Chapter 11 **– The Omega of Apostasy**

 It seems that every time there is a crisis in Adventism, someone usually speculates that it must be the omega of apostasy. It has been said about the publication in 1957 of the book *Questions on Doctrine*, about a host of “new theologies,” about neurolinguistic programming (NLP), about celebration churches, and about spiritual formation mandated in our higher educational institutions. More recently, it has been said about women’s ordination issues. Every single one of these developments has been serious, and some are a result of the omega, but none of these mentioned, on its own, is the omega of apostasy that caused Ellen White to tremble.

Knowing about the omega really is a life-or-death issue. Man has grossly underestimated the enemy of souls. Satan, as Lucifer, had been created with the highest intellect of any created being. The most intelligent human being that has ever lived would have but a small fraction of intelligence in comparison. Thus any person who is not fully connected to Christ is at a decided disadvantage when Satan is working out his malevolent will. We are in serious danger if only ninety percent of what we believe is true. Why? Because Satan can overwhelm us with that ten percent error.

What I have learned has helped me, and can help you, fully understand exactly why Ellen White said, *“I tremble for our people.”* (1SAT 341) In chapter 10, the alpha of deadly heresies was clearly identified. If you have not read chapter 10, you need to do so before reading chapter 11, because this chapter is basically the conclusion of chapter 10. You cannot rightly understand the omega unless you clearly understand the alpha.

I’ll begin by repeating Sister White’s warning that she wrote in *Special Testimonies*: “Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature.” (SpTB02, July 24, 1904)

Let’s spend a moment on each part of this warning. “*Be not deceived*.” A familiar warning from Christ Himself, who, more than any of us, realizes the nature of our enemy and His.

What was “*this danger*,” of which the alpha was first? “Giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” Mrs. White wrote that Kellogg was “inspired by the arch-deceiver,” that his book contained “mysticism,” “speculation,” and “spiritualistic theories.” (1SM 201, 203)

What would be its result? *“Many will depart from the faith.”* There is only one faith, based on an accurate biblical understanding. God signally worked with our pioneers to firmly establish that faith, to prepare them to make God’s final appeal to those who dwell upon the earth.

Of what nature would the omega be? *“Of a most startling nature.”* In other words, it would be unexpected and unsettling, due to its nature. “The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.” (1SM 203)

On what topic were the speculation and specious theories? “*Regarding the personality of God*.” (1SM 203)

What was her reaction to this prospect? *“I tremble for our people.”* (SpTB08 [1897]) It would be an alarming prospect—implying that it could cause the loss of eternal life for many of “our people.” What else would cause Mrs. White to “tremble” in fear? Her trembling indicates that the matter is an eternal life-or-death battle, with faith in the Word of God at the center of it.

Keep in mind that the alpha and omega of apostasy are closely linked; they are very close in nature, content, and time, for Ellen White wrote that the omega would follow “in a little while” after the appearance of the alpha. (1 SM 203) In fact, the latter is but a development and expansion of the former, with consequences affecting far more souls. Therefore, we have been given this counsel from the Holy Spirit through God’s messenger:

“As a people, we are to stand firm on the platform of eternal truth that has withstood test and trial. We are to hold to the sure pillars of our faith. The principles of truth that *God has revealed to us* are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. He will bring in everything that he possibly can to carry out his deceptive designs. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God.” (1SM 201; SpTB02 51 [1904])

Sister White and others protested against the alpha of deadly heresies by voice and pen, but despite the protests, it wasn’t long before the omega followed, as Mrs. White foresaw. “The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.” (1SM 200) Mrs. White had written, “We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” (CET204) In prophetic warning in these two quotations, God’s prophet wrote plainly that those who “forget the way the *Lord has led*” our denomination “in our past history,” and who are “not willing to heed the warning *God has given*” through the Spirit of prophecy concerning the alpha of heresies Kellogg introduced into our church concerning the personality of God, “will receive” (will accept) the omega of apostasy.

Tragically, the omega of apostasy became fully and officially entrenched within the denomination more than three and one-half decades ago. Through the 1920s and 30s, and even into the 1940s, our historic faith held relatively firm, but the foundational principles were slowly being chipped away. Opposition to the doctrinal changes concerning the identities and/or personalities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit proved powerless as promotion of the omega from within Adventism subtly but steadily increased. As protesters died off, the banner of truth was left to trail in the dust. Resistance to the new concept of God waned, compromises multiplied, and acceptance of a triune god grew. Then came the 1950s, when the denominational book *Questions on Doctrine* initiated a doctrinal division in Adventism that has never been healed. One well-known minister wrote, “I want my church back!” But the watchmen on the wall were asleep at their posts, except for a few courageous men like theologian M. L. Andreasen—men who were cruelly persecuted for their stand for biblical truth. And now we are reaping what has been sown.

The omega is the same insidious misrepresentation of the personality of the one true God that Dr. Kellogg advocated both in pantheism and tritheism. Both reject the Scriptural revelations about the personality of God, making mystical what was plainly understood by our pioneers. In pantheism, Kellogg represented that our holy God was not a personal Being, but an impersonal, mystical essence or influence—indiscriminating in its presence in sinners as well as believers. In tritheistic Trinitarianism, the personality of God is again misrepresented. The Father and Son are personal Beings; Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy both tell us the wonderful good news that they come to dwell in believers in their omnipresence, as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. But the personality of God in His own Spirit—what a reasonable person would take for granted to be obvious and true, and what a Bible student would be able to confirm in God’s Word—is essentially denied in favor of an alleged third personal being that is a separate personality from Father and Son, that comes to dwell in us instead of Father and Son, and that can be worshipped in addition to Father and Son.

Ellen White wrote in 1904, “There are some things which we must reason, and there are other things that we must not discuss. In regard to God—*what* He is and *where* He is—silence is eloquence.” (Ms 46, 1904) Kellogg ignored that counsel, insisting he knew where God is: in everything, including air, plants, sinners, etc. Regarding Kellogg’s reasoning, Mrs. White had this to say: “Let not the theory be presented that God would dwell in the soul-temple of a wicked man. No greater falsehood could be presented.” (1NL 124) After Kellogg’s view received objections, he then adopted the Trinity, whose three gods enabled him to say that it was God the Holy Spirit who is in everything, not God the Father. But to the non-trinitarian pioneer mind, wherever the Holy Spirit is present, it is God Himself, in His omnipresence.

Ellen White also warned, “When you are tempted to speak of *what* God is, keep silence, because as surely as you begin to speak of this, you will disparage Him.” (Ms 46, 1904) Again there is disobedience to the explicit instruction of the Holy Spirit to us through Ellen White. Our church did not totally escape Kellogg’s spiritualistic theories, as some members were ensnared by them and joined Kellogg in their promotion. And today, in our official doctrines, we dare to define *what* God is. We’ll take ~~t~~he definition straight from our published *28* *Fundamental Beliefs*: “a unity of three coeternal Persons.” Is that not explaining *what* God is? Are we not following Kellogg’s rejection of the counsel of the Spirit of prophecy? And have we not endorsed Kellogg’s three gods ourselves—after what we know about Satan’s influence over Kellogg’s mind?

Shall we do this when even the esteemed scholars at our Biblical Research Institute (BRI) cannot explain how three gods can be one god? Even they cannot logically defend the doctrine from either Scripture or the Spirit of prophecy. These following statements were taken from a 2015 publication from that organization titled *God in Three Persons—in Theology,* pages 25 and 23*.* The author, Kwabena Donkor, wrote, “The defining characteristic of the Seventh-day Adventist approach to the doctrine of the Trinity is to state dogmatically the biblical positions on the relevant points without any great effort at explaining its logic” … “without a burden to define rationally God’s oneness….”

Are Seventh-day Adventists expected to believe in a doctrine that the BRI chooses not to explain logically to fellow Adventists? On what basis should we accept it, then? Frankly, any religiousdogma, to be trustworthy, requires an explanation that is not speculative but *explicitly, plainly biblical.* I know of no other doctrine that Adventism holds that is so lacking in sound biblical exegesis. Actually, on another page, the author admits why the BRI avoids any attempt to explain the Trinity doctrine. It’s because they can’t. On page 26 of that publication, the author candidly confessed, “The issue is how one may definethe ‘One’ and relate it to the three Persons without falling into tritheism. It may be that theology needs to acknowledge its impotence in this matter.” It may also be—and many recognize it to be—that what the BRI has proved truly impotent to do is to conceive a way to convincingly explain something illogical and unbiblical so that it appears logical and biblical, so that it will be accepted without divisive challenges. The simple fact is, the “oneness” of Father and Son relates to their character, purpose and mind. “It is thus that God and Christ are one.” (MH 422) It is not a numerical oneness. To claim that it is, in order to make “three gods” mean “one god,” exceeds common sense, credibility and the witness of Scripture. We pray for our brethren at the BRI, that our long-suffering God would give them eye salve to discern the truth in this matter. We need courageous men—men who esteem the riches of heaven greater than the approval of men—to lead our church into “unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.” Only when that which brought on disunity is removed, will unity regarding the biblical Godhead be restored—unity which our pioneers had without one word of correction from the Spirit of prophecy.

Regarding the identity and personality of God—i.e., who He is, what He is like—Jesus came to show us the Father. All that the Son did or said came from the Father. But now we’re taught that God is not our “one God the Father” of 1 Corinthians 8:6, but a three-in-one God never mentioned by Jesus or any of the authors of Scripture. The one god temporarily called “Father” is allegedly but one-third of the whole, or “true,” God. Our majestic, holy, omnipotent God the Father, the ancient of days, “of whom are all things,” is removed from His sovereign throne of the universe to be just one of three almost-identical, unnamed gods. The Son of God—no longer a true Son, but merely acting the temporary role of “Son”—is also one of those generic, nameless three gods. The biblical narrative about an omnipotent Creator God inviting us to call Him “Father,” who loved us so much that He gave His divine, one-and-only begotten Son to live a sinless life that would later be imputed to us, and to die in our places so we could have a second probation—is reduced to metaphor in Adventism’s new interpretation of Scripture. And a Son willing to do that, out of love for us? No, not according to the Trinity doctrine. “Father” and “Son” are not real divine Persons; they are simply roles played in the cosmic controversy. The result is, to use Ellen White’s term, “to make a nonentity of God and of Christ.” (RH Aug. 6, 1908) As Ellen White predicted, “Our religion would be changed.” (1SM 204)

This teaching that makes of none effect the personality of God has found wide acceptance within Adventism today, though few have reasoned it out to realize that is what the doctrine of a triune God leads to. Its “most startling nature” comes from the fact that Kellogg’s misrepresentation of the personality of God—Who He is and where He is—“virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself,” according to Ellen White. (Letter 300, 1903) Yet a theological variant that is just as destructive is now accepted and defended by our leaders as sound doctrine. In other words, what was once regarded as part of “deadly heresies” is now “state[d] dogmatically … without any great effort at explaining its logic.” (Kwabena Donkor, *God in Three Persons—in Theology,* Bible Research Institute (2015), 25) Indeed, the destructive doctrine reached the point where it could be—and was—voted into our Fundamental Beliefs at the General Conference quinquennial session in Dallas in 1980, and then published in our 1981 yearbook. It is set forth in our Fundamental Beliefs two through five, which are stated in chapter 2.

In those four fundamental beliefs dealing with the Trinity doctrine and its three coeternal gods, you have the **omega of apostasy.** It began in limited scope in our midst through Kellogg, but despite Mrs. White’s strong warnings about Kellogg’s theology and the satanic spirit influencing him, Kellogg’s unbiblical, mystical theology has been adapted and developed within our denomination until it has culminated in what Sister White foresaw as the omega. What caused her to “tremble for our people” is that which, sadly, has been embraced by the overwhelming majority of the leadership and laity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. Sadly, many well-intentioned Adventists, whether they are historic or otherwise, have joined themselves to this fearful new trend. Books of a new order have been written—books in support of the omega—whose authors, I believe, do not understand the gravity of the situation.

Why did it cause Sister White to tremble, and why is it so deadly? Simply because God’s first commandment states, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” “Before me” is a Hebrew idiom that can mean “besides me,” “in addition to me,” or “in opposition to me.” None of those things are acceptable to our Lord God; they are insulting, and they are sin. In the first commandment, He requires that He alone be worshipped. He reminds us that He is the One who delivered His people from bondage in Egypt, thus proving His power to deliver them (and us) from sin. Even the divine Son of God, when the great controversy is ended, will be “subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (2 Cor 15:28)

But despite God the Father’s sovereign command, our church has accepted a false third god called “God the Holy Spirit,” a counterfeit of the true. Since this third god is supposedly coequal and coeternal with God the Father, our members are being taught from the pulpit and in denominational publications that we may also pray to and worship this false god. Prayers and worship are being directed away from our “one God the Father” (1 Cor 8:6) and toward a false holy spirit. Who receives the misdirected prayers and worship? Not God the Father; He’s not even the intended recipient. The one who receives their prayers and worship is the one whose falsehood it is: the enemy of God. He is the same one who received worship because of another deception of his that Ellen White wrote about. Satan had discouraged the churches in the 1830s and 40s from receiving the Millerite computation of prophetic time. That led to their rejection of the true event of Jesus entering the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary to begin the investigative judgement, so the “sanctuary [would] be cleansed” in preparation for His return. Mrs. White saw Satan standing by the throne in the Holy Place that Jesus had vacated when He entered the Most Holy Place. She wrote, “I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, ‘Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God’s children.” (EW 56)

Another danger stemming from a misrepresentation of the personality of God and of His divine Son comes when one worships a false god. It is idolatry—but consider why God hates idolatry. It is an empty, impotent, insulting substitute for the our infinitely superior, omnipotent God. It is a fatal delusion, because false gods cannot offer salvation. Our one true God dearly desires that we be saved. He hates lies because they cause the loss of eternal life for those He loves and for whom He has sacrificed everything. It is crucial that we know Him as He really is. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

Mrs. White penned this insight: “Few can discern the result of entertaining the sophistries advocated by some at this time. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me the result that would follow. The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.” (1SM 203)

What “past experience” are we robbed of, if we accept the sophistries regarding the personality of God? It is the confidence that we may have that, by His Word and by the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, God Himself has established Adventism’s understanding of the prophetic timeline, of the hour of judgment now come, of our great need of His indwelling Spirit, and of the imminent return of Jesus. We can have peace as we face the events of the future, because we know in whom we have believed. We can say with assurance, “This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: …we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” (Isa 25:9)

Consider these words of encouragement and faith: “Our faith in reference to the messages of the first, second, and third angels was correct. The great way-marks we have passed are immovable. Although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundation, and triumph in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. These pillars of truth stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those of Satan and his host. We can learn much, and should be constantly searching the Scriptures to see if these things are so. God’s people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward,—where He is interceding for His people.” (RH Nov. 27, 1883)

Finally, as stated before, embracing this doctrinal heresy makes believers in the Trinity first-commandment breakers, and unless there is deep repentance and a return to the “old paths, where is the good way” (Jer. 6:16), there will be tragic ends to their earthly probations.

In Hosea 4:6, God spoke to His people: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”Many believe that verse applies today to deceived Sunday-keepers. True as that may be, since they have forgotten the one commandment that begins with the word “remember,” it is also true that the majority of Seventh-day Adventists blindly break the first commandment while dutifully keeping the fourth. Sunday-keepers are in double jeopardy, as they are also Trinitarians. Frankly, though, “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)

God’s prophet gave us the following counsel, which we would do well to heed: “In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away.” (3T 265)

In December of 1905, Ellen White wrote fearful words concerning Dr. Kellogg and his refusal to accept divinely-inspired correction: “I have lost all hope of Dr. Kellogg. He is, I fully believe, past the day of his reprieve. I have not written him a line for about one year. I am instructed not to write to him….” (Letter 333, 1905) Imagine. The Holy Spirit told Ellen White not to strive with him any more for his salvation. One thinks of the verse “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.” (Hosea 4:17) Solemn words.

Wrongs have settled in on God’s church that have grieved our heavenly Father’s Spirit. Shall we not admit our error and put it away forever? Shall we not walk in the footsteps of Jesus, rather than the footsteps of Dr. Kellogg? This warning from Ellen White is unmistakable. She had written to Kellogg, “Men who are ignorant of the byways you have entered, the crooked paths you have made, are in danger of following your lead. I have been compelled to bear my testimony to the church, ‘*Enter not into that path*, to follow a course of action that will leaven your faith with evil, spoil your confidence in Bible truth, and lead you to build castles that will fill you with self-confidence and separate you from God.’” (20MR 346)

We have been given wisdom from on high: “We need no fanciful teaching regarding the personality of God. What God desires us to know of Him is revealed in His word and His works….

“Christ is the perfect revelation of God. Let those who desire to know God, study the work and teaching of Christ. To those who receive Him and believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God.” (CET 83)