.



The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon common points of doctrine. To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed--however important they might be from a Bible standpoint--must necessarily be waived. {GC 444.2}

The union of apostate protestant churches is based on such points of doctrine as are held by them in common. “Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. ...{GC 588.1}”

On October 31, 2017 apostate protestant churches went back and joined themselves to Catholicism. This union of protestant churches with the catholic church is not the image of the beast but it is a fulfillment of bible prophecy. For it was foretold according to the spirit of prophecy that “....The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country(U.S.A) will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience....{GC 588.1}” The three fold union is a confederacy between apostate protestant churches, the catholic church and spiritualism. (Revelation 16:13-14)

Formation of the image of the beast.

Already preparations are advancing, and movements are in progress, which will result in making an image to the beast. Events will be brought about in the earth's history that will fulfill the predictions of prophecy for these last days (RH April 23, 1889). {7BC 976.1}

When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution; when the state shall use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church--then will Protestant America have formed an image to the papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin (ST March 22, 1910). {7BC 976.4}

When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, **shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy**, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result. {GC 445.1}

The "image to the beast" represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. . . . {FLB 286.4}

The union of church and state



What does the image of the beast mean unto us?

This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God.

Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast (Letter 11, 1890). {7BC 976.3}

The image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided.... {Mar 164.2}

More cherished idols.

- Fashion. {Read RH, March 31, 1891 par. 7}
- Pride {2SAT 185.1}
- Covetousness { PP 496.4,RH, July 11, 1899 par. 15 and RH, November 14, 1882 par. 17}
- Witchcraft {DD 20.3 and PP 685.}
- Flattery { VSS 152.2 and 12MR 338.1}
- Self trust/confidence {1BC 1105.7}
- Selfishness {RH, December 10, 1901 par. 3 and ST, June 25, 1894 par. 3}

Idolatry in professed churches.

In the sixth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the Lord revealed to Ezekiel in vision some of the abominations that were being practiced in Jerusalem, and within the gate of the Lord's house, and even in the inner court....{PK 448.2}

“The bible says: “And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. Ezekiel 8:1”

Read carefully, because these are being repeated in today’s religious systems.

“And He put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the

inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. Ezekiel 8:3”

Note that Jerusalem was the place of worship.

“And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain. Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. Ezekiel 8:4-5”

“He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? *Even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.* Ezekiel 8:6”

“And He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. *And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.* Ezekiel 8:7-9”

“*So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about.* Ezekiel 8:10”

Ministers were only offering sacrifices to idols.

Let us continue reading.

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

“Then said He unto me, Son of man, *hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.* Ezekiel 8:12”

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

When you go to most religious systems, this is only what you find. Pastors and Elders and the entire congregation have just a form of worship but deny the power thereof.

God looks with a grieved heart at such pastors, Elders and the flock that obeys its leaders rather than Himself and pronounces these same words, "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. **For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men...**ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

Let us continue reading. Greater abominations are ahead.

*"He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and, **behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.** Ezekiel 8:13-14"*

There were still "greater abominations" for the prophet to behold.

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

"And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; **and they worshipped the sun toward the east.**

How do people worship the sun today?

...in changing the fourth precept of God's law, the papal power has thought itself able to exalt itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. This was the very work that the prophecy foretold would be done by this power. In trampling upon the fourth commandment, the first commandment is broken. Their idolatry is similar to that of Israel's when she substituted a god which her own hands had made, for the living and true God, and followed after the example of Egypt; for when the Catholics substitute a sabbath of their own making for that which God commanded, they too worship that which their own hands have made, and follow the example of the heathen who worshiped the sun on the first day of the week. {ST, November 19, 1894 par. 1}

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

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

Through Jeremiah the Lord had declared of the wicked men who presumptuously dared to stand before the people in His name: "Both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in My house have I found their wickedness." Jeremiah 23:11.

There are idols cherished in our families and in our churches today which have the same influence upon us as did the golden calf upon the Israelites. Will the people search themselves? ...Will they see what idols they are cherishing?..This idolatry on the part of ancient Israel was an offense to God; but are there not idols just as offensive

cherished in our families and in our churches today--idols which have the same influence upon us as did the golden calf upon the Israelites? . . ." {7BC 941.10-11}

The blasphemous claims of the papacy.

The Papacy, claiming to be the vicegerent of the Son of God, is in truth the vicegerent of another power. She points to the Sunday institution as the sign of her authority; but in the change of the law and time of God, she is only doing that which Satan tried to do in heaven,--prove the law of God faulty, and the Lawgiver fallible....{ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

...In boasting of her power above the law of God, she is but echoing the sentiments of the great deceiver. God instituted the Sabbath as a sign of His authority and power, and the Papacy, acting for the prince of evil, points to the Sunday as a sign of her power and jurisdiction...{ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

...**The day of the sun, Sunday**, was a day devoted to the most vile of the heathen worship, for it was celebrated in connection with sun-worship. This Sunday-sabbath has been accepted by many who know it to be the foundling of heathenism, which has been cherished and nourished by the Church of Rome, and by her clothed in the garments of sanctity...{ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

...But while many are now aware of its origin, *there are true Christians in every church who do not know the origin of the Sunday-sabbath, and believe that they are keeping the day which God sanctified and blest*. This is true of worshipers even in the Catholic Church; and while this ignorance and integrity remain, God accepts of their sincerity; but when light shall fall upon their pathway, God requires them to come into harmony with his law, and to observe the Sabbath of His appointing...{ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

The time has come when the glory of the Lord is to fill the earth, and when the whole earth shall be lightened with His glory. The cry is sounding to the honest in heart to "come out from among them, and be

ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."{ST, November 19, 1894 par. 5}

Idolatry in conference church systems.

It is not only the papacy that practices idolatry. Concerning the General Conference church system, the Messenger of the Lord Ellen G. White says:

“Who can truthfully say: "Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world"? *I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath.* Then He said to me: "**Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character?** 'How is the faithful city become an harlot!' My Father's house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking." {8T 250.2}

It is almost the same question of astonishment. With Prophet Ezekiel, God asked, “Hast thou seen this, O son of man? *Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here?* And with the Lord’s messenger Ellen G. White concerning the conference churches, the instructor asked, “**Can you not see how they(conference churches) have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character?** 'How is the faithful city become an harlot!' by this time, the General conference had been corrupted and this is why it was asked, “'How is the faithful city(General conference structure) become an harlot!' **For details about this, kindly read our book entitled “THE SECOND ANGEL’S MESSAGE” pages 13-36**

“**The religion of Jesus is endangered. It is being mingled with worldliness.** Worldly policy is taking the place of the true piety and wisdom that comes from above, and God will remove His prospering

hand from the conference. Shall the Ark of the Covenant be removed from this people? Shall idols be smuggled in?

Shall false principles and false precepts be brought into the sanctuary? Shall antichrist be respected? Shall the true doctrines and principles given us by God, which have made us what we are, be ignored? Shall God's instrumentality, the publishing house, become a mere political, worldly institution? This is directly where the enemy, through blinded, unconsecrated men, is leading us. {CW 95.3}

“The church at Battle Creek [General Conference] might have stood free from idolatry, and her faithfulness would have been an example to other churches. **But she is more willing to depart from God's commandments than to renounce the friendship of the world.** She is joined to the idols which she has chosen; and because temporal prosperity and the favor of a wicked world are hers, she believes herself to be rich toward God. This will prove to many a fatal delusion. **Her divine character and spiritual strength have departed from her.** {5T 190.4}

The General conference of the S.D.As like other fallen churches might have stood free from idolatry but She is joined to the idols which she has chosen. Her doctrines have been mixed with errors thus the truth(the three Angels' Messages) that make us seventh Day Adventists have been sacrificed and because of this, **her divine character and spiritual strength have departed from her.** Idols have been smuggled in this system. **False principles and false precepts have been brought in.** The antichrist has been respected by the conference. For she says the papacy has changed. (**visit Adventist Today Magazine January 4, 2010** Letting the catholic church off hook) True doctrines and principles given us by God, which have made us what we are, have been ignored.

“I counsel this church says God through the spirit of prophecy “to give heed to the Saviour's admonition: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come

unto thee quickly, **and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 5T 190.5**" Since she has refused to repent but is more willing to depart from God's commandments than to renounce the friendship of the world, **God has thus said, "let the General conference alone, she is joined to her idols" His prospering hand has been removed from the conference. For details about this, Read our book entitled, **THE SECOND ANGEL'S MESSAGE**" Page 31**

As we come to the close of this study, examine yourself whether there is an idol you do worship. It may not be a physical one. What is it that you are cherishing in your heart? Before it is too late and it is pronounced to you, "let him/her alone, for he/she joined to his/her Idols," let loose such idolatry. The bible says, "Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Romans 2:22"

Wednesday Bible Study November 22, 2017

Further study on the second commandment:

“For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God”

Why is God a jealous God?

As we start today’s study, we need to remember that the second commandment warns us of idolatry. In 1 Corinthians 10:7, the Bible tells that “**Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them;** as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Notice what the Israelites did as they worshipped the golden calf. Read Exodus 32:1-7, 17, 19, 25

And when Aaron saw it(golden calf), he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; **and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.**



And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: **but the noise of them that sing do I hear.** And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing.

All worship that involves a bedlam of noise and dancing is not of God. It is an idolatrous form of worship. God is worshipped in meekness not with noise and scratching the walls.

“As Moses beheld the children of Israel shouting and dancing in an excited manner, in imitation of the idolatrous feasts and idol-worshippers of Egypt, so unlike the reverential worship of God, he was overwhelmed.....{1SP 247.2}”

The use of musical instruments to create a bedlam of noise, shocks the senses and perverts the worship.--The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls.

A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working.--2SM 36. {PaM 178.3}

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

After committing such a great sin by the Israelites, Moses went and pleaded to God lest God .

After pleading for the Israelites, Moses then asked God to confirm to Him that indeed He had favoured them. “Now therefore (said Moses), I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. Exodus 33:13”

And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. Exodus 33:17-19

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. Exodus 34:6-7

God declared to Moses His name/character in Exodus 34:6-7. When Moses saw the glory of God, he acknowledged that this glory cannot be shared with anything else. He then did what the children of Israel and Aaron had failed to do. The bible says, “And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. Exodus 34:8”

God then commanded them to take heed to themselves, lest they make a covenant the inhabitants of the land whither they went. But that they shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:

Let us take on the study now. Why is God a jealous God?

Apostle Paul in his second letter to the Corinthian church writes, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: **for I have espoused you to one husband,** that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2

"I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." The close and sacred relation of God to His people is represented under the figure of marriage. Idolatry being spiritual adultery, the displeasure of God against it is fitly called jealousy. {PP 306.2}

For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Exodus 34:14

I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Isaiah 42:8

For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. Isaiah 48:11

Visiting iniquity of fathers upon children.

"Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me." It is inevitable that children should suffer from the consequences of parental wrongdoing, *but they are not punished for the parents' guilt, except as they participate in their sins*. It is usually the case, however, that children walk in the steps of their parents. By inheritance and example the sons become partakers of the father's sin. Wrong tendencies, perverted appetites, and debased morals, as well as physical disease and degeneracy, are transmitted as a legacy from father to son, to the third and fourth generation. This fearful truth should have a solemn power to restrain men from following a course of sin. {PP 306.3}

What is the glory of God?

... Moses prayed, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." *And the Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."* "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed. The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." **The glory of God is his character, and it is manifested to us in Christ.** Therefore it is by beholding Christ, by contemplating his character, by learning His lessons, by obeying His words, that we become changed

into his likeness. As we are enlightened by his Spirit, we see no virtue or merit in ourselves. We realize there is naught in us but deformity.

But the glory of the Redeemer, manifested in His atoning sacrifice, in His justifying righteousness, in His fullness of grace, whereby we not only obtain pardon but receive sanctification, fills the whole soul with love and adoration, and in contemplating the goodness, mercy, and love of God, we become transformed in character.

Jesus said, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." On him who receives Christ, the glory of the Lord has risen, the Sun of Righteousness has shined, and, rising from his low and worldly state, the believer reflects the light of Christ's glory. As he continually looks to Jesus and contemplates his beauty, he is more and more transformed into the child of light. {SSW, July 1, 1894 par. 5}

Wednesday Bible Study November 30, 2017

Further study on the second commandment: Exodus 20:6

“And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

We have come to the last section of the second commandment. “showing mercy!” what is it? “Of them that love me, and keep my commandments!” who are they? “To keep God’s commandments!” how is done? These three questions are the basis of today’s study.

What is mercy?

Mercy is that benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves; the disposition that tempers justice, **and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant...**It implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity or compassion, and clemency, but exercised only towards offenders. Mercy is a distinguishing attribute of the Supreme Being. (Webster Dictionary)

It implies that mercy is exercised when there is an offender and the offended. Let us look at the Biblical perspective of mercy.

Genesis 39:21

But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

From the above scripture, we note that to show mercy is synonymous to giving favour. In Deuteronomy 13:17 is presented another word to mean mercy. Let us read it:

“And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers;”

Basing on this, we are going to study how merciful or compassionate our God is.

Being merciful is also God's name.

Last week, we saw in Exodus 20:5(part of the second commandment) that God is a jealous God. For His glory cannot be shared with another. Christ is our husband and we are espoused unto Him alone. Spiritual adultery provokes God to anger. This did not mark the end of God's name. Here is revealed another name/character of God.

The Lord of heaven and earth revealed His glory to Moses, when he offered his prayer to Jehovah in behalf of idolatrous Israel, and pleaded, "Show me thy glory." And the Lord said: "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. . . . And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock." "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, **and proclaimed the name of the Lord.** And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, **The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious,** long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock when the glory of the Lord was revealed to him, and it is when we are hidden in Christ that we obtain some view of the majesty and love of God. {ST, April 25, 1892 par. 2}

... keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." It grieves the heart of God, as our Father, to let justice smite. He "suffereth long and is kind." While men are hard-hearted, condemnatory, and willing to abandon the one who needs help that his soul may be saved from death, the Father, with heart filled with love for the sinner, opens his arms, and says, "Child, come back to me." If the Lord were not full of mercy and abundant in goodness, we should not be the subjects of his grace

and love today. He pardons abundantly, He entreats the sinner to confess his sin, to come to him and accept forgiveness... {PH089 15.3}

To whom does God show mercy?

Read Exodus 20:6 and Exodus 32:18-19

When some people read Exodus 20:6, they imagine that God's mercy is given to those who keep His commandments. God's mercy is not given because of any good works done by man. For it is a free gift from God. None need not to do anything to merit him before God so that He can receive God's mercy.

Mercy, rich and free, is presented in the gift of Christ's righteousness. Those who scorn this precious gift, who despise and reject the Saviour, who refuse the invitation, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me" (Isaiah 27:5), reject the offer of the attributes of a character which will constitute them sons and daughters of God. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God... {12MR 143.2}

God knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, and he understood the motives that prompted the request of His faithful servant. He answered Moses, saying: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.... {RH, May 11, 1897 par. 6}

The prayer of Moses was heard and answered, **and we also may present our earnest petitions to God, and receive of his grace and power.** Jesus has said: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The promises of God are not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ. If we would importune God, laying before him our needs in simplicity, with unfaltering confidence, in the name of Christ, we should receive of the abundance of the blessing of God.

Tell the Lord exactly what you want in the way of spiritual blessings; and you need not fear to lay before him your temporal needs and perplexities. He has said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." He has said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." {ST, April 25, 1892 par. 3}

God's mercy towards the sinner

The penalty for the least transgression of that law is death, and but for Christ, the sinner's Advocate, it would be summarily visited on every offender. Justice and mercy are blended. Christ and the law stand side by side. The law convicts the transgressor, and Christ pleads in the sinner's behalf. TDG 246.2

When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God. We see a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance that threatened only misery and despair, in the light reflected from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent, believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom. AA 333.2

Look at the cross of Calvary. It is a standing pledge of the boundless love, the measureless mercy, of the heavenly Father. O that all might repent and do their first works. When the churches do this, they will love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not vex Ephraim.

Divisions will then be healed, the harsh sounds of strife will no more be heard in the borders of Israel.... TDG 88.2

When does God's mercy End?

The Lord will not be trifled with. Those who neglect His mercies and blessings in this day of opportunities will bring impenetrable darkness upon themselves and will be candidates for the wrath of God. Sodom and Gomorrah were visited with the curse of the Almighty for their sins and iniquities. **There are those in our day who have equally abused the mercies of God and slighted His warnings.** It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those who bear the name of Christ, yet dishonor Him by their unconsecrated lives. This class are laying up for themselves a fearful retribution when God in His wrath shall visit them with His judgments. {4T 191.2}

There was a shut door in Noah's time. There was a shut door to the unbelievers in the destruction of Sodom, but an open door to Lot. There was a shut door to the inhabitants of Tyrus, a shut door to the inhabitants of Jerusalem ...who disbelieved, but an open door to the humble, the believing, those who obeyed God. Thus it will be at the end of time. - Manuscript 17, August 14, 1885, "Shipboard Meditations." TDG 235.5

There are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the gospel invitation calling to repentance, and heed not, are more guilty than the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. The fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition, not merely to those guilty of outbreaking sin, but to all who are trifling with Heaven - sent light and privileges. EP 103.3

The Saviour watches for a response to His offers of love and forgiveness with more tender compassion than that which moves the heart of an earthly parent to forgive a wayward son. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." Malachi 3:7. **But if one persistently refuses that tender love, he will at last be left in darkness.**

The heart that has long slighted God's mercy becomes hardened in sin, no longer susceptible to the influence of the grace of God. It will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the cities of the plain than for those who have known the love of Christ and yet have turned away to the pleasure of sin. **In the books of heaven there is a record kept of the impieties of nations, of families, of individuals. Calls to repentance, offers of pardon may be given; yet a time will come when the account will be full.** The soul's decision has been made. By his own choice, man's destiny has been fixed. Then the signal will be given for judgment to be executed. EP 103.4

Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message to Lot, "Escape for thy life." The same voice of warning was heard before the destruction of Jerusalem: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." Luke 21:20, 21. They must not tarry but must escape. EP 105.1

There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in the last days. Again the voice of God is heard, bidding His people separate from the prevailing iniquity. EP 105.2

What warning is given us in these last.

Revelation 14:6-12

Sinners who have not had the light and privileges that Seventh-day Adventists have enjoyed will, in their ignorance, be in a more favorable position before God than those who have been unfaithful while in close connection with His work and professing to love and serve Him. The tears of Christ upon the mount came from an anguished, breaking heart because of His unrequited love and the ingratitude of His chosen people. He had labored untiringly to save them from the fate that they seemed determined to bring upon themselves, but they refused His mercy and knew not the time of their visitation. Their day of privilege

was ending, yet they were so blinded by sin that they knew it not. {4T 191.3}

God's final judgement for sinners will not be mixed with mercy. The cup of His indignation shall be without mixture. He had offered mercy to pardon their sins but they had rejected the free gift.

The whole world stands condemned before the great moral standard of righteousness. In the great day of judgment every soul that has lived on the earth will receive sentence in accordance as to whether his deeds have been good or evil in the light of the law of God. Every mouth will be stopped as the cross with its dying Victim shall be presented, and its real bearing shall be seen by every mind that has been sin blinded and corrupted. Sinners will stand condemned before the cross, with its mysterious Victim bowing beneath the infinite burden of human transgression. How quickly will be swept away every subterfuge, every lying excuse! Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. They will then understand that they have chosen Barabbas instead of Christ, the Prince of Peace. {6BC 1069.3}

The mystery of the incarnation and the crucifixion will be plainly discerned; for it will be presented before the mind's eye, and every condemned soul will read what has been the character of his rejection of truth. All will understand that they have erred from the truth by receiving the misinterpretations and bewitching lies of Satan instead of "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." They read the announcement, "Thou, O man, hast chosen to stand under the banner of the great rebel, Satan, and in so doing thou hast destroyed thyself." Whatever may have been the endowment of talent, whatever may have been the supposed wisdom, the rejecter of truth has then no ability to turn unto God. The door is shut, as was the door of the ark in Noah's day. {6BC 1069.4}

The great men of earth will then understand that they have surrendered mind and heart to ensnaring philosophy which pleased the carnal heart.

Hope and grace and every inducement had been held out by One who loved them, and gave His life for them, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, but they refused the love of God. Their lofty opinions, their human reasonings, were extolled; they declared themselves sufficient in themselves to understand divine mysteries, and they thought their own powers of discrimination were strong enough to discern truth for themselves. They fell an easy prey to Satan's subtlety, for he presented before them specious errors in human philosophy, which has an infatuation for human minds.

They turned from the Source of all wisdom, and worshiped intellect. The message and the messengers of God were criticized and discarded as beneath their human, lofty ideas. **The invitations of mercy were made a jest, and they denied the divinity of Jesus Christ and derided the idea of His pre-existence before He assumed human nature.** But the tattered shreds of human reasoning will be found to be only as ropes of sand in the great day of God (ST March 7, 1895). {6BC 1069.5}

The Wicked who neglect God's mercy Will Feel Agony of Cross.

Those who reject the mercy so freely proffered, will yet be made to know the worth of that which they have despised. They will feel the agony which Christ endured upon the cross to purchase redemption for all who would receive it. And they will then realize what they have lost--eternal life and the immortal inheritance (RH Sept. 4, 1883). {6BC 1069.6}

When sinners are compelled to look upon Him who clothed His divinity with humanity, and who still wears this garb, their confusion is indescribable. The scales fall from their eyes, and they see that which before they would not see. They realize what they might have been had they received Christ, and improved the opportunities granted them. They see the law which they have spurned, exalted even as God's throne is exalted. They see God Himself giving reverence to His law. {6BC 1069.7}

Then those who pierced Christ will remember how they slighted His love and abused His compassion; how they chose in His stead Barabbas, a robber and murderer; how they crowned the Saviour with thorns, and caused Him to be scourged and crucified; how, in the agony of His death on the cross, they taunted Him, saying, "Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." "He saved others; himself he cannot save." They will seem to hear again His voice of entreaty. Every tone of solicitude will vibrate as distinctly in their ears as when the Saviour spoke to them. Every act of insult and mockery done to Christ will be as fresh in their memory as when the satanic deeds were done. {6BC 1070.2}

They will call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. "The wrath of the Lamb"--One who ever showed Himself full of tenderness, patience, and long-suffering, who, having given Himself up as the sacrificial offering, was led as a lamb to the slaughter, to save sinners from the doom now falling upon them because they would not allow Him to take away their guilt (RH June 18, 1901). {6BC 1070.3}

A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him concerning righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. That was his heaven - sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. But he said to the messenger of God, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God. AA 427.2

Waste No Time

I would call on all who would win heaven, to take warning. **Do not devote your precious probationary time to sewing together fig leaves to cover the nakedness which is the result of sin.** As you look into the Lord's great moral looking glass, His holy law, His standard of character, do not for a moment suppose that it can cleanse you.

There are no saving properties in the law. It cannot pardon the transgressor. The penalty must be exacted. The Lord does not save sinners by abolishing His law, the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth. **The punishment has been endured by the sinner's substitute. Not that God is cruel and merciless, and Christ so merciful that He died on Calvary's cross to abolish a law so arbitrary that it needed to be extinguished, crucified between two thieves.** The throne of God must not bear one stain of crime, one taint of sin. In the councils of heaven, before the world was created, the Father and the Son covenanted together that if man proved disloyal to God, Christ, one with the Father, would take the place of the transgressor, and suffer the penalty of justice that must fall upon him (MS 145, 1897). {6BC 1070.4}

As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God's will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory. {6BC 1070.5}

Dear Reader;

...The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: "This is My child. I reprove him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy--eternal life--because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son." Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God. {6BC 1070.6}

Will you not serve the Lord today- the one who died that you might live?

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. Joshua 24:15”

Contact us on

+256 700874248 +256 752264622 +256 704120103

+256 788041341 +256 756155980 +256 778734288

Or email us on

threeministries@gmail.com

Don't miss

Our Wednesday Bible studies

starting from

5:00pm to 7:00pm