

Watch and Pray or Dance and Play



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By Jonathan Mukwiri

Ready or not, Jesus Christ is coming! When He comes, there will be two classes, the careful and the careless. The former watch and pray, while the latter dance and play. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:33). John records the words of our Lord, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Revelation 3:3). But ready or not, Christ is coming!

The Bible warns us of the dangers of perceiving a delay in the return of Christ. When the Israelites perceived that Moses delayed to return, they "rose up to play" (Exodus 32:6). When the evil servant perceived that his Lord delayed to return, he sat "to eat and drink with the drunken" (Matthew 24:48-51). In Matthew 25, the foolish virgins waited for the bridegroom without enough oil in their lamps. Lest we make the same mistakes, as ancient Israel or evil servant or foolish virgins, Christ bids us: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13).

In Mark 6, King Herod beheaded John the Baptist to please those “which sat with him” (Mark 6:26). John had dared tell Herod that it was unlawful he married Herodias, his brother’s wife. Herodias then arranged for her beautiful daughter, Salome, to dance in a seductive, captivating style, to which Herod made a pompous oath to reward her. On the advice of her mother, Herodias, Salome asked for John’s head. Today, with the daughters of “the Mother of harlots” (Revelation 17:5) in a dance and celebratory worship styles, it will not be long before the state accedes to the demands of the mother to behead careful worshippers. Your only safety is to watch and pray, not to dance and play.

Watch and Pray is the safe course

Jesus spoke these words, “Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is” (Mark 13:33), in reference to the time of the end, and His second coming to take His faithful children home.

First, you are to watch. Watch, lest you should speak hastily, fretfully and impatiently. Watch, lest pride should find a place in your heart. Watch, lest evil passions should overcome you, instead of your subduing them. Watch, lest a careless, indifferent

spirit comes upon you, and you neglect your duty and become light and trifling, and your influence savour of death, rather than life.

Second, you are to pray. Jesus would not have enjoined this upon you, unless there was actual necessity for it. It is well known to Him that of yourself you cannot overcome the many temptations of the enemy, and the many snares laid for your feet. He has not left you alone to do this, but has provided a way that you can obtain help. Therefore He has bid you to pray.

To pray aright is to ask God in faith for the very things you need. Go to your chamber, or in some retired place, and ask your Father for Jesus' sake to help you. There is power in that prayer that is sent up from a heart convinced of its own weakness, yet earnestly longing for that strength that comes from God. The earnest, fervent prayer will be heard and answered.

Go to your God who is strong, and who loves to hear children pray, and, although you may feel very weak, and find yourself at times overcome by the enemy, because you have neglected the first command of our Saviour, to watch, yet do not give up the struggle. Make stronger efforts yourself than before. Faint not.

Cast yourself at the feet of Jesus, who has been tempted, and knows how to help such as are tempted. Confess your faults, your weakness, and that you must have help to overcome, or you perish. And as you ask, you must believe that God hears you. God will help you. Angels will watch over you. “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” (Psalms 34:7).

But before you can expect this help, you must do what you can on your part. Watch and pray. Let your prayers be fervent. Let this be the language of your heart, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me” (Genesis 32:26).

Have a set time, a special season for prayer at least three times a day. “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice” (Psalms 55:17).

Evening, morning, and at noon Daniel prayed to his God, “he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God” (Daniel 6:10). This Daniel did notwithstanding the king’s decree, and the fearful den of lions. He was not ashamed or afraid to pray, but with “his windows being open in his chamber” (Daniel 6:10) he prayed on his knees three times a day.

In the warning to “watch and pray,” Jesus has indicated the only safe course. There is need of watchfulness. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Therefore, closely examine your own heart as in the light of eternity. Hide nothing from your examination. “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalms 139:23,24). Search, oh! search, as for your life, and condemn yourself, pass judgment upon yourself, and then by faith claim the cleansing blood of Christ to remove the stains from your Christian character.

“If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee” (Revelation 3:3). The advent of Christ will surprise those who have risen to dance and play, instead of watching and praying. They will know not when “Sudden destruction cometh upon them” (1 Thessalonians 5:3). Upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth, upon all who make this world their home, who instead of watching and praying, dance and play, the day of God will come as a snare. It comes to them as a prowling thief.

Perceived delay of Moses' return

We come to the perceived delay in Exodus 32:1-6: "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

"And Aaron said unto them, break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings, which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, 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."

Notice here that the children of Israel were involved in the wrong kind of music and dancing.

This parallels with the contemporary, celebration music that has come into many Christian churches. The true doctrines are put aside for the want of attracting new worldly people to the churches.

Many of these new modern styles of worship are characterised by shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. By this dance and play, the senses of rational beings become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. Yet this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. But 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.

Sadly, although the Israelites demanded idols, Aaron, the minister, supported their sin. The fact that Aaron had been blessed and honoured so far above the people was what made his sin so heinous. It was Aaron "the saint of the Lord" (Psalm 106:16), that had made the idol and announced the feast. It was he who had been appointed as spokesman for Moses, and concerning whom God Himself had testified, "I know that he can speak well" (Exodus 4:14), that had failed to check the idolaters in their heaven-daring purpose.

Aaron, it was he to whom God had committed the government of the people in the absence of Moses,

was found sanctioning their rebellion. “The Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him” (Deuteronomy 9:20). But in answer to the earnest intercession of Moses, his life was spared; and in penitence and humiliation for his great sin, Aaron was restored to the favour of God.

When Moses came down the mountain, he found the children of Israel singing and dancing, and he also found that they were naked. The Bible tells us that Aaron had caused them to be naked (Exodus 32:25). We are told in Revelation 3:17 of the end time church being naked. A careful study of the Bible shows nakedness to represent the lack of Christ’s righteousness. Every soul that seeks the righteousness of Christ to whom will He grant freely.

When Moses confronted the children of Israel, he told them that they had to make a choice. “Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him” (Exodus 32:26). The Levites did not dance and play during the perceived delay of Moses. Like the Levites, God is counting on you to watch and pray – to shun dance and play worships.

During that long time spent in communion with God, the face of Moses had reflected the glory of the

divine Presence. Such a light illumined the countenance of Stephen when brought before his judges; “and all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel” (Acts 6:15). Aaron as well as the people shrank away from Moses, and “they were afraid to come nigh him” (Exodus 34:30). In their conscious guilt, feeling themselves still under the divine displeasure, they could not endure the heavenly light, which, had they been obedient to God, would have filled them with joy. There is fear in guilt. The soul that is free from sin will not wish to hide from the light of heaven.

Like the Israelites, we are in danger of asking our Aarons to make us the golden calf. We have become impatient with the delay in Christ’s return and some who lead are forming a golden calf for us by bringing the worship, doctrines, and world methods of church growth to us. And many of us are offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, and eating, drinking, singing, dancing, and having a good old time. But, we cannot cast all the blame on leaders. Remember, it was the impatient children of Israel who came to Aaron and asked him to make them gods. Our leaders, in many cases are responding to what they believe we want. We all

have to accept responsibility for what is taking place in most camps of spiritual Israel. The spiritual Levites must stay the course, watch and pray.

For the remnant church, the prophecy is clear: “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” (*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 36). Sadly, this prophecy has long been fulfilled in the remnant church. Whilst a call for a true reformation is made, unfortunately, few Adventists are heeding the call, but many are given to contemporary worship with its music and drums.

Evil servant: My Lord delayeth

The words of the Saviour in the parable of the wicked servant apply very forcibly to those who ridicule the near coming of the Son of man: “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the

drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 24:48-51).

Something fearful need be noticed about this evil servant. He calls Christ, "My Lord." Then he says, "My Lord delayeth His coming." He does not say that Christ will not come; he does not scoff at the idea of His second coming; but he tells the people that His coming is delayed. He is removing from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay. Thus they are off their watch and they echo the words of the unfaithful watcher; still others catch them up, and the evil spirit, and men are confirmed in their worldliness and stupor. Their course is downward, not upward; they are not looking for and hasting unto the day of God. Earthly passions, corrupt thoughts, take possession of the mind. Careless worshippers, they all become.

The evil servant smites his fellow servants who are seeking to do the will of his Lord. He eats and drinks with the drunken, those who are carnally minded, notwithstanding their profession of

Christianity. They are opposed to Christ and the work He came to our world to do, which was to live the law of God in humanity, to be an example to all humanity, to defeat transgression of the law (sin).

Christ was surrounded by His disciples, and a vast congregation were listening to His words when He said, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34). Paul tells us, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

The influence of the evil servant is at work in all Christendom. The world, full of rioting, full of godless pleasure, is asleep, asleep in carnal security. Men are putting afar off the coming of the Lord. They laugh at warnings. The proud boast is made, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:4). "Tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Isaiah 56:12). We will go deeper into pleasure loving.

But Christ says, "Behold, I come as a thief" (Revelation 16:15). At the very time when the world is asking in scorn, "Where is the promise of His

coming?" the signs are fulfilling. While they cry, "Peace and safety" (1 Thessalonians 5:3), sudden destruction is coming. When the scorner, the rejecter of truth, has become presumptuous; when the routine of work in the various money-making lines is carried on without regard to principle; when the student is eagerly seeking knowledge of everything but his Bible, Christ comes as a thief.

The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods, murders of every grade. Who can read the future? Where is security? There is assurance in nothing that is human or earthly. Sadly, very few believe with heart and soul that we have a hell to shun and a heaven to win.

Pleasure lovers are still bowling, gambling, or horse racing. Satan has set all his agencies at work that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied and entranced, until the day of probation shall be ended, and the door of mercy be forever shut.

You must watch and pray if you will escape the coming sudden destruction. Solemnly there come to us down through the centuries the warning words of our Lord from the Mount of Olives: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be

overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares” (Luke 21:34). “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

Ten virgins watching for Christ

We come to the story of the ten virgins, watching for the bridegroom. The ten virgins all “took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom” (Matthew 25:1). But five were wise and five were foolish. The two classes of watchers represent the two classes who profess to be waiting for their Lord. They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith. By the lamps is represented the word of God. The psalmist says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalms 119:105). The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

In the parable, all the ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom. All had lamps and vessels for oil. For a time there was seen no difference between them. So with the church that lives just before Christ's second coming. All have a knowledge of the Scriptures. All have heard the message of Christ's

near approach, and confidently expect His appearing. But as in the parable, so it is now. A time of waiting intervenes, faith is tried; and when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him" (Matthew 25:6), many are unready. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit.

Without the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The theory of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot quicken the soul or sanctify the heart. One may be familiar with the commands and promises of the Bible; but unless the Spirit of God sets the truth home, the character will not be transformed. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan.

The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up.

The class represented by the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work. They have not

studied the character of God; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezekiel 33:31).

The apostle Paul points out that this will be the special characteristic of those who live just before Christ's second coming. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves; . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

This is the class that in time of peril are found crying, Peace and safety. They lull their hearts into security, and dream not of danger. When startled from their lethargy, they discern their destitution, and entreat others to supply their lack; but in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it," in the land, "as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness" (Ezekiel 14:20).

At the final day, many will claim admission to Christ's kingdom, saying, "We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets" (Luke 13:26). "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matthew 7:22). But the answer is, "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me" (Luke 13:27).

In this life they have not entered into fellowship with Christ; therefore they know not the language of heaven, they are strangers to its joy. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11).

We cannot be ready to meet the Lord by waking when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom!" and then gathering up our empty lamps to have

them replenished. We cannot keep Christ apart from our lives here, and yet be fitted for His companionship in heaven.

The foolish virgins do not live in Christ but profess a relationship with Christ based on their feelings. If it feels good, to them it is the truth. Jesus prayed, “sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). To them, truth is what you make it to be, no longer what God has said in Scriptures. They will rationalise the Scriptures to suit their feelings. The command “be ye holy” is seen as relative to their carnal ability outside the power of Christ.

In the parable the wise virgins had oil in their vessels with their lamps. Their light burned with undimmed flame through the night of watching. It helped to swell the illumination for the bridegroom’s honor. Shining out in the darkness, it helped to illuminate the way to the home of the bridegroom, to the marriage feast.

So the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God’s word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory – His character – is to shine forth in His

followers. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The coming of the bridegroom was at midnight – the darkest hour. So the coming of Christ will take place in the darkest period of this earth's history. The days of Noah and Lot pictured the condition of the world just before the coming of the Son of man – we live in a world darkened by immorality.

The Scriptures pointing forward to this time declare that Satan will work with all power and “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10). His working is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, and delusions of these last days.

Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great apostasy will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. To God's people it will be a night of trial, a night of weeping, a night of persecution for the truth's sake. But out of that night of darkness God's light will shine. Must we then to whom this dark night approaches dance and play?

No, God forbid! The bridegroom cometh, we must watch and pray, and remain wise virgin.

Alliance of mother and daughter

Like in the time of Herod, when John the Baptist rebuked his sin, the truth is opposed on every side. Many of those who profess to believe the truth would say, if they expressed their real sentiments, What need is there of speaking so plainly? They might as well ask, Why need John the Baptist have said to the Pharisees, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7). Why need he have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother's wife? He lost his life by speaking so plainly. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the anger of Herodias?

Today there is need of the voice of stern rebuke; for grievous sins have separated the people from God. Infidelity is fast becoming fashionable. "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14), is the language of thousands. The smooth sermons so often preached make no lasting impression; the trumpet does not give a certain sound. Men are not

cut to the heart by the plain, sharp truths of God's word. The present truth of Revelation 14 is ignored.

The desire to please men leads many leaders to suppress truth. Plain truth, "Thou art the man" (2 Samuel 12:7), words as unmistakably plain as these spoken by Nathan to David, are seldom heard in the pulpits of today, seldom seen in the public press. If they were not so rare, we should see more of the power of God revealed among men. The Lord's messengers should not complain that their efforts are without fruit until they repent of their own love of approbation and their desire to please men, which leads them to suppress the present truth.

God cannot use men who, in time of peril, when the strength, courage, and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right. God calls for men who will do faithful battle against wrong, warring "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). It is to such as these that He will speak the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:23).

But time is running out for the faithful Johns of our day to speak plain truth. The alliance of mother and

daughter will soon be repeated, as was one of Herodias and Solome in causing Herod to behead John. We pick up the story in Mark 6:17-28.

John the Baptist had rebuked Herod, saying that it was unlawful for Herod to have taken his brother's wife, Herodias, to wife. The wicked queen, Herodias, determined to use her influence over Herod, to have John killed. First, she persuaded him to have John imprisoned. Then she asked to have John executed, but Herod refused. He knew that John was a true prophet and feared political backlash from the people.

The wicked queen then allied with her daughter. It was a birthday party for Herod and his lords were feasting and drinking in the banqueting hall. The queen, Herodias, debased with crime and passion, sent her daughter, Salome, dressed in a most enchanting manner, into the presence of Herod and his royal guests. Salome was decorated with costly garlands and flowers. Like modern churchgoers, she was adorned with sparkling jewels and flashing bracelets. With little covering and less modesty she danced for the amusement of the royal guests.

Herod and his guests, to their perverted senses, the enchanting appearance of this, to them, vision of beauty and loveliness charmed them. Instead of

being governed by enlightened reason, refined taste, or sensitive consciences, the lower qualities of the mind held the guiding reins. Virtue and principle had no controlling power.

As Salome danced and played, the false enchantment of the dizzy scene seemed to take away reason and dignity from Herod and his guests, who were flushed with wine. Herod made a pompous oath: "Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom" (Mark 6:23). At the advice of the mother, the daughter replied, "I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist" (Mark 6:25). King Herod, though exceeding sorry, yet "for their sakes which sat with him," he gave the orders and that very day John was beheaded in prison.

Watch and pray, for the mother and daughter alliance is coming again after God's faithful people. In Bible prophecy, a woman symbolizes a church. A pure woman represents God's true church as described in Revelation 12. An unfaithful woman represents a church that has departed from the Scriptures. We can be certain who this fallen woman is, because Revelation 17:18 says she was ruling when Revelation was written. History tells us it was pagan Rome (Luke 2:1) that eventually turned

over its authority, capital city, and power to papal Rome.

In Revelation 17:4-5 this woman is described as “arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:...and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots.” Says the prophet: “I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Babylon is further declared to be “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (Revelation 17:4-6, 18).

The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet colour, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared “drunken with the blood of the saints” as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ in the dark ages.

As to the “mother of harlots”, it is widely known that there is only one church that claims to be the mother church – the great Roman Catholic Church. A prominent Catholic priest, John A. O'Brien, said:

“That observance [Sunday keeping] remains as a reminder of the Mother Church from which the non-Catholic sects broke away” (John A. O'Brien, *The Faith of Millions* ((Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1974), p. 401)).

That the papacy is the power described in Revelation 17 is widely accepted by Protestants. Many leaders of the Reformation (Huss, Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Melanchthon, Cranmer, Tyndale, Latimer, Ridley, and others) taught that the papacy is the power here involved (George Eldon Ladd, *The Blessed Hope*, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956, pp. 32-34). The details by which the papacy is described in Revelation 17 are too clear for doubt.

Babylon is said to be “the mother of harlots.” By her daughters must be symbolised churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, such as the honouring of Sunday worship instead of Sabbath, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.

It is said: “Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose,

Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy...

“She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated” (Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950 Revised edn, pp. 581, 582).

When religious and political powers unite to enact a law demanding God’s people to keep Sunday holy, the alliance of mother and daughter (Herodias and Salome) in urging the state (Herod) to behead John (the pure woman in Revelation 12) will be repeated.

This alliance has been long formed, now at the dancing stage. When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common with papal Rome, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then the mother and daughter alliance will produce a Sunday law, which will inflict civil penalties upon dissenters.

This calls for the patience of the saints, who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12), to watch and pray. The

dancing daughter, on the advice of the mother, asked the state to inflict death upon a man of God. While the alliance prepare to inflict pain or death upon God's people, your safe course is to watch and pray, not to dance and play.

But when that time comes, when mother and daughter ally with the state to force conscience of worship, God will surely act. Daniel 12:1 tells us: "At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Zechariah 2:8 tells us: "For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." But God's help will only be to those that have heeded the call to watch and pray.

Conclusion

Watch and pray, not dance and play. What happened to the church in the camp of Israel, when they perceived Moses delayed coming down from the Mount, and rose up to play, should ever stand as a warning to us. As a result of the Israelites dancing and playing in worship to the idol god, "there fell of the people that day about three thousand men" (Exodus 32:28). As we wait for Christ's return, we

must not be found dancing and playing in worship of idols in the celebratory worship styles, but rather watching and praying.

God's people must not underestimate the negative effects of contemporary worship styles. These modern worship styles are characterised by shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. By this dance and play, the senses of rational beings become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. Truth, character purification in preparation for the close of probation, is sacrificed to the idols of pleasure and excitement.

But the Mother-Daughter alliance to persecute God's people is upon us. With the daughters of "the Mother of harlots" (Revelation 17:5) in a dance and celebratory worship styles, it will not be long before the state accedes to the demands of the Mother to behead careful worshippers. This calls for the patience of the saints of God, who "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12), to watch and pray, not to dance and play. To watch includes obeying God's law.

Finally, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

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