

Contemporary Celebratory Worship



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The instruction on worshipping God is clearly provided in God's own sure Word. Whenever men depart from God's instructions, the Bible likens them to people who choose to drink water from their waterless broken cisterns. God lamented through prophet Jeremiah of the evils of His people: "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water ... And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?" (Jeremiah 2:13, 18).

With the growth of contemporary and celebratory worship styles in the remnant church, God's people are repeating the history of drinking from broken cisterns. Those who accept these worship styles from other churches cannot effectively proclaim the three angels messages in Revelation 14. Whilst the fallen churches represent "Babylon," and the angel said that "Babylon is fallen," it is sad if we stand on crossroads, partly calling upon our brothers and sisters in "Babylon" to "Come out of her, My people"

(Revelation 18:4), and partly at the same time now returning to “Babylon” to receive instructions from Babylon for contemporary celebratory worship!

Many unfaithful ministers are using contemporary and celebratory worship styles to attract the worldly minded souls into church in large numbers and they count these baptised but unconverted numbers as evidence of success. But “if you lower the standard in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then make this increase a cause of rejoicing, you show great blindness. If numbers were evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for in this world his followers are largely in the majority” (5T 31.3). Christ said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Another class of unfaithful ministers and laity have joined contemporary and celebratory worship styles in the name of unity. To the faithful ministers and laity in the remnant church, the counsel is clear: “We must not be afraid of being singular when duty requires us to be thus to exalt and honor God ... Do not court singularity for the sake of being odd, but for

the sake of avoiding sin and dishonor to God. And in this case we are not to mind even the multitude who are against us. ‘Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil’” (*Upward Look*, p. 315).

“Worship should be permeated by a sense of reverence and awe for God, an attitude that will give us the humility and surrender so needed for true worship. We are also told to ‘give glory to Him’ [Revelation 14:6-7]. What is crucial here is that worship be about God and not about ourselves. We have to make sure that worship is not people-centered, culture-centered, or personal-needs-centered, but God-centered. We worship God, not ourselves; hence, worship must be about Him, about giving glory to Him, and not about music, culture, or worship styles” (SSL 2011 Q3). Unless we worship according to God’s instructions, we worship Him not.

Perverted celebratory music in worship

As probation is soon closing, the foretold dramatic style of music has been brought into the Seventh-day Adventist church worship. Drums are a major part of this new music. “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40) is largely being ignored in Sabbath-keeping worship services. Celebratory worship is on the increase.

Perversion of worship is manifest in shouting, with drums, frivolous ditty choruses, dancing, clapping, jeering, excitement and confusion. But “the Lord desires to have in His service order and discipline, not excitement and confusion” (*Maranatha*, p. 234). This perverted celebratory music in worship is a clear sign that the close of probation is eminent!

“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 Seventh-day Adventist Church. The faithful leaders in the church have called for a revival and reformation. But only few Adventists are heeding the call, for many are given to contemporary worship with its music and drums.

“Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted. God calls upon His people, who have the light before them in the Word and in the Testimonies, to read and consider, and to

take heed. Clear and definite instruction has been given in order that all may understand. But the itching desire to originate something new results in strange doctrines, and largely destroys the influence of those who would be a power for good if they held firm the beginning of their confidence in the truth the Lord had given them” (*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 38).

“Singing is just as much the worship of God in a religious meeting as speaking, and any oddity or peculiarity cultivated attracts the attention of the people and destroys the serious, solemn impression which should be the result of sacred music. Anything strange and eccentric in singing detracts from the seriousness and sacredness of religious service.

“Bodily exercise profiteth little. Everything that is connected in any way with religious worship should be dignified, solemn, and impressive. God is not pleased when ministers professing to be Christ’s representatives so misrepresent Christ as to throw the body into acting attitudes, making undignified and coarse gestures, unrefined, coarse gesticulations. All this amuses, and will excite the curiosity of those who wish to see strange, odd, and exciting things, but these things will not elevate the minds and hearts of those who witness them.

“The very same may be said of singing. You assume undignified attitudes. You put in all the power and volume of the voice you can. You drown the finer strains and notes of voices more musical than your own. This bodily exercise and the harsh, loud voice makes no melody to those who hear on earth and those who listen in heaven. This singing is defective and not acceptable to God as perfect, softened, sweet strains of music. There are no such exhibitions among the angels as I have sometimes seen in our meetings. Such harsh notes and gesticulations are not exhibited among the angel choir. Their singing does not grate upon the ear. It is soft and melodious and comes without this great effort I have witnessed. It is not forced and strained, requiring physical exercise” (*Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 333).

“Eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words and acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness

envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbath-keepers" (*The Voice in Speech and Song*, p. 420). Must you make your guardian angel weep?

Are you attending a celebratory worship service with drums and frivolous ditty songs? If "the angels are moving from the scene," suppose ye that evil angels will hesitate to come in? Can you develop a Christ-like character needed for the final test whilst you attend worship without the pure angels? Must you be indifferent to such perversion of worship?

As to musical instruments in worship services, the Lord specified three types of instruments to be used by the Levites in the Sanctuary: harp, lyre, and the cymbal (1 Chronicles 25:1, 6; 2 Chronicles 29:25). In this list there are no drums. The celebratory drum worship is not of God, and those engaged therein cannot expect the Holy Spirit to reside therein, let alone the worshippers receiving the true latter rain.

Applause or Clapping in worship

Applause is defined in most English dictionaries as an act of approbation and praise publicly expressed by clapping the hands, stamping or

tapping with the feet, or acclamation. Also defined as a demonstration of approval by clapping the hands together. The question here is whether this applause or clapping of hands is approved by the sure word of God for use in worship service.

The main Bible text often quoted to justify applause in worship service is Psalm 47:1-2: "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth." Notice, however, that God alone is the recipient of the clapping of hands. The applause is not directed to any human being. Even then, the Psalmist is referring to a future time when the Lord is coroneted as "King over all the earth." The people clapping are a church already triumphant, as they shout 'with the voice of triumph.' We are told, "The work is soon to close. The members of the church militant who have proved faithful will become the church triumphant" (RH October 12, 1905 Par 22). It is to that future time when the now church militant becomes the church triumphant, when victory over the beast and the devil is fully gained, the Psalmist foresaw the remnants clapping their hands and shouting unto God with the voice of triumph, shouting with triumph

for the Lord most high who then is a great King over all the earth made new.

Clapping of hands is attributed to a coronation of a King. When Joash was introduced as the legitimate heir to the throne those who were present clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!" (2 Kings 11:2). A religious usage of clapping hands is found in Psalms 47:1 where the psalmist invites all peoples to clap their hands because the Lord is being proclaimed as King over all the earth. In Psalms 98:8 the people (as in floods or multitudes) are exhorted to praise the Lord and the hills to clap their hands because the Lord is coming as King and Judge of the earth. There we see that even nature will rejoice before the Lord when He comes, at a future time, as King and Judge of the whole world.

Until Jesus' second return, the present King of this earth is Satan, and the Psalmist is not referring to present King but a future King. In Matthew 4:9 Satan said to Jesus, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Satan could contemplate giving all earthly things to Jesus because he (Satan) was the King of earthly Kingdom. Jesus refused Satan's offer of this present Kingdom. Even when the people wanted to

make Jesus King, He did not take the offer. We are told in John 6:15 “Jesus knew that the people wanted him to become king. The people planned to come get Jesus and make him their king. So Jesus left and went into the hills alone.” Referring directly to the King or Prince of the present earth, Jesus said in John 14:30 “for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” Jesus later explained in John 18:36 that, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

For saints who accept Jesus, His Kingdom is within us (Luke 17:21), as we will inherit the Kingdom prepared for us (Matthew 25:34). But that is not what the Psalmist is referring to in the above text. The Psalmist is not referring to clapping for a King now in this present earthly Kingdom whose King is Satan, but rather to clap in the future Kingdom whose King will be Jesus. To clap for Christ in triumph when He is coroneted as King of all the earth, “every member of His church militant must manifest the same qualities, if he would join the church triumphant” (FCE 179). Moreover, a careful study of the Bible indicates that clapping (or applause) as creeping into our churches today was

not part of the worship service in the Old and New Testaments. Rather, as in so many things, the practice came out of a desire to “pattern after other churches” (2SM 18).

We must not worship like them or inquire of their worship styles or their gods. “Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deuteronomy 12:30-32). This text applies to the fallen churches, and warns the remnant church not to worship like those churches.

Just as today, Ellen G White saw applause as a social expression of joy, appreciation, or approval. But she never recommended it for our worship services. For example, on one occasion in the 1880s, Ellen G White was invited to speak at the Temperance Reform Club of Haverhill, Massachusetts, in a city auditorium seating one

thousand people. She wrote concerning this experience: "I was stopped several times with clapping of hands and stomping of feet" (*Review and Herald*, 1984, p. 46). While she witnessed the enthusiasm of this non-Adventist audience, she never endorsed 'clapping or stomping of feet' as examples for Adventist worship services.

Instead of approving applause for worship services, Ellen G White warned about its dangers. Referring to applause, she said Christians are "to relinquish all selfish delights, all unholy passions, all that love of applause which is the food of the world" (*The Southern Work*, p. 17). Talking of King Saul, Ellen G White said: "his standard of right and wrong was the low standard of popular applause" (*Patriarch and Prophets*, p. 650).

Warning ministers who love applause, Ellen G White said wrote: "Some ministers of ability who are now preaching present truth, love approbation. Applause stimulates them, as the glass of wine does the inebriate. Place these ministers where they have a small congregation which promises no special excitement and which provokes no decided opposition, and they will lose their interest and zeal, and appear as languid in the work as the inebriate when he is deprived of his dram. These men will fail

to make real, practical laborers until they learn to labor without the excitement of applause” (3T 185-186). Looking at things not essential to the gospel, Ellen G White wrote: “An appearance of wealth or position, expensive architecture or furnishings, are not essential to the advancement of the work of God; neither are achievements that win applause from men and administer to vanity. Worldly display, however imposing, is of no value with God.” (7T 143).

Applause, Ellen G White said, causes one to be “puffed up” (*Signs of the Times*, Jan 28, 1897). Moreover, she saw applause as “a snare” (*Special Testimony to Ministers and Workers*, No. 4, 1895, p. 25), something that can injure a person (4T 376), and that which can even influence a person to leave the church for the world (*Review and Herald*, June 28, 1897). Pointing to Jesus, Ellen G White wrote: “Jesus did not seek the admiration or the applause of men. He commanded no army. He ruled no earthly kingdom. He did not court the favor of the wealthy and honored of the world. He did not claim a position among the leaders of the nation. He dwelt among the lowly. He set at nought the artificial distinctions of society. The aristocracy of birth, wealth, talent, learning, rank, He ignored” (MH 197).

Since 1844, we live in the Day of Atonement. In this Day of Atonement, there is no shouting with a voice of triumph. It is rather a searching of our hearts, lest the high priest complete the work in the most holy place whilst our sins remain with us. Jesus is in heaven ministering as a high priest, not as King of all the earth. When probation closes, Jesus will put away the priestly garments, and will close Himself with Kingly robes. Until then, we cannot clap for Jesus the King. For now, we confess our sins before Jesus the high priest. If we instead clap, a counterfeited “Jesus” is honoured.

Waiving and lifting up hands in worship

The practice of the waiving of hands during worship is increasing in our worship services. This practice is often seen as a non-verbal way of showing appreciation or an assent to what is being preached or sang. Sometimes the uplifted hand is also used during prayers. Often, the book of Psalms is used as the main support. A careful study of the Bible reveals that hands, in worship, were only lifted in prayer. The waving and lifting of hands in other times during worship service is unbiblical.

There are a number of Bible passages that speak about the raising of hands. The overwhelming

evidence in Scripture, however, shows that the practice was employed in prayer and supplication, and not in singing. For example, in Psalm 28:2, "Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle" is an attitude to prayer (see Lamentations 3:41 "Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."). In Psalm 63:1-6, this communicates "joy, praise, thanksgiving, and longing for God" in prayer, especially the tone of verse 4. Other texts are all in the context of prayer: Psalm 119:48; Psalm 141:2; Psalm 143:1, 6-7; 1 Kings 8:54; Nehemiah 8:6; Lamentations 2:19; Lamentations 3:40-43. It is quite clear from the relevant Bible texts that the "lifting of hands" was used during prayer. It was not used to show appreciation, approval, or as a form of non-verbal applause. It was a gesture showing a person's desire to walk in the ways of the Lord and this was only used in prayer.

Other than in prayer, the other times when hands were lifted was in making an oath (Genesis 14:22), to bless (Leviticus 9:22), and to rise up in rebellion (2 Sam 18:28; 20:21). Clearly, hands were not lifted up in singing as we see in churches today.

Moreover, even in prayer, it is only holy hands that should be lifted (1 Timothy 2:8 "lifting up holy

hands, without wrath and doubting.” The lifting of hands in prayer is figurative of a character void of moral defilement with the hands symbolising holy deeds. God calls for leaders who will have a living connection with God to lift up their holy hands in supplication for the people they lead to be spared.

Further more, a careful reading of 1 Timothy 2 reveals that Paul is setting roles for men and women in prayer meetings. Talking to men (male) in verse 8, Paul says: “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” The whole chapter is in the context of public prayer and it is men (male) that are called upon, not women, to lift up their holy hands in such public prayers. Turning to women (female) in verse 9, Paul states what women should do in such public meetings: “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.”

The phrase “in like manner also”, clearly shows that Paul is making a distinction between the role of men and women in such prayer meetings, as he transitions from talking to men, thus “in like manner also.” Nowadays, because some other churches have women elders and women pastors, the

remnant church have allowed their sisters to disregard Jesus' command through Paul. In some cases, women with naked hands beyond the armpits swing their gold or pearls decked hands up in the air purportedly in the name of Jesus. God have mercy, these women's hands should never be swung to Jesus in public prayer meetings!

Gestures and acting attitudes in worship

In the book 2 Selected Messages, we read the following: "Bodily exercise profiteth little. Everything that is connected in any way with religious worship should be dignified, solemn, and impressive. God is not pleased when ministers professing to be Christ's representatives so misrepresent Christ as to throw the body into acting attitudes, making undignified and coarse gestures, unrefined, coarse gesticulations. All this amuses, and will excite the curiosity of those who wish to see strange, odd, and exciting things, but these things will not elevate the minds and hearts of those who witness them."

"The very same may be said of singing. You assume undignified attitudes. You put in all the power and volume of the voice you can. You drown the finer strains and notes of voices more musical than your own. This bodily exercise and the harsh,

loud voice makes no melody to those who hear on earth and those who listen in heaven. This singing is defective and not acceptable to God as perfect, softened, sweet strains of music. There are no such exhibitions among the angels as I have sometimes seen in our meetings. Such harsh notes and gesticulations are not exhibited among the angel choir. Their singing does not grate upon the ear. It is soft and melodious and comes without this great effort I have witnessed. It is not forced and strained, requiring physical exercise.”

Use of drums in worship

The Bible is not opposed to the use of musical instruments. The prophetess also encouraged the tasteful use of musical instruments. However, she was emphatic that it is better never to have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to create “a bedlam of noise” that shocks the senses and perverts the worship. “The Holy Spirit never reveals in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise.” (*2 Selected Messages*, p. 36). She stressed that music suited to the stage was foreign to the worship context. Forced or strained vocal deliveries that emphasize loudness, along with undignified, unrefined gestures and

“acting attitudes,” are out of keeping with the worship atmosphere of Heaven. The “softer,” “finer,” “sweeter,” “more silvery strains” are “more like angel music,” whereas opposite attributes tend to be driven by self-centered “love of praise.” (3 *Selected Messages*, p. 335).

The Bible clearly does not sanction drums in worship. God never gave drums for use in the sanctuary worship. The Lord specified three types of instruments to be used by the Levites in the Sanctuary. These are: harp, lyre, and the cymbal (1 Chronicles 25:1). In this list, the drum is not mentioned. Of the three instruments mentioned, the harp and lyre were, essentially, the same type of stringed instrument. They were both harps. One (the harp) played the higher register while the other (the lyre) played the lower range. The only percussive instrument listed is cymbal, an instrument that was apparently used to mark the pauses or intermissions. The same three musical instruments are mentioned in 1 Chronicles 25:6, with added instruction that the chosen musicians were to be under the instruction of their fathers (men of music, and most importantly, spiritual excellence). In 2 Chronicles 29:25, during the time of Hezekiah, it is made very clear that the instruction regarding music,

musical instruments, and musicians originated with God Himself.

Though drums were not employed in the sanctuary service, they were used in festivals and celebrations outside of the sanctuary. Here are some relevant texts: Genesis 31:27; 1 Samuel 10:5-6; Job 17:6; Job 21:11-14; Psalm 81:2; Isaiah 24:8; Jeremiah 31:4; Ezekiel 28:13.

There are also in the Bible where drums were associated with disobedience. In Isaiah 5:11-13, drums are used in disobedience of Israel. In 1 Chronicles 13:7-10, David disobeyed God's commandment about how the ark was to be transported. Most people ignorantly use this text to support drums, because of the wording that David danced in the Lord. Clearly, David had simply disobeyed God, and the Bible simply records facts of what David claimed to do, dance in the Lord. When he later repented, he did the right thing. But this time, drums (trimbrels) were not included (see 1 Chronicles 15:12-24).

Drums were also associated with battle. In Exodus 15:1-5, 20-21, drums were used in connection with the victory over the Egyptians at the Red Sea. In Judges 11:34, Jephthah's daughter met her father "with trimbrels and with dances." The

celebration was in response to the victory in the battle over the Ammonites. In 1 Samuel 18:6, 7, drums were used in celebration by the women after David killed Goliath. In Isaiah 30:31-33, drums were used in celebration over the Lord's victory over the Assyrians.

In Psalm 149, drums were used in celebration of God's victory over all his enemies. In Psalm 150, drums are used, but for some, verse 1 presents a problem because it speaks of praising God "in His Sanctuary." However, Psalm 150 is the final great finale to the Hallelujah series of Psalms that commence in Psalms 146. Psalm 150 concludes this series with a final call for everything (whether on earth or in heaven) that has breath to join in the praise anthem of God. Verse 1 is simply an invitation to those in heaven (the heavenly sanctuary) to worship God in "the firmament of His power" (3 *SDA Bible Commentary*, p. 941). The text reads: "Praise God in his sanctuary [which is in]: the firmament of his power."

Note that drums associated with battle emphasize the celebration that takes place when God granted victory. But some will say, we must use drums and dancing in the church to celebrate the victories God has given us in our spiritual battles over sin. The

question is: Did the Israelites win spiritual battles over sin in their lives? How come the Bible does not give a record of celebrating such spiritual victories?

It is interesting that there is no reference to drums (timbrel) being used in the New Testament. Historical records showed that drumming and dancing were banned because of their association with common and profane things. And now some of our sister Adventist local churches use drums that were never sanctioned by the God we worship. Just because our local Conferences make policies that allow for these contemporary drum use in worship does not makes it right with God. We cannot point at Conference policy to truly enjoin that which God disjoined.

Dancing in worship

Just as applause or clapping, waiving of hands, and drumming in the church, dancing has also made its way into some of our churches. However, from a careful study of the Bible, one can conclude that:

(1) Scripture and history indicate that dancing was never part of divine worship in the temple, synagogue, and early church;

(2) Of the twenty-eight references to dance or dancing in the Old Testament, only four can be

considered to refer to religious dancing (Psalms 149:3; 150:4; 2 Samuel 6:14-16), but none of these relate to worship in God's house, and two of them may not actually refer to dancing at all;

(3) Social dancing in Bible times was done mostly in conjunction with the celebration of religious events, especially the annual festivals, and performed outside the temple by women, children, or men, as separate groups, and not as male-female couples; and

(4) The Levitical choir was to be accompanied only by stringed instruments, the harp and the lyre (2 Chronicles 5:12-14; 1 Chronicles 16:42), and percussion instruments like drums and tambourines, which were commonly used for making dance music, were clearly omitted.

David, who is regarded by many as the primary example of religious dancing in the Bible, never instructed the Levites regarding when and how to dance in the temple. Had David believed that dancing should be a component of divine worship, no doubt he would have given instructions regarding it to the Levite musicians he chose for the ministry of music at the temple. Also, David is the founder of the music ministry at the temple. He gave clear instruction to the 4,000 Levite musicians regarding

when to sing and what instruments to use to accompany their choir (1 Chronicles 23:5, 25-31). His omission of dancing in the divine worship can hardly be an oversight. Rather, it tells us that David distinguished between the sacred music performed in God's house and the secular music played outside the temple for entertainment.

Supporters of contemporary styles of worship, with shaking of the bodies and dancing, refer to David's "Dancing before the Lord" in 2 Samuel 6:14. This passage (which reads: "And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a line ephod") has often been exploited to justify dancing in the church. Is it really so? Ellen G White explained:

"David's dancing in reverent joy before God has been cited by pleasure lovers in justification of the fashionable modern dance, but there is no ground for such an argument. In our day dancing is associated with folly and midnight reveling. Health and morals are sacrificed to pleasure. By the frequenters of the ballroom God is not an object of thought and reverence; prayer or the song of praise would be felt to be out of place in their assemblies. This test should be decisive. Amusements that have a tendency to weaken the love for sacred things and

lessen our joy in the service of God are not to be sought by Christians. The music and dancing in joyful praise to God at the removal of the ark had not the faintest resemblance to the dissipation of modern dancing. The one tended to the remembrance of God and exalted His holy name. The other is a device of Satan to cause men to forget God and to dishonor Him” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 707).

Careful and careless worshippers

In the book *Early Writings*, page 54, we read the following: “I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I saw two companies, one bowed down before the throne, deeply interested, while the other stood uninterested and careless. Those who were bowed before the throne would offer up their prayers and look to Jesus; then He would look to His Father, and appear to be pleading with Him. A light would come from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the praying company.

“Then I saw an exceeding bright light come from the Father to the Son, and from the Son it waved over the people before the throne. But few would receive this great light. Many came out from under it and immediately resisted it; others were careless

and did not cherish the light, and it moved off from them. Some cherished it, and went and bowed down with the little praying company. This company all received the light and rejoiced in it, and their countenances shone with its glory.”

“I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, ‘My Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace.

“I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, ‘Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much

power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan's object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God's children."

Careless worshippers "despise prophesyings" (2 Thessalonians 5:20) and reject the "Spirit of Prophecy" (Revelation 12:17; 19:10) and reject the light of Jesus and their prayers answered by Satan.

Celebratory standing in worship prayer

Jesus shows up in our worship every Sabbath, we behold Him by faith, in adoration, the celebratory congregation stands for Jesus in prayers. Must saints stand in prayer when the Word of God clearly states: "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:10)? As if in mockery, they sing the introit to Jesus "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psalms 95:6), and then they stand in prayer! Jesus Himself "kneeled down, and prayed" (Luke 22:41). Elijah "cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" to plead for rain; and must we rise on our feet to plead for the latter rain?

"We are living in perilous times. Seventh-day Adventists are professedly the commandment-keeping people of God; but they are losing their devotional spirit. This spirit of reverence for God

teaches men how to approach their Maker – with sacredness and awe through faith, not in themselves, but in a Mediator. Thus man is kept fast, under whatever circumstances he is placed. Man must come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy” (2SM 314).

We are also told: “Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God” (2SM 311-312). Must we exchange Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy teaching on prayer attitude for church policy that teaches that we must stand in all worship prayer sessions and only kneel in pastoral prayer?

Conclusion

Often, drumming, shouting, and dancing are characteristics of pagan worship. The Bible records examples of such apostasies in Exodus 32 and 1 Kings 18. The prophetess Ellen G White also wrote that shortly before probation closes for the world, drumming and dancing would be introduced into the worship services of our church. Though proponents will claim that such expressions are evidence of the Spirit’s leading, according to the prophetess, no encouragement should be given it (2SM 36-37).

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