

Vol.2 • 05

VISO VERUM



Public Evangelism

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VISO VERUM

A series of booklets concerning the progress of biblical light

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Editing and graphics: Tamina Bläsing - PIP

VISO VERUM (Lat.: I See Truth)

1st edition 2018

2nd extended Edition 2019

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Public Evangelism

Does God Require What He Once Forbid?

This booklet was written by Seventh-day Adventists to fellow Seventh-day Adventists (in present truth) to address the message of no public evangelism at this time.

The Command

Verse 19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:19-20

At the birth of the early church this command was given to go forth and teach all nations; and that same command was embraced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) from about 1850 (*The Early Years*, Volume 1, 191-196). The book *Evangelism* clearly shows that Seventh-day Adventists are called to do public evangelism and the church has eagerly obeyed the command for the last 160 years. Let us study why there is a message that says **not** to do public evangelism.

What is Public Evangelism?

Public evangelism is bringing the message of the everlasting gospel of the three angels of Revelation 14 to unbelievers in the world. This is accomplished in many ways – such as organizing camp meetings, seminars, outreaches, and mission trips. These methods are designed to arouse interest in Bible studies, with the goal of baptizing new converts into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These efforts of-

ten include giving the health message as the opening wedge to reach people in the community. Another method is for young people to go door to door offering Bible studies to those who are interested. There is also friendship evangelism, where SDA members reach out to help their neighbors with their temporal needs, with the intent of leading them into church. Then there are the public campaigns in pedestrian zones that have different stations set up to awaken people to their health and/or spiritual conditions, in order to get them interested in the Bible, and ultimately joining the church.

This is public evangelism using your time, effort, and money to reach outside the church with the focus of bringing new converts into the church. “Gotellittotheworld”, wasthecommandgiventomodernIsrael.

When using the term public evangelism in this booklet, we do not consider this to be when you meet someone who is not an Adventist, and you give them a copy of *The Great Controversy*; or if you are a doctor in your own practice, and you offer free copies of Ellen G. White books to your patients. We are to be witnesses of our faith where ever we are. This is considered as “personal witnessing”, rather than public evangelism.

How Can the World be Warned?

In response to the command to witness to the world the Adventist church has actively practiced public evangelism for about the last 160 years. Yet, for quite some time, it is evident that this work is no longer having a big impact on the world. What do we mean by this statement? At one time Adventism’s knowledge of health and healthy living was highly esteemed in the world, and our hospitals were very much sought out. It was in our hospitals that we were able to share the Adventist faith. But this time period is long gone. What happened? The Adventist church fell asleep. We are no longer a peculiar people. We have returned to that which God called us out of. Slowly, and over many years, the distinguishing line of separation between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the other churches (and the world), has faded. As a result, the vast majority of Adventists now eat, dress, talk, and behave in the same manner as the

other churches and the world. We have forgotten our calling to be a peculiar people. This is why the church's work of public evangelism does not have the influence upon the world it once had. The truth of how Adventism left its unique status is demonstrated in the following studies: *The "Four Generations"*, *"The Desolation of Jerusalem"*, and *"William Miller's Second Dream"*¹.

So how is the world to be warned? What must we do in order that the work of public evangelism will have the effect it once had? Let us read what Sister White says:

"The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The world can only be warned by seeing those who believe the truth sanctified through the truth, acting upon high and holy principles, showing in a high, elevated sense, the line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who trample them under their feet. The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between those who have the seal of God and those who keep a spurious rest day." 7BC, 980.8

We take from this quote that the world (unbelievers) can only be warned when they see God's people (Seventh-day Adventists) live the truth. What does this mean?

In *Testimonies for the Church*² Sister White describes those traveling on the narrow way will dress, talk, and act differently than those

¹ See: Ellen Gould White *Early Writings*, 81.2-83.8

² "At the conference at Battle Creek, May 27, 1856, I was shown in vision some things that concern the church generally. The glory and majesty of God were made to pass before me. Said the angel: 'He is terrible in His majesty, yet ye realize it not; terrible in His anger, yet ye offend Him daily. Strive to enter 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, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' These roads are distinct, separate, in opposite directions. One leads to eternal life, the other to eternal death. I saw the distinction between these roads, also the distinction between the companies traveling them. The roads are opposite; one is broad and smooth, the other narrow and rugged. So the parties that travel them are opposite in character, in life, in dress, and in conversation." *CET*, 156.1; *1T*, 127.1

"Those who travel in the narrow way are talking of the joy and happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy, sacred joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, nor talk like them, nor act like them. A pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled it Himself. His followers see His footsteps, and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely; so can they, if they follow in His footsteps." *CET*, 156.2; *1T*, 127.2

who travel on the broad way. So we have two ways: the narrow and the broad. The only means for people walking on the broad path to be called to the narrow way is to see a people who are actually walking on the narrow way. What good is it if you just talk and point people to the narrow way while you are walking on the broad way? Your offer does not appear sincere to the people walking on the broad path.

As stated before, Seventh-day Adventists in large measure do not dress, talk, nor behave differently from the world anymore. Why would the world then be attracted to the Adventist faith when there is no difference? Now we would like to expound why this movement believes that at the present time we should not do public evangelism, but rather focus on a work within Adventism.

No Public Evangelism at this Time - Why?

We believe our current focus is not to evangelize the world, but rather to go to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and reform her. Why? There are a couple of reasons. One reason as stated in the previous section, is that the majority of Adventism are worldly (Laodicean condition). In order to give the final warning to the world, God's church must once again become a shining example for others to live up to the expectations of the law of God. Ellen White tells us: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work." (*ISM*, 121.1) God's church, Seventh-day Adventism, needs a revival.

"When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. ... One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation- that the connection between God and His people is close and decided." *FLB*, 345.3

"... When we as a people understand what this book (Revelation) means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. ..." *TM*, 113.2

From the Book *The Faith I Live By*, page 345 and *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 113, we see that a revival comes through a better understanding of the books of Daniel and Revelation; meaning that proph-

ecy will bring a revival to individuals in God's church, which leads to individual reformation. Revival and reformation have to go hand in hand. Sister White tells us: "Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices." *RH*, February 25, 1902.8

Those who are familiar with the study of the reformlines, are familiar with the principle first reformation and then the revival. The first angel's message brings a message of reform, which when heeded by the church will bring a revival, the second phase. This seems contrary to what was mentioned above, yet they harmonize. The reformline depicts the line of a movement/church while the sequence mentioned above depicts an individual being.

- A message of reform is designed to revive an individual.
- Once the individual is revived and experiences reformation, then the church will be revived.

This revival of an individual comes through the prophetic reform message (Daniel 11:40-45) and goes hand in hand with individual reformation. We know that reformation comes to the church first. What does reformation actually mean? Reformation comes from Latin and means to shape again. The church, through reform and revival will return to the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16). What is Adventism's present condition? According to Revelation 3:14-21 and to Sister White, Adventism is described as the Laodicean church. Adventists began as the Philadelphian church in the time period of our pioneers, it is to this condition the church must return. Through a prophetic reform message (first angel's message), we as individual Seventh-day Adventists will be revived from our lukewarm state and will return or reform to the condition of being hot, and on fire for the Lord,. When this work within the church is accomplished then the world will see a people that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus, and then many will come and join us on the narrow way.

The present condition of Adventism is similar to a person with cancer and has a remedy to cure his cancer, but he does not use it. Yet, this

same person will tell others with cancer “you have to do this and do that in order to get well again”. The other cancer patient then says, “If your cure is that good, why don’t you first apply it to yourself?” That is what Adventists do. We are a sick church (Laodicea) and we also have the remedy: Ellen G. White in her book *Testimony for the church*, Volume 4, page 88³, calls the gold, raiment, and eye salve the remedy and represent the everlasting gospel. Sadly, we do not apply the remedy to ourselves, instead we are trying to apply it to the world. But that is not how it works. First, Adventism has to be healed, then we can go to the world.

Another example: Have you ever had the experience of being in a group and you are given a task and in the group one person stands out among all in the group? He or she is passionate, their entire heart and mind is on the project and he or she give this vibe of energy and encouragement to the people around them. This is exactly what Adventism once was and must become again; to inspire people around them to walk on the path of duty, to keep God’s law and to bear the cross every day. As a church we have lost this. We are not inspiring to the world any longer; this is why public evangelism has such little effect on others. We need to return to our first love. Right now we are living in the time when the church needs to be experience this reformation.

3 “Faith and love are the true riches, the pure gold which the True Witness counsels the lukewarm to buy. However rich we may be in earthly treasure, all our wealth will not enable us to buy the precious remedies that cure the disease of the soul called lukewarmness. Intellect and earthly riches were powerless to remove the defects of the Laodicean church, or to remedy their deplorable condition. They were blind, yet felt that they were well off. The Spirit of God did not illumine their minds, and they did not perceive their sinfulness; therefore they did not feel the necessity of help.” 4T, 88.1

“To be without the graces of the Spirit of God is sad indeed; but it is a more terrible condition to be thus destitute of spirituality and of Christ, and yet try to justify ourselves by telling those who are alarmed for us that we need not their fears and pity. Fearful is the power of self-deception on the human mind! What blindness! setting light for darkness and darkness for light! The True Witness counsels us to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eyesalve. The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire is faith and love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested the more brilliant is its luster. The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience. The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise. God has given His church eyes which He requires them to anoint with wisdom, that they may see clearly; but many would put out the eyes of the church if they could; for they would not have their deeds come to the light, lest they should be reproved. The divine eyesalve will impart clearness to the understanding. Christ is the depository of all graces. He says: ‘Buy of Me.’” 4T, 88.2

Another reason why we believe that we should not do public evangelism at this time is that God tells us in 1 Peter 4:17, Ezekiel 9:6, and Romans 2:9 that judgement begins at the house of God.

We live at the end of the world. We are expecting Christ's soon return. It is standard Adventist understanding that when Michael stands up (Daniel 12:1) human probation closes. From the Bible verses mentioned above we can clearly see the truth that probation ends first for God's house, His sanctuary (Seventh-day Adventism). First God's church is judged, then the world. This is only fair since God's church has more light to live according to God's law, and thus be an example for the world, and then world can follow the example. It is out of the scope of this study to address when the probation for Adventism closes, but we encourage you to take up the study of "Daniel 11:40-45 and the Reformlines".

We believe that for Adventists probation closes at the Sunday law in the United States. In *Christian Experience and Teachings*⁴, page 191 Sister White wrote that when the decree (Sunday law) goes forth God's people will receive the seal, it is then that you are sealed for eternity. Knowing this, why would we use our time, money, and talents to focus on evangelizing outside the church to bring people into the church, especially when we know that the brethren in the SDA church close their probation earlier? Now more than ever before, we are to go within Adventism and try to awaken God's people out of their Laodician condition and become part of the Ephesian church. When we do public evangelism we are neglecting the work and duty to our brethren.

Verse 7 "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. **8** When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from

4 "What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mold, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, - these are receiving the heavenly mold, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity." *CET*, 191.1

his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, **9** if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” Ezekiel 33: 7-9

In summary, this movement believes that at this time we are **not** to focus on evangelizing the world because Seventh-day Adventism has departed from the way of truth and needs the experience of revival and reformation among them through a reform message (Daniel 11:40-45) which leads to reformation among the members and the revival to prepare the church to warn the world later. For Adventism probation closes earlier than the world and it is our duty to first warn our brethren in our church, otherwise the blood of the those lost the Lord will require of us.

The Tarrying Time

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

Luke 24:49

As mentioned in the beginning of this pamphlet, the disciples were given the command to evangelize the entire world, but first they were to tarry in Jerusalem. Why? To wait for the power of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost). Without the Holy Spirit their work would be futile. They would have done the work in their own strength and it would have had no effect. But they obeyed the command of the Lord and stayed in Jerusalem. After Pentecost the message was given to the world. From this we understand that today we are also to stay in Jerusalem (God’s church - Adventism), then the biggest evangelical event that planet earth has ever seen will occur. This will take place after the national Sunday law in the United States during the loud cry. We must see that this time period in which we are not to focus outside of the church, but within the church, is the very time in which the church is to be reformed and revived as its members are revived and reformed, and this is the work of preparation for the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit in history.

So when does this time period start, and when does it end? At this point we would like to refer you to the study of “The Reformlines”, “The Latter Rain” - “9/11”, and “Ezra 7:9” as these give the background as to where to place the exclusive internal work of God’s church. As we go through the study of the Reformlines we see that when a divine symbol comes down this is where God starts to test His people. Here are a few examples:

Moses: On the way to Egypt an angel comes down because Moses had not circumcised his son. Moses’ wife performs the duty and they are permitted to continue their journey.

Christ: At Christ’s baptism the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descends and Christ is led into the wilderness to be tested.

Cyrus: Michael descends to help Gabriel (Daniel 10:13). The first decree is issued and God’s people are tested to see if they will return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

Millerites: On August 11, 1840 the angel of Revelation 10 descends and God’s people are tested on eating “The little book”.

In every one of those lines we see that there was an exclusive internal work for God’s people: The Israelites, the Jews, and also the Millerites.

Since we know testing begins when the divine being comes down, let us look at our time period as to when this happened for us. When the angel of Revelation 18 came down on 9/11⁵ (LS, 411.3⁶; 9T, 12-14⁷), then

5 “Now comes the word that I have declared that New York is to be swept away by a tidal wave. This I have never said. I have said, as I looked at the great buildings going up there, story after story: ‘What terrible scenes will take place when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth! Then the words of Revelation 18:1-3 will be fulfilled.’ The whole of the eighteenth chapter of Revelation is a warning of what is coming on the earth. But I have no light in particular in regard to what is coming on New York, only I know that one day the great buildings there will be thrown down by the turning and overturning of God’s power. From the light given me, I know that destruction is in the world. One word from the Lord, one touch of His mighty power, and these massive structures will fall. Scenes will take place the fearfulfulness of which we cannot imagine.” LS, 411.5

6 “Not many years ago, a brother laboring in New York City published some very startling notices regarding the destruction of that city. I wrote immediately to the ones in charge of the work there, saying that it was not wise to publish such notices; that thus an excitement might be aroused which would result in a fanatical movement, hurting the cause of God. It is enough to present the truth of the word of God to the people. Startling notices are detrimental to the progress of the work.” [REVIEW AND HERALD, JULY 5, 1906.]; LS, 411.3

7 Editor’s note: This footnote you can see on Page 21

the test of God's people began. The message of the angel of Revelation 18 is the same as the second angel which descended on April 19, 1844. April 19, 1844 marks the beginning of the tarrying time for the Millerites. Therefore we can mark the tarrying time at 9/11. These are two witnesses (9/11 test starts; 9/11 tarrying time is marked) to show that the exclusive internal work for God's people started at 9/11. They are to stay and labor in Jerusalem before they are sent to the entire world, just as the disciples were to tarry in Jerusalem before Pentecost. God is testing His people now, and soon (at the national Sunday law) the Adventists will have closed their probation and the loud cry increases to its climax, as it parallels Pentecost.

In this time period we are to labor in the ranks of our brethren (Adventism). If we disobey by focusing on public evangelism, we are actually going outside of Jerusalem in our strength to proclaim the everlasting gospel. This false work will not have much effect, since the Holy Spirit is not in it; and the Lord will require the blood of the brethren who went out in their own strength.

The question we now must answer is – can God at one time give us the command to evangelize the world and at another time tell us to “stay home”? Sister White has many quotes from her books counseling the church about the need of reaching out to the lost. Can God require what He once forbid? Let us examine this more fully in the next section.

Does God Require What He Once Forbid?

It is true that from the beginning of Adventism the work given was to evangelize. That work continues to this day. There are plenty of quotes by Sister White to justify the evangelistic policy of the SDA church. However, timing and context is everything. As we already stated in the previous section, we can show that now is not the time to evangelize the world, but rather to evangelize within church. We must carefully consider this important issue and ask ourselves: “Would God require what He once had forbidden? Would God require us today to stay within the church (Jerusalem), even though, through His prophet, the church is repeatedly counseled to go into the cities

and do a work there? Would God **not** have His people go into the cities, and instead stay at home by going to the church?” Yes, God would give such a command as a special test for Adventism at this time.

Abraham was called out of Babylon to serve one God and this God has no pleasure in human sacrifices. Abraham was known far and wide for fearing God and keeping His commandments. The upright character of Abraham was especially known that he would never kill, nor sacrifice human blood upon God’s holy altar. Then why did God command Abraham to take his son, his only son that he loved, and offer this son as a burnt offering? Was this not contrary to God’s promise to Abraham of having an heir? This command goes against all that he had practiced for so many years! Imagine the shame and reproach Abraham would have had to bear from his neighbours after sacrificing his son. Why would God require him to do that which He had once forbidden? The answer is plain, God was testing Abraham’s faith, his love of God, and his obedience. As Abraham climbed the mountain with his beloved son, he did not know in what manner God would provide Himself a sacrifice. But what Abraham did know, was the voice of His Lord, and he obeyed.

So it is with us today. God requires obedience to His command, even though that command goes against what He had required previously. It is a test, a test of our love for Him. The question is, do we know God’s voice? Can we hear Him speaking to us? Are we willing to take the shame and the reproach for doing that which is opposite to what everyone believes to be right? Satan told Abraham that he must be deceived, and that God would not require what He once forbid. Today we hear that same accusing voice saying, how can we stay within the church today, when God had called us to do public evangelism?

“The command was expressed in words that must have wrung with anguish that father’s heart: ‘Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest ... and offer him there for a burnt offering.’ **Isaac was the light of his home**, the solace of his old age, above all else the **inheritor of the promised blessing**. The loss of such a son by accident or disease would have been heart rending to the fond fa-

ther; it would have bowed down his whitened head with grief; but he was commanded to shed the blood of that son with his own hand. It seemed to him a fearful impossibility.

“Satan was at hand to suggest that he must be deceived, for the divine law commands, ‘Thou shalt not kill’ Exodus 20:13, and God would not require what He had once forbidden. Going outside his tent, Abraham looked up to the calm brightness of the unclouded heavens, and recalled the promise made nearly fifty years before, that **his seed should be innumerable as the stars.** If this promise was to be fulfilled through Isaac, how could he be put to death? Abraham was tempted to believe that he might be under a delusion. In his doubt and anguish he **bowed** upon the earth, and prayed, as he had never prayed before, for some confirmation of the command if he must perform this terrible duty. **He remembered the angels sent to reveal to him God’s purpose to destroy Sodom, and who bore to him the promise of this same son Isaac, and he went to the place where he had several times met the heavenly messengers, hoping to meet them again, and receive some further direction; but none came to his relief. Darkness seemed to shut him in; but the command of God was sounding in his ears, ‘Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest’. That command must be obeyed, and he dared not delay. Day was approaching, and he must be on his journey.”** *PP*, 148.2-3

Abraham knew the voice of God. This made all the difference. He “simply” had to obey. It does not matter what God requires from us. It is our duty to know his voice and obey it. That is how the Lord tests our trust and faith in Him.

If we know God’s voice and have an experience with Him, and this should give us enough faith to obey Him in whatever He requires of us. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27). “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” (Revelation 14:4). These are also the 144,000.

Go to the Lost House of Israel

If we are not to go to the world at this time, where are we to go? Because we see apostasy in the church, we may become discouraged

from giving the message, but as already stated we are to stay within Jerusalem (Adventism). What does this look like and what is the purpose? For context let us first read Ezekiel, chapters 2 and 3:

Verse 1 “And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. **2** And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. **3** And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. **4** For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God. **5** And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house), yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. **6** And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. **7** And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. **8** But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. **9** And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; **10** And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.” Ezekiel 2:1-10

Verse 1 “Moreover he said unto me, **Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. 2** So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. **3** And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. **4** And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. **5** For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; **6** Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would

have hearkened unto thee. **7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me:** for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted. **8 Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.** **9 As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.** **10** Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. **11** And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. Ezekiel 3:1-11

For whom is Ezekiel given a message? To God's church. Numerous times we read that Ezekiel was sent to the house of Israel. Why? To bring them a message from the Lord. God used Ezekiel as His agent to warn His people. We read that Ezekiel was to eat the roll of a book which was handed to him. This scroll was written within and without. So on this scroll were written messages of lamentations, and mourning, and woe, not sweet uplifting messages, but sorrowful messages. What was Ezekiel to do with the scroll (message)? He was to eat it. But why? How can you eat a message, and what happens after you eat it?

Let us consider what happens when we eat a meal. After chewing the food in our mouth, we swallow it, and then our stomach digests it. What actually happens to the food you have eaten and is then fully digested? It becomes part of you. I am sure you have heard the phrase: "You are what you eat". Well, this is also how it works with spiritual food, the message. God has given us spiritual food, the message of Daniel 11:40-45, and we are to eat it. We need to chew it, to swallow it, and digest it. We must understand this message and its impact. We need to get it into our heart and let it become part of us. This message will change our life. And when it does, we will live accordingly in the present truth the Lord has given us. This truth will govern our goals, our dreams, and our daily living. This is what it means to eat the message. And where are we to take this message that has become a part of us? We are to take the message to the house of Israel,

by speaking God's words and by our actions, just like the messengers/prophets we read about in the Scriptures. It is our duty to take this present truth to the Adventist church.

In the above passage of Ezekiel we are told that when this message is brought to the house of Israel, they will not hearken, neither will the people want to hear it. This is the same response we will face when we bring present truth to the Adventist church. People do not want to hear the message that their probation is about to close. None of the kings of Israel liked to hear such a message. So for us in our time. You could ask yourself, why even bother going to the Adventist church? For two reasons: first there are those within the house of God who are truly thirsting for the truth, and if no one goes to the church to give the message, to give the water (the latter rain message), these people will die with those who are not thirsting. These brethren who are thirsting need to be reached. The second reason is that you will establish yourself in the truth. We read that when Ezekiel went to Israel he was not to be afraid of their words, nor be distressed at their looks. Why? Because the Lord made Ezekiel's forehead harder than flint, as an adamant. Adamant is a diamond, but it also can be translated as "unshakable." A diamond is the hardest of the gemstones, and is used to cut the other stones. It truly is unshakable. This is the condition we need to be in, if we want to receive the seal of God.

Let us confirm this with a quote from Sister White:

"... Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads – it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved – just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land to give us warning, that we may know what is coming." *10MR, 252.1*

What does it mean to do be sealed? It means to be fully settled into the truth intellectually and spiritually so you cannot be moved. You are fixed for eternity. You must have an experience in understanding the truth (intellectually) and an experience of living the truth (spiritually) to receive the seal of God. You experience the revival and the

reformation in your personal life by receiving, believing, and living the present truth for our time. This is what it means to be sealed. Let us read from Sister White as to where the seal is placed upon us:

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, – candidates for heaven. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.” *5T*, 216.2; *CET*, 191.2

Connecting this passage with chapters two and three of Ezekiel means that to have a forehead of diamond means to have the seal of God on us. Why is the seal placed on the forehead and not somewhere else? What part of our brain is behind our forehead? It is the frontal lobe.

The function of the frontal lobe involves the ability to project **future consequences resulting from current actions, the choice between good and bad actions (or better and best) (also known as conscience), the override and suppression of socially unacceptable responses,** and the determination of similarities and differences between things or event.” Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frontal_lobe

The frontal lobe is where the ability to choose between right and wrong takes place. The frontal lobe is essential for us. We receive the seal of God on our forehead because we have chosen to be faithful to Him. This is a very important subject. We need to choose! We receive the seal of God by choosing to have this intellectual and spiritual experience so we cannot be moved. Every time we come to a test, a right decision is required. How do we grow in the experience of coming to the point where we cannot be moved? When we take the present truth message to “God’s rebellious house” (Adventism). What happens when you take the message to someone who rebels? Will they like it? No. Most likely they will give you many reasons as to why what you are saying is wrong.

In the literal we know that soldiers are trained in various battle situations to discover their weak areas. When the enemy hits a weak spot, what does the soldier do? He strengthens his weak point. When he strengthens all his weak areas what happens? He becomes an elite soldier. This is similar for the soldier of Christ in the spiritual battle. When you come with the Lord's message to the church and they find a weak spot and a question is raised, you go back and study, and then return with an answer. Then your answer might raise another question. Again you study, and return with an answer for the new question, and so on. This will give you spiritual training and you will become an elite soldier for the truth of the Lord. You will grow in the message and be able to defend the message to the point where you are so fully settled into the truth that you are unshakable.

This is the experience the Lord wants us to have. And we can only obtain it by taking the message of the hour to God's church. This is our "training camp", and our preparation for the soon coming perilous times. Then we will stand before the kings of the earth and we will give a reason for our faith and defend the truth. When this time arrives there will not be time to tell the people, "I am sorry, I was a little wrong here or there". Or "please give me some more time to study because I am unsure". Now is the time to figure out what you believe. Now is the time to be fully settled into the truth; once the storm breaks upon our house we want to know that it was built on solid ground, and we will not be shaken.

This is the reason why we so earnestly need to take the message to the Adventist church. It prepares us to stand. If we simply just stay at home or with like-minded brethren because we are sad or frustrated that only a few people are responding to the call of the hour, we will not have this training which we so urgently need. In the church they will question our theories and we will see how little we know and where we need to do further study to become stronger. If we just stay at home or with like-minded brethren, our message will not be questioned in the same way, and we will not realize our weak spots as much. I make mention of this simply for those who feel impressed not to go to the Adventist churches anymore. For as we know, it is

also very important to fellowship with like – minded brethren in order to obtain further light, fellowship, and encouragement. It was also clearly shown that the command is to take the message to the church as previously stated, thus making the church our “Training camp”.

Summary

We are not do public evangelism at this time in the sense of using our money, time, and talents with the goal of bringing people from the world into the church. Now is the time for the church to be reformed and revived (by present truth). Then the world can be truly warned, because probation closes for Adventism first, then for the world. The period of time for **not** doing public evangelism begins at 9/11 and continues until the national Sunday law in the United States. Even though Adventism was given the clear command to evangelize the world, we saw from the story of Abraham that God tests His people by sometimes requiring what He once had forbidden. It is a test of true obedience and of recognizing the voice of God. God requires us now to labor **within** Jerusalem until it is time to go to the world, despite the fact that Adventism was given the command to do public evangelism.

In closing, we saw in Ezekiel chapters two and three that God gives a message of warning which is to be eaten by Ezekiel (representing God’s faithful people) and that message is to be taken to Adventism (house of Israel) which will not hearken to the message of the hour. In obedience to God by taking the message, Ezekiel will now be fully settled in the truth intellectually and spiritually, so that he cannot be moved and will receive the seal of God for eternity.

Footnote from page 11:

“On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: ‘How can we best glorify God?’ The Lord was not in their thoughts.” 9T, 12.1

“I thought: ‘Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man.’” 9T, 12.2

“As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah.” LS, 413.3; 9T, 12.3

“The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: ‘They are perfectly safe.’ But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines.” 9T, 13.1

“I am instructed that when the Lord’s time comes, should no change have taken place in the hearts of proud, ambitious human beings, men will find that the hand that had been strong to save will be strong to destroy. No earthly power can stay the hand of God. No material can be used in the erection of buildings that will preserve

them from destruction when God's appointed time comes to send retribution on men for their disregard of His law and for their selfish ambition." 9T, 13.2

"There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them." 9T, 13.3

"The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. Of the men who by robbery and extortion are amassing great riches, it is written: 'Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.' (James 5:3-6)." 9T, 13.4

"But who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians 'knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away' (Matthew 24:39). They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin." 9T, 14.1

"The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place." 9T, 14.2

“Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. ... Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate. ... The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.’ (Isaiah 24:1-8).” 9T, 14.3

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