

Sabbath School Lesson #5 – The Controversy Continues – 23-29 January 2016

Christ would have us strengthened to finish the work before He returns. Thus, we may join Nehemiah is saying, “Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work” (Nehemiah 2:18).

Our Lesson this week looks at a number of controversies that continued among God’s people of old, like the account of David and Goliath, Elijah and the prophets of Baal, among others. In this short comment, we will focus on Monday’s part dealing with Elijah’s ministry.

The type controversy at Mt Carmel between Elijah and priests of Baal is meeting anti-type – faithful Seventh-day Adventists are living their Mt Carmel experience before the latter rain.

Little is known about Elijah before God called him to bear His message. The first we hear of him begins as follows: “And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (1 Kings 17:1). Why was rain withheld? If we understand the basics in types, we will be able to better understand them in anti-types.

Ahab was the seventh king of Israel and was the son of King Omri who did evil in the sight of the Lord (see 1 Kings 16:30-31). Ahab joined himself to a woman of the world called Jezebel, and Ahab served Baal, and worshipped Baal. We know that in type, a woman in Scriptures represents a church. In his joining himself with the worldly church, Ahab adopted their spiritual views and worshiped Baal. Elijah was a prophet raised by God to reveal that God was about to judge Israel because of this, and he revealed how by declaring that there would be no rain. God previously warned of this judgment (see Deuteronomy 11:13-17).

The rain would not fall because Israel was serving Baal. The latter rain may not fall while we serve a philosophical idol enshrined in the place of Jehovah. We have joined ourselves to a doctrine concerning the Father and Son that is not revealed in Scriptures. We have joined ourselves by this doctrine to a woman (church) of the world and are worshipping Baal.

Our Baal worship is in our understanding or mind, for idolatry starts in the heart. Ezekiel says so in Ezekiel 14:3 “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?” In the eighth chapter of Ezekiel, we see a picture of the church and of what is happening in the minds of church members, that there is confusion over worship in the church, and in the mind of church members, just before the close of probation. Idolatry begins in the heart, in the mind, and a false understanding or conception of God is idolatry and is Baal worship.

Ellen White explains it this way: “Are we worshippers of Jehovah, or of Baal? Of the living God, or of idols?” {5T 173.3} “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 worshipping 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?” {5T 173.4}

The true God is the Father (John 17:3), and we see it here very clearly that it is the Father who is revealed in His word, in Christ, and in nature. Are we worshipping mysterious gods that we cannot find in the Bible or do we hold beliefs in false conception of God or are we worshipping something else, which is called a philosophical idol enshrined in His place? This philosophical idol is the inexplicable trinity concept that was after the death of our Adventist pioneers enshrined in our Fundamental Beliefs. Elijah’s message calls for repentance.

Rain was withheld as Israel worshipped Baal. The latter rain is withheld in our time as we Seventh-day Adventists continue to worship trinity gods. “But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you” (Jeremiah 5:23-25).

“And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And

Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria" (1 Kings 18:1-2). It was not Elijah's choice to reveal himself to Ahab; it was the Lord's command.

The anti-type Elijah message is brought to us (see two booklets: "*Greater Abominations*" and "*True God and His Son*") as Seventh-day Adventists, just before Christ comes, but we are responding as did wicked Ahab: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17). Many reject the message and messenger as being from God. Ahab attributed withholding of rain to Elijah who was following God's directions. Type has long met anti-type; the leaders are rejecting the truth in the Father and Son message, for they are worshipping the trinity gods. It also happened in Christ's day, for the Jewish leaders rejected John and his message and killed the Messiah.

As the controversy of Baal worship continued, Elijah summoned Ahab to gather all Israel at "mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men" (1 Kings 18:20-22).

Here is probably one of the saddest scenes in history. When given the opportunity of choosing whom to serve, there was only silence. How is it with you today? When you see that the trinity doctrine deny the true Son of God and reject God as His Father, do you stand up for truth or sit silently in fear of our leaders who joined themselves to modern Jezebel?

As for those who do allow God to use them as a voice of Elijah, do you, like Elijah, feel like you are the only one that has remained faithful to God? Have you ever felt like you were alone in this message? Where is the voice of the people? Like Israel of old, most are hung up between two opinions. Yes, to many of you who are reading this, it is the same with you today. You may be among most Seventh-day Adventists who say they believe in "the only true God, and Jesus Christ" (John 17:3), and yet accept the trinity doctrine that creates a third god out of the one "Spirit of God"/"the Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8:9). Our Fundamental Belief calls the Holy Spirit "God the Eternal Spirit" – a phrase that is not found in the Bible. The trinity separates the Spirit from God and makes it into a separate god – this provokes God to jealousy (read the booklet: *Greater Abominations*). A belief in trinity gods is sin, for sin is transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and the law says we should not have other gods (Exodus 20:3). Instead of the Holy Spirit being a personality or a manifestation of the Father, the trinity doctrine made it into a separate god with his own individual personality and being. To believe in that third god is worshipping other gods contrary to the law, and it is sin.

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, He is the God; the LORD, He is the God... And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain" (1 Kings 18:36-41).

When God is worshiped as He really is, He will pour out His Spirit with power. The Elijah message is that the outpouring will occur on individuals who worship God in truth and Spirit.

Ahab remained Baal worshipper after it rained; many Seventh-day Adventist leaders will remain trinity worshippers after the latter rain. After "a great rain," Ahab "rode, and went to Jezreel. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done... Then Jezebel sent messengers to Elijah" (1 Kings 18:45-19:1-2). Although Ahab remained joined to Jezebel and Baal, he could not prevent the rain from pouring out on those who cried: "The LORD, He is the God; the LORD"! It also triggered a persecution from the worldly church (Jezebel). Thus it will be in our time. Leaders may reject the truth, but the latter rain will fall on those who reject the trinity gods and cry: "The LORD, He is the God"! Then the time of trouble such as never has been will commence. Like Ahab, apostate leaders will be most efficient agents of Satan to accuse us before courts {GC 608.2} when church is united with state. It is time to proclaim the Elijah message, to turn hearts of Adventists to the faith once delivered to our pioneers.