

**CHAPTER 3**

**EARLY ECUMENICAL ASPIRATIONS**

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*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*  
*Come out of her, my people*  
Revelation 18:2,4

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## INTRODUCTION

The message of the second angel of Revelation 14 is that the churches of the last days have fallen. Has spiritual Babylon always been fallen? No. *At some previous time these churches must have been in an unfallen condition in order to become fallen!* Why have they fallen? Because in 1844 they rejected the first angel's message – the truth about Christ's work in the heavenly Sanctuary.

*“The second angel's message had its initial sounding early in the summer of 1844 in the call to the Advent believers to come out of the nominal churches that had rejected the proclamation of the first angel's message.” (Appendix Note, Early Writings, page 304. See also, “The Final Warning,” The Great Controversy, pages 603-612).*

### A Closer Look At Modern Babylon

The message of the fourth angel of Revelation 18, which adds power to the message of the second and third angels of Revelation 14, is that the Church of Rome and her harlot daughters (Rev. 17:5) have fallen, and the angel fervently calls God's people to *come out of the fallen churches of the last days*. Indeed, the angel cries aloud that these churches have “become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” (Rev. 18:2b). The fourth angel comes down from heaven “having great power; and the earth is lightened with his glory.” (Rev. 18:1b). Notice that this special angel “cried mightily with a strong voice.” (Rev. 18:2a). The NIV and RSV render the passage, “With a mighty voice he shouted.” (Rev. 18:2 NIV), “And he called out with a mighty voice.” (Rev. 18:2 RSV). This, beyond question, is a vivid description of the Latter Rain of the Advent message. Indeed, do not Seventh-day Adventists know the Latter Rain as the “Loud Cry” of the message?

*The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to fearlessly proclaim the third angel's message. Ellen G. White, Early Writings, page 277. (emphasis supplied).*

Notice that the contemporary churches of our time are “filled with corruption.” And because these churches are filled with corruption, “*The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry.*”

*“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,” the fourth angel cries aloud, “and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” (Revelation 18:3).*

*“The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated,” Ellen White commented on Revelation 18, “with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844.” (Early Writings, page 277, emphasis supplied).*

## Habitation Of Devils

Let us more carefully analyze Revelation 18, verses 1 and 2. The fourth angel states that because the modern churches of Babylon have fallen they have “become the habitation of devils.” What does this mean? **The contemporary Roman Catholic and Sunday-keeping churches are now filled with spiritualism in the form of false healing, false speaking in tongues, casting out demons, and using hypnosis in the practice of so-called “Christian psychology.” Rock music, inspired by demons, is now used in the worship service of most contemporary denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church. All of Christendom is rampant with the modern spiritualistic techniques of “Self-Esteem,” and “Neuro-Linguistic Programming,” known as NLP. This, without question, is spiritism in its most subtle and deceptive form!**

*When Satan has undermined faith in the Bible, he directs men to other sources for light and power. Thus he insinuates himself. Those who turn from the plain teaching of Scripture and the convicting power of God’s Holy Spirit are inviting the control of demons. Criticism and speculation concerning the Scriptures have opened the way for spiritism and theosophy – those modernized forms of ancient heathenism—to gain a foothold even in the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, page 258. (emphasis supplied).*

“History is repeating,” Ellen White warned. “With the open Bible before them, and professing to reverence its teachings, *many of the religious leaders of our time are destroying faith in it as the word of God.*” (*Desire of Ages*, page 258, emphasis supplied). Like ancient Israel, modern Babylon has accepted spiritualism into their midst.

*“Side by side with the preaching of the gospel,” Ellen White added, “agencies are at work which are but the medium of lying spirits.” (ibid., *Desire of Ages*, page 258, emphasis supplied).*

### Three Important Concepts Of Revelation 18, Verse 3

- (1) *“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”  
The nations have drunk from the wine of her false doctrine.*
- (2) *“The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.” The contemporary Roman Catholic and modern Evangelical churches have sought the power of the state to enforce their so-called Christian values, and to support their institutions.*
- (3) *“The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”*

The merchants of the earth have become rich from the sale of goods connected with the Christian faith. Christmas, Easter, Saint Valentine’s Day, All -Saints Day (Halloween), Saint Patrick’s Day, and other so-called Christian holidays reap millions in revenue for merchants and the Church.

The “Contemporary Christian” gospel music industry alone is second only to the Country music industry of Nashville in the millions of dollars realized.

The blasphemous movie productions, “Jesus Christ Superstar,” and the even more blasphemous “Godspell,” reaped millions and millions of dollars. Although the Bible says of Judas, “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot” (Luke 22:3), in the production “Godspell,” Judas Iscariot is depicted as the hero. Also in this blasphemous production the disciples crawl around on the stage and bleat like sheep. Jesus is depicted as a clown. He has a contemporary “rock star” Afro hair style, a little red heart on his shirt, and eyes painted with large teardrop under the eyes like a circus clown. *The lyrics of a song in this production suggests that Jesus had a sexual affair with Mary Magdalene, and God the Father had sexual relations with the offspring of Jesus and Mary Magdalene!*

It is sad that we have become so gospel- hardened that some of these things no longer shock us. However, we should not be surprised by these developments in the fallen churches of Babylon. Seventh-day Adventists have been warned that gross apostasy would increase in the end of time. “For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.” (Isaiah 60:2). But what is most astounding is that these two blasphemous movie productions were endorsed by the major denominations as tools for evangelism among the youth. (See, Bob Larson, “Rock and the Church,” available at most Christian book stores).

### **The False Doctrines Of Modern Babylon**

The wine is the false doctrine of Roman Babylon and her fallen harlot daughters of apostate Protestantism. Let us now examine the false doctrine of modern Babylon.

*This is the same message that was given by the second angel. Babylon is fallen, “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (Rev. 14:8). What is that wine?—Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:9). Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, Bk. 2, page 118. (emphasis supplied).*

*“The whole chapter shows that the Babylon that has fallen is the churches who will not receive the messages of warning the Lord has given in the first, second, and third angel’s messages,” Ellen White states. “They refused the truth and accepted a lie. Anyone who reads this chapter need not be deceived.” (Manuscript Release, Vol. 1, page 302, emphasis supplied).*

Notice that these fallen churches have “refused the truth and accepted a lie.” Are we to join hands with those who have accepted a lie?

### **Spiritism In the Deception Of False Healing**

*“The apostles of nearly all forms of spiritism claim to have power to heal,” Ellen White warned. “And there are not a few, even in this Christian age, who go to these healers, instead of trusting in the power of the living God and the skill of well-qualified physicians.” (Conflict and Courage, page 219, emphasis supplied).*

The false leaders and teachers of modern Babylon will lead the masses of earth’s final generation to perdition. Only a few of earth’s billions will come out of Babylon. “Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” (Matt. 7:14, emphasis supplied).

**From Egypt only two passed into the promised land. Only eight were saved in Noah's day. After the flood they all apostatized into Babylon. A few followed when the Lord called Abraham. Fewer still stood at the cross. "And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things." (Luke 23:49, emphasis supplied). Only one hundred and twenty in the upper room received the early rain of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. A small company believed William Miller. Fewer still accepted the Sanctuary and Sabbath truths, the Spirit of Prophecy, and became Seventh-day Adventists. Today many are living in the broad way. There remains a small remnant throughout the earth.**

*"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh," Jesus asked, "shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8b, emphasis supplied).*

### **A Link Between Church and State**

*"When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common," Ellen White warned, "shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy." (Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4, page 277, emphasis supplied).*

*By this first beast is represented the Roman Church, an ecclesiastical body clothed with civil power, having authority to punish all dissenters. The image to the beast represents another religious body clothed with similar power. The formation of this image is the work of that beast whose peaceful rise and mild professions render it so striking a symbol of the United States. Here is to be found an image of the papacy. .*

*.. Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance with worldly powers have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. . . . Persecution always follows religious favoritism on the part of secular governments.*

*Ellen G. White, The Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4, page 277. (emphasis supplied).*

The whole world has been deceived by the false doctrine of modern Babylon, and these contemporary churches of fallen Babylon have committed fornication with the "kings," or governments of the earth. This prophecy will reach its closing fulfillment when the modern day Religious Right leads America and the entire world in a National Sunday Law.

Although God has given up on the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon, *He has not given up on the people in those churches*. As in the days following the crucifixion of Christ, there was probation for the people – *but there was no probation for the leadership of Israel!* Jesus had declared, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:38).

### **A Warning Against Fellowship With Modern Babylon**

The early Christian Church apostatized in the rise of the Papal Church and her link with the secular State. The Protestant churches apostatized when they rejected the message of the first angel. Now, through the message of the second angel, and the amplified message of the special angel of Revelation 18, God is calling

His people out of Babylon, out of these false churches. He warns that if they do not come out of Babylon, they shall be “partakers of her sins” and will receive of her plagues. (See Rev. 18:4).

“Partakers of her sins,” the angel cries. What is sin? “Sin is the transgression of the law,” John replies. (I John 3:4). The Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon reject the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. God has judged these false churches for rejecting the Sanctuary and the Sabbath message of the first angel.

Again, the point cannot be over-emphasized that, *the message of the second and fourth angels calls people out of Babylon*, and to reject the false teachings of the fallen Protestant churches of the end times. It is a message directly against the Ecumenical Movement, which champions the brotherhood of all Christian churches. It is a message directly against membership, or associate-membership, or as an unofficial “observer,” in the National and World Council of Churches. We, as Seventh-day Adventists, should not turn toward the churches of Babylon, *but should be calling people out of these false churches!*

Why can we not have fellowship and brotherhood on all sides with these Christians of other denominations? Why cannot Seventh-day Adventists become members of the National and World Council of Churches?

*“There is as great a difference in our faith and that of nominal professors,” Ellen White replies. “as the heavens are higher than the earth.” (Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 2, page 300, emphasis supplied). “The world is against us, the popular churches are against us, the laws of the land will soon be against us,” Ellen White wrote. “God has committed to us the special truths for this time to make known to the world.” (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, page 236, emphasis supplied).*

How can we fellowship with the false Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon when “the popular churches are against us.” Indeed, did not Jesus Himself say, “For he that is not against us is on our part.” (Mark 9:40). If the modern churches of Babylon are no longer against us, perhaps we are no longer teaching and preaching the historic Advent truth! George Vandeman and the *It Is Written* telecast, the Seventh-day Adventist Church outreach television program, has received the “Dove” award several times. The “Dove” is awarded to, in the opinion of the contemporary Christian world (Babylon), the best religious program of the year. How can this be? Because the SDA Church’s outreach programs are no longer giving the “straight testimony” of Revelation 14:6-12.

James White also gave some wise counsel on the subject of ecumenism and fellowship with the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon. Notice carefully his wise counsel:

*Here is a man, for instance, who does not agree with us on the subject of the second coming of Christ. He believes that we are wholly mistaken in regard to this great truth. Can we feel union with such a man, and take him into our fellowship and communion? We cannot. We can but feel that he shuts his eyes to some of the clearest light of the Scriptures, and refuses assent to their most unequivocal testimony. We cannot therefore extend to him the hand of Christian fellowship. Just so with the Sabbath. Can we fellowship the man who violates it? We cannot. On a vital point connected with the teaching of the word of God, we are at issue; and the union that would otherwise exist between us, is of course destroyed. So with the subjects of baptism, the sleep of the dead, the destruction of the wicked, &c. Where there is not agreement in theory, there can be, in the Christian sense, no real communion of heart and fellowship of*

*feeling. James White, "Fifty Unanswerable Arguments," Review and Herald, January 14, 1861. (emphasis supplied).*

"Where there is not agreement in theory [theology]," James White states, "there can be, in the Christian sense, *no real communion of heart and fellowship of feeling.*" Can anything be more plain? Pioneer Seventh-day Adventists did not believe in ecumenicalism. They did not advocate joining in mutual fellowship with the churches of Babylon, or recognizing all those who lift up Christ, though they reject the truths of these last days.

*I saw that since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches, yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God. Said the angel, "God will not dwell in their assemblies. Selfishness, fraud, and deceit are practiced by them without the reprovings of conscience. And over all these evil traits they throw the cloak of religion." Ellen G. White, Early Writings, page 274. (emphasis supplied).*

Notice that it is the voice of an angel that says, "God will not dwell in their assemblies." If God does not dwell with these assemblies (National and World Council of Churches), why do we wish to "dwell" with them when God does not? Also the angel said, "Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God."

Again, is it possible to have unity with modern Babylon? Can we have dialogue and goodwill between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the fallen churches of Babylon? Pioneer Adventists did not believe so. The Spirit of Prophecy warns against it.

*After a long and severe conflict the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry. They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the Word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children's children. . . . If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference and even war. Well would it be for the church and the world if the principles that actuated those steadfast souls were revived in the hearts of God's professed people. Ellen G. White, The Story of Redemption, page 324. (emphasis supplied).*

Notice that Ellen White states that, "If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, *then let there be difference and even war.*" Then she brings it home to the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Church, "Well would it be for the church and the world if the principles that actuated those steadfast souls were revived *in the hearts of God's professed people.*" In the hearts of God's professed people? That is us, is it not? It would be well if these principles were revived in the hearts of Seventh-day Adventists.

### **Ecumenism – Modern-Day Deception Of Satan**

Before we can continue our study we must first understand the concepts of "ecumenism." Today we often hear the word ecumenical. What is ecumenism? The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book* and *SDA Bible Dictionary* give a clear answer:

*“At its most ambitious, the ecumenical movement aspires to heal the thousand-year-old break between Rome and the Eastern Orthodox churches on the one hand, and the later breach between these and the Protestant denominations on the other.” (Editorial, “To a Greater Christian Church,” Life, 49 (December 19, 1960), 24; op. cit., Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student’s Source Book, Art. “Ecumenical Movement,” Second Revised Edition, emphasis supplied).*

*“But despite these deep doctrinal differences, these three chief branches of Christianity are on much friendlier terms than they used to be,” the editorial stated. “Their spokesmen are able to meet in serious dialogue without thinking of each other as antichrists; they have learned to know what they believe in common and why they disagree.” (ibid., Editorial, Life, December 19, 1960, emphasis supplied).*

Notice the phrases, “the ecumenical movement aspires to heal the thousand-year-old break [wound].” Does that sound familiar? “And his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” (Revelation 13:3b). “Their spokesmen are able to meet in serious dialogue *without thinking of each other as antichrists.*” Have you ever heard, dear reader, the phrase “beast bashing” in today’s Adventist thinking? But the most astounding fulfillment of prophecy is the phrase, “they have learned to know what they believe in common and why they disagree.”

*“When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common,” Ellen White warned, “shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy.” (Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4, page 277, emphasis supplied).*

### **So Much In Common**

In 1973 Bert Beverly Beach (later secretary of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, PARL, of the General Conference) coauthored a book with Lukas Vischer, Secretary of the World Council of Churches. The title of the book was, *So Much In Common*, the subtitle, “Between the World Council of Churches and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” The book was published by the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland, in 1973. (Note:- A copy of *So Much In Common* may be obtained from; *Adventist Laymen’s Foundation*, P. O. Box 69, Ozone, AR 72854). The title of the book alone tells the story, “*So Much In Common, Between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the World Council of Churches.*” What do Seventh-day Adventists have in common with the World Council of Churches? How did Adventists ever come to the place where they thought they had something in common with the great assembly of the churches of Babylon, the harlot daughters of Rome?

In 1977, Bert Beach was President of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At that time Beach was also serving as Secretary of the World Confessional Families, the theological branch of the World Council of Churches. On May 18, 1977, as Secretary of the World Confessional Families meeting in Rome, Italy, Beach presented the Seventh-day Adventist Church in symbol to Pope Paul VI. (Religious News Service (RNS), FOREIGN SERVICE, May 19, 1977; W. D. Eva, Adventist Review, “Book, Medallion Presented to Pope”, August 11, 1977, (847), page 23).



## The Goal Of Ecumenism

As long as the Catholic is Catholic and the Protestant is Protestant, there is only one way to union—the conversion of one to the views of the other. If that should happen, either Catholicism or Protestantism would disappear. There can never be a Catholic-Protestant Church, or even a Catholic-Protestant fellowship of churches. This is the basic fact.

The Catholic must say to the Protestant that the [Catholic] Church was substantially right, and therefore any endeavor toward reunification must be theirs. Source: Gustave Wiegel, “A Catholic Primer on the Ecumenical Movement,” pp. 50, 51, 64, 66.

Copyright 1957 by The Newman Press, Westminster, Md.; *op. Cit.*, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student’s Source Book.* (emphasis supplied).

## Ecumenism Will Triumph

*“Through the two great errors, [1] the immortality of the soul and [2] Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions,” Ellen White concluded. “While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.” (The Great Controversy, page 588, emphasis supplied).*

*“The protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism;” Ellen White wrote, “they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.” (ibid., The Great Controversy, page 588, emphasis supplied).*

## Early History Of Ecumenical Aspirations In the SDA Church

With this background of “ecumenism” in mind we must now consider the historical evidence that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has joined hands with the World Council of Churches in the Ecumenical Movement. How did it all begin? Why has SDA leadership been deceived by the erroneous concept that we should seek fellowship and acceptance from the fallen churches of Babylon? That we should also seek fellowship and approval from the Papacy, the Anti-christ of the end-times, is truly astounding! (Bert B. Beach, *So Much In Common*, “Between the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the World council of Churches.”).

## The American Sentinel’s Ecumenical Aspiration-Removing Seventh-day Adventist

The first hint of a desire for the acceptance of Seventh-day Adventism by the popular denominations took place in 1890. (MR., No, 1033). Ministers who were in charge of the *American Sentinel*, (Seventh-day Adventist Religious Liberty magazine of the day, forerunner of our contemporary *Liberty* magazine), met behind closed doors to contemplate dropping the name Seventh-day Adventist from the magazine. The reason given by the editorial board was to gain acceptance from the Sunday -keeping churches. Ellen White received a vision of what was taking place and gave the following testimony:

*In the night season I was present in several councils, and there I heard words repeated by influential men to the effect that if the American Sentinel*

would drop the words “Seventh-day Adventist” from its columns, and would say nothing about the Sabbath, the great men of the world would patronize it. It would become popular and do a larger work. This looked very pleasing. These men could not see why we could not affiliate with unbelievers and non-professors to make the American Sentinel a great success. I saw their countenances brighten, and they began to work on a policy to make the Sentinel a popular success. *ibid.*, Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 96. (emphasis supplied).

“These things have gone as far as they should without someone protesting against them in plain words,” Ellen White admonished.. “The Lord’s time to set things in order has fully come.” (*ibid.*, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 96, emphasis supplied).

Notice that these early Ecumenical-minded Adventist leaders, these “influential men,” as Ellen White stated, desired that “the great men of the world would patronize” the *American Sentinel* magazine. They believed that if they dropped the name Seventh-day Adventist it would then “become popular and do a larger work.” However, they could not see “why we could not affiliate with unbelievers and non-professors.” Because of their false concept of Ecumenical ties between Seventh-day Adventists and the Sunday-keeping churches “they began to work on a policy to make the *Sentinel* a popular success.” This erroneous policy was never implemented because the messenger of the Lord was alive and well. She was given a vision of the movements underfoot and gave her faithful testimony to the “influential men.” They saw their error and kept the name Seventh-day Adventist on the *Sentinel* magazine. Indeed, who would like to stand up against a living prophet of the Lord?

### Removing the Name ‘Seventh-day Adventist’ today

**How is it today, friend? Since the living prophet has passed from the scene has the contemporary Church preserved the name “Seventh-day” on its periodicals and institutions? No, it has not!** The contemporary Church has dropped the name “Seventh-day” from everything, and simply employs the name “Adventist.” Adventist Book Center, Adventist Media Center, Adventist Community Center, etc. Indeed, today many churches and book centers have even dropped the name Adventist, and call themselves simply, Christian Book Center, or Community Worship Center. A Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bothell, Washington took the name “North Creek Fellowship.” This group met in the local Conference office until funds were raised to construct a church building. The name “Seventh-day” has been dropped from hospitals and clinics. (See, “Portland Adventist Hospital,” Portland, Oregon). Indeed, the name Seventh-day has been dropped from the Church’s welfare system. Remember when the Church’s welfare system was called SAWS, which stood for the title, “Seventh-day Adventist Welfare System?” What is the title of this entity today, friend? ADRA, “Adventist Development and Relief Agency.” How about the periodicals? We now have the *Adventist Review*. What was the name of our Church paper in the days of the pioneers? *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald!*

The name “Missionary” has been removed from the title of colleges and schools. The name “Immanuel Missionary College” was changed to “Andrews University.” At Loma Linda, the “School of Medical Evangelism” is no longer emphasized. The reader can think of many more examples.

### Ballenger’s Ecumenical Aspirations

There were Ecumenical aspirations in the apostasy of A. F. Ballenger in 1905. In this apostasy, Ballenger introduced new concepts and heresy on the Sanctuary doctrine. *The underlying purpose for Ballenger’s thesis was Ecumenical!* He desired a “new theology” that would be accepted by the main-stream churches of the day, which would make the Seventh-day Adventist Church popular in the religious world.

“How can you accuse Ballenger of Ecumenical motives?” you ask. Because Ellen White places him with the Ecumenical-minded group of men at Salamanca, New York, in 1890 who were proposing to remove the name “Seventh-day Adventist” from the *American Sentinel* magazine to make it more popular with other Christians. Speaking of the Ballenger apostasy in 1905, Arthur White related the following story:

*“At about this time Ellen White met Elder Ballenger in the hallway of the dormitory where she was staying,” Arthur White related. “She told Elder Ballenger that he was the minister that the Lord had presented before her in vision in Salamanca, New York, in 1890, as standing with a party who was urging that if the Sabbath truth were left out of the American Sentinel, the circulation of that paper would be largely increased.” (EGW, *The Early Elmshaven Years, Vol. 5, 1900-1905, page 408, emphasis supplied*).*

Actually, Ellen White was speaking of the name “Seventh-day Adventist being dropped from the *American Sentinel*’s columns,” not as Arthur White quoted her as stating that “if the Sabbath truth were left out of the *American Sentinel*.” By leaving out the name Seventh-day Adventist from the magazine title, in a sense, would be dropping the “Sabbath truth” from the *American Sentinel*. However, the historical fact is that the men in Salamanca, New York wished to drop the name “Seventh-day Adventist” from the cover and title page of the magazine. This, they believed, would make the magazine less offensive to the religious world. The word “Sabbath” and “Seventh Day” are offensive to the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon because their belief in the sacredness of Sunday is in direct opposition to the Law of God.

“So, we will be nice and will not remind the Sunday-keeping churches that they are in opposition to God’s holy law,” liberal Adventists erroneously reason. “We’ll just remove the offensiveness of the seventh day Sabbath from our periodicals and institutions and emphasize those doctrines that we hold in common with them.”

Today, even the name “Adventist” is becoming offensive to contemporary leadership. The Seventh-day Adventist hospital in Portland, Oregon has now dropped the name “Adventist,” and is simply called, “Portland Medical Center.” An Adventist college professor remarked that we should drop emphasis of the “eminence” of our Lord’s return, because it has not come to pass for so many years, and we might look stupid to the religious world by teaching the “eminence” of the Lord’s return. This is a direct denial of the word “Adventist.” To pioneer Seventh-day Adventists the word “Adventist” has always symbolized the belief in the soon return of Jesus. Heaven gave council on removing the name Seventh-day Adventist from the periodicals and institutions of the Church. Speaking on the subject Ellen White stated in part:

*This policy is the first step in a succession of wrong steps. The principles which have been advocated in the American Sentinel are the very sum and substance of the advocacy of the Sabbath, and when men begin to talk of changing these principles, they are doing a work which it does not belong to them to do. Like Uzzah, they are attempting to steady the ark which belongs to God, and is under His special supervision. Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors, page 96. (emphasis supplied)*.*

“This policy is the first step in a succession of wrong steps,” Ellen White warned. Why would the “wrong steps” be successful from 1926 onward, and not in 1890 and 1905? The answer is simple. The messenger of the Lord passed from the scene in 1915! Leadership no longer had to answer to a living prophet. What has been the succession of “wrong steps” taken toward Ecumenical policies since these first attempts were made in 1890 and 1905? Sadly, history reveals the answer.

## The First Wrong Step Toward Ecumenism Approved In 1926

SDA leadership also recognizes these fallen churches of Babylon as “part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world.

*“In the desire to avoid occasion for misunderstanding or friction in the matter of relationship to the work of other societies, the following statement of principles are set forth as a guidance to our workers in mission fields in their contacts with other religious organizations,” the General Conference voted in 1926. (General Conference Executive Committee, 1926).*

*#1. We recognize every agency that lifts up Christ before man as a part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world, and we hold in high esteem the Christian men and women in other communions who are engaged in winning souls to Christ. “Relationship To Other Societies,” General Conference Executive Committee, 1926. (emphasis supplied).*

Notice that the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church “recognize every agency that lifts up Christ.” This would include the Roman Catholic and apostate Protestant churches, evil spirit-filled Pentecostal churches. SDA leadership also recognizes these fallen churches of Babylon as “part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world.” Not what my Bible says! Neither can this premise be found in the Spirit of Prophecy.

*“There is as great a difference in our faith and that of nominal professors, as the heavens are higher than the earth,” Ellen White stated. (Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, page 300, emphasis supplied).*

This statement is the last sentence in an important testimony. Let us consider the complete testimony in context:

*Those who engage in the solemn work of bearing the third angel’s message, must move out decidedly, and in the Spirit and power of God, fearlessly preach the truth, and let it cut. They should elevate the standard of truth, and urge the people to come up to it . It has been lowered down to meet the people in their condition of darkness and sin. It is the pointed testimony that will bring up the people to decide. A peaceful testimony will not do this. The people have the privilege of listening to this kind of teaching from the pulpits of the day. But God has servants to whom he has entrusted a solemn, fearful message, to bring out and fit up a people for the coming of Christ. There is as great a difference in our faith and that of nominal professors, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts. Vol. 2, pages 299, 300. (emphasis supplied).**

*“God has committed to us the special truths for this time to make known to the world,” Ellen White reminded. (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, page 236).*

In these last hours, “God has given to us,” Seventh-day Adventists “the special truths for this time to make known to the world.” He has not given this message to the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon. Our commission is to call the people out of Babylon, not to join hands with Babylon! We are not to please the churches of the world by emphasizing doctrines SDA leadership alleges we hold in common with them.

*“The world is against us, the popular churches are against us,” Ellen White stated, “the laws of the land will soon be against us.” (ibid., 5T, p. 236, emphasis supplied).*

How can we “recognize” the “popular churches” that are “against us” as being “a part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world?” Notice also that the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Church holds “in high esteem the Christian men and women” who teach the false doctrines of the Protestant churches, the churches that the Scripture calls the harlot daughters of Babylon.

*“And the Roman Catholic Church was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her false doctrine,” the apostle John wrote. “And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” (Revelation 17:4, 5, paraphrase).*

*In our day. . .are not religious teachers turning men away from the plain requirements of the word of God? Instead of educating them in obedience to God’s law, are they not educating them in transgression? From many of the pulpits of the churches the people are taught that the law of God is not binding upon them. Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 305. (emphasis supplied).*

*“The Protestants have accepted the spurious Sabbath, the child of the papacy, and have exalted it above God’s holy sanctified day,” Ellen White stated, “and our institutions of learning have been established for the express purpose of counteracting the influence of those who do not follow the word of God.” (Fundamentals of Christian Education, page 288, emphasis supplied).*

Does this sound like Ellen White would approve any idea of ecumenism? But then this action by the General Conference Committee was taken eleven years after her death. How can we “recognize” the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon as “part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world” and still be “counteracting the influence” of those churches “who do not follow the word of God?” How can we “recognize” those churches who have “accepted the spurious Sabbath, the child of the papacy, and have exalted it above God’s holy sanctified day?” Ellen White stated that in the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon “the doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by ‘believing’ we are released from the necessity of being doers of the word.” (*Signs of the Times*, February 25, 1897). She stated further that this teaching “is the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which Christ so unsparingly condemned.” (*ibid.*, ST, 2/25/1897, emphasis supplied).

### **Have the Sunday-keeping churches become more “Adventist” since the death of Ellen White?**

What was Ellen White’s position on the recognition of Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon? Would she agree with the premise that they are “part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world?” (*General Conference Executive Committee*, 1926). What would she say if she were alive today? She would give the same testimony she gave from the beginning. Truth does not change.

*I saw that since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches, yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God. Said the angel, “God will not dwell in their assemblies. Selfishness, fraud, and deceit are practiced by them without the reprovings of conscience. And over all these evil traits they throw the cloak of religion. . . .” Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, page 274. (emphasis supplied).*

Ellen White’s position on the other denominations was that the members of these churches of Babylon “profess to be Christians.” The contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Church concurs with these false churches by stating that “we hold in high esteem the Christian men and women in other communions who are engaged in winning souls to Christ.” (ibid., *GC Executive Committee*, 1926).

**Because we recognize the fallen churches of Babylon, does this mean that they will always love and recognize Seventh-day Adventists as Christian brethren? No, they will not.**

*“When we reach the standard that the Lord would have us reach,” Ellen White warned, “worldlings will regard Seventh-day Adventists as odd, singular, strait-laced extremists.” (Fundamentals of Christian Education, page 289, emphasis supplied).*

**We now have the answer to two important questions.**

(1) Why were the attempted moves toward Ecumenism by “influential men” not successful in 1890 and 1905?

(2) Why would the “wrong steps” toward Ecumenism be successful after the year 1926 and onward? Again, the answer is simple.

*The messenger of the Lord passed from the scene in 1915 – and the written Testimonies of the Lord have been made of non-effect!*

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