

Sabbath School Lesson #11 – Managing in Tough Times – 11-17 March 2023

Christ would have us claim the promises in the Bible to manage in tough times. “Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me” (Psalm 50:14-15). Here are more promises: “I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely” (Hosea 14:4). “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” (Revelation 21:6). “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee” (Isaiah 43:2). “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isaiah 43:25). “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring” (Isaiah 44:3).

Sunday: Putting God First – In 2 Chronicles 20:1-22, we find that Jehoshaphat did put God first, and won the war. Today, our warfare is more complicated, in most cases it not a physical war. One of the things we war against in this materialism age is the love of money. To what extent is the love of money able to prevent us from putting God first? There is nothing that gives worldly glory so quickly, so easily, and so abundantly as money; and there is nothing that gives worldly power so quickly and so easily as does money. All this, simply because in this world Mammon is such a familiar god to mankind, and this is simply because mankind is naturally so worshipful of Mammon. And yet it is all idolatry; it is all a denial of the true God; it is a breaking of the First Commandment, which says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” For, says Jesus: “Ye cannot”, – not, Ye ought not; not, Ye should not; but, – “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” If so, in the context of putting God first, what is the danger of putting God second in our effort to get rich? Ellen White puts it this way: “The question is asked, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” It is dangerous to give time, thought, and strength to the pursuit of worldly gain, even if success follows persevering effort; for in thus doing there is danger of making God and his righteousness secondary. It is better far to be in poverty, to endure disappointment, and have our earthly hopes shattered, than to have our eternal interests imperiled. Flattering inducements may be presented to us, and we may think to obtain wealth and honor, and so set our heart and soul on worldly enterprises. But as we cannot serve God and mammon, we are led to give up the service of God” – EG White {ST June 26, 1893, par. 1}. “Let us not be determined to get rich. If we see that poverty will be our portion in abiding in the simple truth, let us abide by the truth and enter into life. Jesus said that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” The devotees of the world may smile at this statement, but it is nevertheless the counsel of eternal wisdom. Jesus has left his followers a legacy of peace. He says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” The Christian who is called into the world by his business, if he follows Christ, will bear his cross, and meet his perplexities in the Spirit of Christ. He will not make the world his God, and give brain and bone and muscle to the service of mammon. He will realize that Heaven is looking upon him, and whatever success attends him, he will give glory to God. He will realize that God knows, as man does not, that a few more years will roll by, and the treasures of earth be no more” – EG White {ST June 26, 1893, par. 3}.

Monday: Trust God, Not Your Own Resources – How do we strike the right balance between doing what we can, for instance, to be financially secure, and yet, at the same time, trusting in the Lord for all things? “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them” (Psalm 62:10); “let not the rich man glory in his riches” (Jeremiah 9:23); “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall” (Proverbs 11:28); It is “hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:24); Thus, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:6-10).

Tuesday: Time to Simplify? – The Lesson writer asks: ‘What should Seventh-day Adventist Christians do in response to difficult times?’ The same as we have done is good times, if matured in Christ to say: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20); then it should not matter and my life should not change if I knew that Jesus were coming within ten, or five, or three years.

Wednesday: Priorities – For your priority, Peter asks and answers, seeing “that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (2 Peter 3:10-14).

Thursday: When No One Can Buy or Sell – Knowing what is said in Revelation 13:11-17, are we ready to refuse the mark of the beast? Many Adventists have head knowledge of the truth, but their actions show lack of power. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:5). Take for example, the vaccine in the recent crisis, many Adventists took the vaccines to keep their jobs or to be able to travel and not because they believed vaccines to be healthy. As Sunday Law approaches, that is, “as the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition” {GC 608.2}. It is not that people will “abandon their position” at Sunday Law, but when the “storm approaches”, and Sunday Law will only reveal that the professed Adventists had already abandoned their position, for they had head knowledge without power. Many by their vaccine choices have already abandoned their position. In Babylon, Daniel and his three friends refused Babylonian version of vaccines, and they were the only ones we know of the captives who did not worship Nebuchadnezzar’s idol. Paul says these things “are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). Vaccine mandates were relatively a minor test, the mark of the beast will be a bigger test. But both minor and bigger test require divine power to pass. Trinitarian Adventists deceive themselves to think that they can get pressured by jobs and travel and get vaccinated, but when Sunday Law comes, they will refuse the mark of the beast. They will have no power to resist enormous satanic pressure, for “power belongeth unto God” (Psalm 62:11), yet they have no true God – they worship a trinity god, but God is not a trinity! The trinity is the sun-god, and the sun-god cannot give power to resist sun-day worship! The trinity doctrine removes God. In 1904, Ellen White gave this prophecy: “The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless ” {1SM 204.2}. This was fulfilled in our Seventh-day Adventist Church when formally in 1980 we adopted the belief in trinity gods, which our Adventist pioneers had rejected, and fulfilled “God being removed”. The real issue in the coming Sunday Law is worship of either the trinity sun-god or the true God who made the Sabbath. The Bible says, “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?” (Jeremiah 12:5). Vaccine mandates was the setting of the footmen, the health test in Daniel 1. Out of “ten thousand captives” (2 Kings 24:14) in Babylon, only Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah refused Babylonian vaccines. To “run with the footmen” is to decide on vaccines, and to “contend with the horses” is to decide on the mark of the beast. The “land of peace, wherein” people have trusted include our Church that have not told members that life is in the Son of God who dwells in our body temple that must not be defiled by drugs/vaccines, “land of peace” include the State system people have come to trust, and now if both the Church and the State have “wearied” people with vaccine mandates, how will such people “do in the swelling of Jordan” when much satanic strife and turmoil comes at Sunday Law?!