

Imminent Crisis

#0145

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—October 21, 1976

Our text this evening is Revelation 12:17. I'm so thankful for this book of Revelation. It's focused especially on the last generation. Our text tonight deals particularly with the last battle in the age-long war between Christ and Satan. Will you repeat this verse with me?

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" Revelation 12:17.

There are three things that the Devil is angry about: he's angry with this woman; he's angry with the commandment-keeping practice of her children; he's angry with the testimony of Jesus which they have and hold on to and won't let go of. This tells me that if I am heart-to-heart with Jesus, I will love this woman, I will love the commandments, and I will love His testimony, which is the Spirit of Prophecy.

The imminent crisis into which we are even now entering concerns all three of these—the church, the law, and the testimony, which is the Spirit of Prophecy. In *Great Controversy*, page 592, I read (this is the last sentence of the chapter "The Impending Conflict" dealing with the approaching crisis in this nation over the Sunday law exalting the commandments of men in place of the law of God):

"Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance..."

The fulfillment of this may be nearer than anybody realizes here tonight.

"...Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected..."

Now our sentence:

"...In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which

keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ' (Revelation 12:17)." *Great Controversy*, page 592.

The issue over the law centers especially in that Fourth Commandment dealing with the creation Sabbath, in contrast with the false Sabbath—the mark of the beast.

Now, you notice that the dragon is wroth with the church not only because the commandments of God are kept, but because the church *has* something. What is it? The testimony of Jesus. And in Revelation 19:10, the angel plainly says that the testimony of Jesus is what? The Spirit of Prophecy.

In *Selected Messages*, Book 1, I read:

"The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish' (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony. There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic" *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 48.

Now notice that last sentence and think of that verse which we've just read in Revelation 12:17:

"There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic" *Ibid*.

What's the word in Revelation 12:17 that goes with satanic? The dragon. What's the word that goes with hatred? Wroth, angry.

So, in the church, there are two things which are the object of his special attack: the law—especially the Sabbath, and the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy. Doubtless, much of this conflict over the law is concerned with events in the world around us, but much of the battle over the testimony of Jesus will be witnessed *within* this movement. And it is this that I wish especially to notice tonight.

Some 70 years ago, there came a great crisis in the remnant church, and the medical missionary work was involved in it. That apostasy was called the "alpha of deadly heresy," and the prophet said that the omega would follow. You'll find the chapter on this in *Selected Messages*, Chapter 24, "The Alpha and the Omega." I shall not read all that tonight. I simply call your attention to the fact that 70 years ago, this movement was involved in a great battle over the validity, the authority, the authenticity, the dependability of the Spirit of Prophecy.

And interestingly enough, this attack was led by a man who, up until shortly before it, steadfastly asserted his loyalty to the Spirit of Prophecy. In fact, again and again, he gave glory to the God of Heaven for placing in the remnant church this wonderful gift. But Dr. John Harvey Kellogg came to the place where he no longer accepted the *Testimonies* of Ellen White as the voice of God to his soul.

You know, dear friends, it's an easy thing to quote the *Testimonies* when there's something we want to prove or promote. It's another thing to accept them when they lay bare the need of our own hearts and the sins of our own lives. Now there were many different facets of this problem that arose 70 years ago, and I shall not have time tonight to go into that. Whole volumes have been written about it. And I'm sure the whole story will never be fully known until we examine the books during the 1,000-year judgment in Heaven.

But when I realize that, as I say, the man who led in this was a man who was a great reformer, a man who up until the crisis came was looked upon as a great supporter of the Spirit of Prophecy, to me the lesson comes for myself and for each one of us: "...let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). So I want to study with you for a few moments tonight what I believe is very helpful in getting a true basis of faith in both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

You know, there are those in other churches who have come to look upon even the Bible as something that we can't depend upon. Higher criticism has robbed multitudes of faith in the Holy Word of God. On the other hand, there are those in some of the other churches who have taken the position of verbal inspiration and who believe that word by word, syllable by syllable, as Moses and David and Daniel and Peter and Paul wrote, the very words were given them of God.

"Well," you say, "isn't that true?" I want to study it with you a little tonight, friends, for since the issue, both with the world and within the church, is over the inspiration of this movement in the gift of prophecy, we as members of the remnant church and we as medical missionaries, need to have our feet on solid ground.

In studying this with you, I'd like to begin with John, the sixth chapter. You'll remember that this sixth chapter of John tells the story of Christ feeding the 5,000 with the five little barley loaves. The people were thrilled as they saw this miracle, and they were ready to do what? Crown Him king. But the next day, over in the synagogue at Capernaum, preaching to that same group of people, He said some things that caused them—all of them except the 12—to do what? To leave Him.

What a strange thing—one evening they were ready to crown Him king; the next evening they were ready to leave Him forever! What made the difference? The first day He had worked a miracle, and they were sure that He was indeed a man of God. The second day He had told them some straight truth and, unadorned by any miracle on that day, He announced Himself as the living bread which came from where? Heaven.

This was the message of John six. And He told them, [paraphrase] “Unless you accept that, and unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, unless you accept the fact that this person that you see standing here as merely a man is really the Son of God, you will have no life.” And so they were offended by this because they could not see how He could really have come from Heaven. They said that they knew all about Him.

Look at the 41st verse:

“The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?” John 6:41–42.

Do you see their problem? This was why the Jewish nation rejected Jesus. They might have accepted Him as a prophet, as a religious teacher, but when He said, “I have come from heaven, I’m the Son of God, and unless you accept that, you have no life in you,” they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Now, that same mystery of the union of that which comes from Heaven and that which is born of earth, that same mystery which is in the person of Christ, is in the Bible. The same mysterious union. Of the Bible, as well as of Christ, it can be said “...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” (John 1:14). There’s a wonderful little chapter on this in *Volume 5*, pages 746–747:

“The union of the divine and the human, manifest in Christ, exists also in the Bible. The truths revealed are all ‘given by inspiration of God;’ yet they are expressed in the words of men and are adapted to human needs. Thus it may be said of the Book of God, as it was of Christ, that ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.’ And this fact, so far from being an argument against the Bible, should strengthen faith in it as the word of God” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 747.

Now, which is the Bible then: is it divine or is it human? And we’ll ask about Jesus, going back of the Bible. Which is Jesus: is He divine or is He human? Which is He? He’s both. Is He the Son of God? Is He the Son of man? Did He call Himself both? That’s right. Is He both? Yes. Do you believe that? Do you comprehend that? No, you don’t. No, no. But it’s the truth, dear friends. Thank God we can believe many things that we can’t comprehend.

“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...” 1 Timothy 3:16.

But it takes a revelation such as Peter had there in Caesarea Philippi to accept that, not understand it, to believe it.

“...flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven” Matthew 16:17.

In the book *Great Controversy*, there is an author’s preface or introduction. Sister White herself dealt at length with this great subject of inspiration. And if you’re not already familiar, very familiar, with this chapter, I recommend it to your study because on this point is coming a great issue, friends. On this point.

Just picking a few sentences from this, *Great Controversy*, page six:

“The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not of human composition” *Great Controversy*, Introduction, page 6.

Did Moses have anything to do with the Ten Commandments? Not one syllable. Who spoke them? God. Who wrote them? God.

“The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not of human composition” *Ibid*.

Do you know what the next word is? But.

“But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human” *Ibid*.

Now, this is *not* the Ten Commandments, you understand. The Ten Commandments are all what? Divine. But the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is a union of what? The divine and the human.

“Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us’ John 1:14” *Ibid*.

“God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven” *Ibid*.

Oh I love this sentence, friends, “nonetheless from Heaven.” Is the Bible from Heaven? Oh, yes. In fact, it says it’s “*nonetheless* from Heaven” even though it was

written by whom? By men. The Holy Spirit guided their minds in the selection of what to write. The Scribes, from Moses to John, who penned the Bible, were not under the influence of the Spirit like a spiritualistic medium is that writes. No, no.

God used the *mind* of Moses, He used the *mind* of Daniel, He used the *mind* of Isaiah, the *mind* of Peter, the *mind* of Paul. If you're familiar with the Bible at all, you recognize the difference in style, in choice of words, among the various writers? Correct? Yes! Well, which is it, then, when we read Isaiah: is it God speaking or is it Isaiah speaking? Well, it's both. It's both. But it's "nonetheless from Heaven." That's the point I want you to get. It's "nonetheless from Heaven."

"The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God..." *Ibid.*, page 6–7.

What is the human language here said to be? An "imperfect expression." God does, may I put it this way, He does the best He can with the language we have. And in eternity, we'll learn a lot of things that we never got to learn here. But we can learn enough here to be saved. Aren't you thankful, friends? Yes.

"The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God..." *Ibid.*

All scripture is given by what? The inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine and so forth.

Now, in those very letters that Paul wrote to Timothy, we have some interesting things that show us that Paul was writing very much as a human being. 2 Timothy 3:16 we've just quoted. Now, look at 2 Timothy 4:13. He's writing from his dungeon in Rome:

"The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou come, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments" 2 Timothy 4:13.

Do you think Paul had a vision to write this to Timothy? He was cold there in his cell, and he asked Timothy to bring him his coat. I ask again, do you think Paul had a vision that caused him to write this? Well, now we'll dissect this part out, then as all... what? Or will we? We had better not, my dear friends. This is the point I want you to get. This is something the higher critics don't understand with reference to the Bible, and it's something that the lower critics don't understand with reference to the Spirit of Prophecy. They suppose that they can sit in judgment, and with their vast knowledge and training, they can go through the Bible and tell you at least *some* things in it that are purely human, and some things may be from God.

Now I'm going to read you something very interesting here from *Selected Messages*, Book 1, pages 16–18:

“Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired, had better cover their faces... No man can improve the Bible by suggesting what the Lord meant to say or ought to have said. Men should let God take care of His own Book... I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. Some look to us gravely and say, ‘Don’t you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?’ This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God... All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble. Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity...”
Selected Messages, Book 1, pages 16–18.

Now about this time, there was a man, and he was a prominent man among us—one of the leaders of our work, who wrote some articles in our church paper, the *Review and Herald*, on inspiration. And in it, he took the position that there were *degrees* of inspiration, that some books of the Bible were more inspired than others. I think he even gave some examples. But the prophet writes on page 23 of this *Selected Messages*, Book 1:

“Both in the [Battle Creek] Tabernacle and in the college the subject of inspiration has been taught, and finite men have taken it upon themselves to say that some things in the Scriptures were inspired and some were not. I was shown that the Lord did not inspire the articles on inspiration published in the *Review*, neither did He approve their endorsement before our youth in the college... God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this” *Ibid.*, page 23.

Early in this same decade of the 1880s, the prophet of God sent a testimony from California to the church in Battle Creek. And a leading man in the church, the local church and in the general church, took the responsibility of laying that letter, that testimony, aside and didn’t even read it to the church for a long time. Do you know why? He said he believed in Sister White as a prophet, but he didn’t think that what she had written in that testimony was something she had seen in vision, and he thought that

she had just been influenced by some reports that had come to her. If you read the first hundred pages of *Volume 5*, you'll see the whole story.

And as the result of taking that course of action, that man received a message of stern rebuke from God through His prophet, telling him that he had missed the point, that he'd put his influence on the wrong side, and urging him and the church at Battle Creek to understand how God uses the Spirit of Prophecy, and that He has not appointed men to act as censors or critics.

In *Volume 5*, page 691, you have a most earnest appeal on this point. I read:

"And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the *Testimonies*. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the *Testimonies* speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 691.

Who's Belial? That's the Devil. So a person who understands what is being said here must either eventually, and *will* eventually come out full, complete, loyal to the church, the Sabbath, and the Spirit of Prophecy, or else eventually, he'll give up all three, friends. I can tell you that. That's the imminent crisis that's ahead.

"For Christ's sake do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, 'and be snared, and be taken'" *Ibid*.

What was the stone of stumbling that the Jews stumbled over? The *claim* of Christ to be the Son of God, but the manifest fact, the *obvious* fact, that He was the Son of man. They couldn't get that together. And what does the religious world stumble over in reference to this Bible? The fact that it *claims* to be the Word of God, and yet it's evident that the marks of Moses and David and John and Peter are there, each with a different fingerprint. They can't get that together.

They could if they would *believe* what God says and not try to *reason* it all out and *figure* it all out. But when they get their scalpel and start dissecting, they're on dangerous ground, my friends. Do you know what would happen to anybody here if he were dissected tonight? Well, we'd have to have a funeral tomorrow, wouldn't we?

That's right. And when people start in—whether they're trying to dissect Christ, or dissect His Word, or dissect the Spirit of Prophecy, the writings of the modern prophet—when they get through, as far as *they* are concerned, their faith will be dead, friends, their faith will be dead.

God warns them off that ground. God has not given anybody the business of measuring and weighing the different parts of the Bible or the different *Testimonies*. Oh I thank God friends, that when I look at Jesus, I can say like Thomas, "My Lord, and My God." Even though I know He's the Son of man, I know with Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And I thank God that when I take this Bible, I *know* that this is the Word of God. I can take any page in this book and open it and, with simple faith say, "Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

And thank God, as I open these books—whether it's *Great Controversy*, *Desire of Ages*, or *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, *Medical Ministry*, *Counsels on Health*—I believe with all my heart that this is the Spirit of Prophecy which is the Testimony of who? Jesus. Is it testimony of Jesus?

Now, what does this have to do with medical missionary work? It has *everything* to do with it, dear friends. Do you know why we have a Seventh-day Adventist medical work? Because Sister White had a vision in Oswego, Michigan on health reform, June 6, 1863, and she had a vision in Rochester, New York, on December 25, 1865, on establishing health institutions. That's why we have it. And if she was merely writing her opinion, certainly it may be time to reevaluate the whole matter and see if we can't get something modern and up to date.

But oh, my friends, if *Jesus* fulfilled His promise in the book of Revelation and sent His angel to testify to the remnant church—Listen, if He could look far enough ahead in the Bible to give us a book that would still be up to date after 2,000 years, don't you think He could look ahead in the visions He gave His prophet to last 100 years or so? Don't you think He could?

And everything we're studying in this seminar has validity provided this is the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy. But if it isn't, that's something else. Friends, I thank God that the same voice which speaks in the person of Christ and in the Word of God—the Bible. That same voice we hear through these writings of the modern prophet. But on this point comes the issue that is soon—may I say it, friends? Dare I *not* say it? That is soon to shake this church from center to circumference. That's right. We are entering into it. And I advise you, get your feet on solid rock and be sure you know how to *stay* on solid rock.

Now, 70 years ago when this issue came, there was a great deal of talk about getting ministers and physicians together and doing a lot of research and discussion on it. Do you know what the prophet said? The prophet said [paraphrase], "We haven't any time for that sort of thing. Don't get into an argument. Don't get into a discussion, but study the Bible and study the Spirit of Prophecy."

Friends, wouldn't it be too bad to stop eating in order to have discussions about whether whole wheat bread had nutrition or not? Wouldn't it? Most of us are engaged in demonstrating that every day. If you haven't already met this question, you will—the idea that if you do not investigate every charge, it shows that you are weak in faith and that you are *afraid* that your position can't be sustained.

May I read you something interesting here from the prophet herself? This is *Selected Messages*, Book 2, page 166, writing to Canright. You've heard of Canright, haven't you? Yes, well, there are a lot of things that some people think are recent research that Canright had a long time ago, friends. I want you to see what Sister White wrote to that poor man:

"I do not ask an explanation of your course. Brother [C. W.] Stone wished to read your letter to me. I refused to hear it. The breath of doubt, of complaint and unbelief, is contagious; if I make my mind a channel for the filthy stream, the turbid, defiling water proceeding from Satan's fountain, some suggestion may linger in my mind, polluting it" *Selected Messages*, Book 2, page 166.

Well, if the prophet of God wouldn't listen to all that criticism and doubt and objections, why should I, my friend, why should I?

"If his suggestions have had such power on you as to lead you to sell your birthright for a mess of pottage... I want not hear anything of your doubts..." *Ibid.*

Oh friends, there are some things that are settled, some things that are settled.

Many years ago, when I was just starting in my evangelistic work as a young man, I was visiting a man who was attending the meetings. One day as I visited him, he said, "Brother Frazee, there's a man who lives near me who is an infidel, and he's got a book with 100 different contradictions and objections about the Bible." He said, "I wish we could make an appointment, and you sit down and answer those."

I said, "No."

"You won't? Well, why not?"

"Well," I said, "listen." I said, "Suppose there was a man who had been born blind, but he had been educated, as the blind can be, to read and write Braille. And suppose this man, along in his career, conceives the idea of writing a book to prove that there are no such things as blue skies and green trees and red roses. That the people you hear talking about those things don't know what they're talking about. So he writes this book. Do you suppose he might get some blind men to read it?"

How much time would *you* spend trying to read that book and answer it seriously? Would you? Do you see what I'm getting at, dear friend? Oh, thank God for the certainty of truth!

But somebody says, "But Brother Frazee, aren't there some things in the Spirit of Prophecy that aren't proved yet by science?" *Indeed*. And thank God I don't have to wait for scientific research to believe anything in these books.

Somebody says, "But Brother Frazee, aren't there some things in the Bible that are hard to understand?" Worse than that—*impossible* to understand! [Mild audience laughter] But wouldn't it be a strange thing if the God of Heaven has given us a mind of *infinite* truth if already I had arrived at the place where I could fully understand and explain everything in it? Wouldn't that be a strange thing, my friend?

Oh, I'm so glad that I know how to say, in answer to many questions, "I don't know, I don't know." There are verses in the Bible that people ask me to explain to them, and I just have to say, "I don't know." There are things in the Spirit of Prophecy that if people ask me to explain them, I have to say, "I don't understand." But friends, thank God, none of that lessens my faith one iota in either the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy.

Dear doctors and nurses, dear ministers and teachers, dear laymen, everybody old and young, remember: the last attack of Satan against the church is on the validity, the authority, of the Spirit of Prophecy. Are you ready? Don't be content like Peter to *assert* your loyalty and brandish your sword, even cut off somebody's ear, you understand. No, you'll have to have more than that. You must have a personal experience with Jesus. You must be so certain in your own heart, not only of the *truth* of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and you must *experience* it in your own life. Then the only way anybody could get you to give it up would be to kill you, and even *that* wouldn't take it from you. It would be buried with you and resurrected when Jesus comes! Oh, it's a wonderful thing, friends, to be sealed shut with Jesus in the Most Holy Place.

Well, this is as far as we'll go tonight, and since this is the last night of this series, it's as far as I'm going this year. But I word it this way, friends, because I hope you'll study this with all your heart. I hope you'll take these references that we have suggested tonight, and God Himself will help you as you dig into these chapters and satisfy your mind that the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are both the message of Jesus to your soul.

Shall we stand?

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee with all our hearts tonight that Jesus is on the throne. And though the dragon is angry with the church and seeks to make war with those who keep Thy commandments and have Thy testimony, we thank Thee that we can *hold on* to this wonderful gift and die rather than give it up. Give us not merely an

intellectual conviction; give us a heart experience. May we know day by day, as on our knees, we search the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, that Christ is writing these beautiful truths in our minds and exemplifying them in our lives. We thank Thee, in Jesus' name, amen.

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