

Sabbath School Lesson #9 – End-Time Deceptions – 26 May-1 June 2018

Christ revealed to John that Satan will perform end-time deceptions. John writes: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9). We escape Satan as long as we abide in Christ (see Ephesians 1:15-21; 2:1-6).

Sunday: The Grandest Deception – To “the church in Pergamos” was the commendation, “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith” (Revelation 2:12-13). Here Christ takes cognisance of the unfavorable situation of His people during this period. During this period, the doctrine of Christ was being corrupted, the mystery of iniquity was working, and Satan was laying the foundation of a stupendous system of apostasy, the papacy. The period covered by Pergamos church terminated with the setting up of the papacy in AD 538. The next period of the church in Thyatira covered the 1260 years of papal supremacy from AD 538 to AD 1798. “I will put upon you none other burden” (verse 24) refers to a respite promised the church in Thyatira from the weight of papal oppression. The days of tribulation shall be shortened for elect’s sake (Matthew 24:22); “They shall be holpen with a little help” (Daniel 11:34); “The earth helped the woman” (Revelation 12:16). With the grand deception of the papacy, in Revelation 13 we see that the people of God suffer yet another conflict, brief but sharp and severe, when the two-horned beast decrees Sunday law to support the papacy.

Monday: The Two Great Errors – “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. 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 will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience” {GC 588.1}. Religious bodies have long united with the papacy, for “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (Revelation 17:13). Sadly, although we Adventists do not believe in immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, we have corporately accepted erroneous doctrines from Sunday-keeping Churches. To halt this trend, the General Conference president appealed to our Seventh-day Adventist Church: “Do not succumb to the mistaken idea, gaining support even in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, of accepting worship or evangelistic outreach methods merely because they are new and ‘trendy.’ We must be vigilant to test all things according to the supreme authority of God’s Word and the counsel with which we have been blessed in the writings of Ellen G White. Don’t reach out to movements or megachurch centers outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church which promise you spiritual success based on faulty theology. Stay away from non-biblical spiritual disciplines or methods of spiritual formation that are rooted in mysticism such as contemplative prayer, centering prayer, and the emerging church movement in which they are promoted” (*Adventist Review*, 8 July 2010).

Tuesday: The Immortality of the Soul – “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die” (Genesis 3:4). This was Satan’s first sermon on the natural immortality of the soul of man. Notice that it was this teaching that caused the fall; consequently the teaching that man is by nature immortal, is responsible for all the evil that has ever come to mankind. But the Bible is clear about the matter: Solomon says, “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any [thing] that is done under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 9:5-6). Job says of the dead man: “His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them” (Job 14:21). The psalmist says, “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence” (Psalms 115:17). Again, the psalmist, by whom the Lord spoke, says of man: “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalms 146:4). The grave is “the land of forgetfulness” (Psalms 88:12). It is the synonym of nothingness. Those who believe in the natural immortality of the soul are Spiritualists, for the doctrine leads to Spiritualism.

Wednesday: Sabbath and the Theory of Evolution – The theory of evolution, for which Darwin stood, is very generally accepted in the religious world in place of the Bible account. As it has, according to this notion, been reserved for wise scientists of modern times to get at the real truth about the methods of creation, very naturally Moses is not held in good repute. Yet the One who made the world, the Creator Himself, “made known His ways unto Moses” and told him what to write. But so poor an opinion do many hold of Moses that the fact that the Ten Commandments, written on tables by the finger of God, were committed to him to preserve, leads many to lightly

regard the Sabbath and the law of God. Moses was familiar with the ways of critics. "This man," the people contemptuously called him, while he was communing with God in the mount. But as he was "very meek, above all men which were upon the face of the earth," he minded none of these things. God called him "My servant," and "the man of God." And He said He would not talk with Moses as with the ordinary prophet, but "face to face." What shallow folly for vain men, whatever their powers of observation, to affect a superiority over Moses and regard him as a recorder merely of unintelligent tradition. Moses was so eminent a Christian that he was a type of Christ Himself. When God promised the Messiah He said to Moses, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth" (Deuteronomy 18:18). As Moses spoke God's words, so Jesus spoke not His own words but the words of the Father. Christ was faithful even as Moses was faithful (Hebrews 3). Those who refused to receive Jesus would not receive the testimony of Moses: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me" (John 5:46).

Thursday: The Counterfeit Trinity – This expression, 'counterfeit trinity,' is an oxymoron! It is like saying, 'true myth' or 'virtual reality.' Satan cannot counterfeit a trinity which he does not believe it exist. The devils believe there is one God (James 2:19) and that God has a Son (Luke 4:41). Satan tried to form a trinity in heaven but failed. Before the fall of Lucifer, God had called a meeting and had set His Son to be equal with Himself. Lucifer was unhappy that he was not made equal with God, then Lucifer sought to declare himself equal with God, and he would have formed a trinity had he succeeded. Had Lucifer succeeded, a trinity would have consisted of (1) God, (2) Lucifer, and (3) the Son of God. Here is the order before, during and after the fall of Lucifer:

Before the fall of Lucifer: (1) "God is a moral governor as well as a Father. He is the Lawgiver. He makes and executes His laws" {12MR 208.2}. (2) "The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver" {2SP 9.1}. (3) "Satan was once a covering cherub in the heavenly courts, the angel next in power to Christ Himself" {CTr 200.2}. "Satan in Heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear Son" {1SP 17.1}. "Lucifer in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear Son" {SR 13.1}.

During the rebellion of Lucifer: "The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father" {1SP 17.2}. "Satan thought that he was himself a favorite in Heaven among the angels. He had been highly exalted; but this did not call forth from him gratitude and praise to his Creator. He aspired to the height of God himself" {1SP 18.1}. "Satan's dissatisfaction first commenced in heaven because he could not be first and highest in command – equal with God, exalted above Christ. He rebelled and lost his estate; and he, and those who sympathized with him, were turned out of heaven" {1T 293.3}.

After the fall of Lucifer: "It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel" {DA 234.2}. "The words of the angel, 'I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God,' show that he holds a position of high honor in the heavenly courts. ... Wonderful thought – that the angel who stands next in honor to the Son of God is the one chosen to open the purposes of God to sinful men" {DA 99.1}. In crisis, Gabriel, "the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ" {DA 693.3}.

Before the fall of Lucifer, the order was (1) Father, (2) Son, (3) Lucifer. Whilst Father and Son were equal (because the Father decided that equality), Lucifer was not equal to the two divine Beings, so there was no trinity. After the fall of Lucifer, the order in heaven is (1) Father, (2) Son, (3) Gabriel. Whilst Father and Son are equal (because the Father decided that equality), Gabriel is not equal to the two divine Beings, so there is no trinity. The 'counterfeit trinity' is an oxymoron.

Deceived Adventists think the order in heaven was (1) Father, (2) Son, (3) Spirit. But inspired writings say that Lucifer was next to the Son of God. The truth is, the Spirit is not a Being or Individual separate from the Father and Son, but Their own Spirit. The Spirit is "the Spirit of your Father" (Matthew 10:20), which Spirit the Son receives from His Father, "for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (John 3:34), "the Spirit of God" is also "the Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8:9), if you "are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts" (Galatians 4:6), and "the Lord is that Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:17). "We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ" {Lt66-1894 1.6600}. "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, which is sent to all men to give them sufficiency, that through His grace we might be complete in Him" {14MR 84.3}. "It is not your spirit that is going into heaven; it is Christ's spirit" {1888 905.2}. There are only two divine Beings or Individuals (God and His Son); the Holy Spirit is Their own Spirit. 'Counterfeit trinity' is oxymoron.