

1T - Testimonies For The Church Volume One (1855-1868)

Chapter 69 - The Rebellion

The dreadful state of our nation calls for deep humility on the part of God's people. The one all-important inquiry which should now engross the mind of everyone is: Am I prepared for the day of God? Can I stand the trying test before me? {1T 355.1}

I saw that God is purifying and proving His people. He will refine them as gold, until the dross is consumed and His image is reflected in them. All have not that spirit of self-denial and that willingness to endure hardness and to suffer for the truth's sake, which God requires. Their wills are not subdued; they have not consecrated themselves wholly to God, seeking no greater pleasure than to do His will. Ministers and people lack spirituality and true godliness. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. God's people will be brought into most trying positions, and all must be settled, rooted, and grounded in the truth, or their steps will surely slide. If God comforts and nourishes the soul with His inspiring presence, they can endure, though the way may be dark and thorny. For the darkness will soon pass away, and the true light shine forever. I was pointed to Isaiah 58:1-15; Jeremiah 14:10-12, as a description of the present state of our nation. The people of this nation have forsaken and forgotten God. They have chosen other Gods and followed

their own corrupt ways until God has turned from them. The inhabitants of the earth have trampled upon the law of God and broken His everlasting covenant. {1T 355.2}

I was shown the excitement created among our people by the article in the Review headed, "The Nation." Some understood it one way, and some another. The plain statements were distorted, and made to mean what the writer did not intend. He gave the best light that he then had. It was necessary that something be said. The attention of many was turned to Sabbathkeepers because they manifested no greater interest in the war and did not volunteer. In some places they were looked upon as sympathizing with the Rebellion. The time had come for our true sentiments in relation to slavery and the Rebellion to be made known. There was need of moving with wisdom to turn away the suspicions excited against Sabbathkeepers. We should act with great caution. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." We can obey this admonition, and not sacrifice one principle of our faith. Satan and his host are at war with commandment keepers, and will work to bring them into trying positions. They should not by lack of discretion bring themselves there. {1T 356.1}

I was shown that some moved very indiscreetly in regard to the article mentioned. It did not in all respects accord with their views, and instead of calmly weighing the matter, and viewing it in all its bearings, they became agitated, excited, and some seized the pen and jumped hastily at conclusions which would not bear investigation. Some were inconsistent and unreasonable. They did that which Satan is ever hurrying them to do, namely, acted out their own rebellious feelings. {1T 356.2}

In Iowa they carried things to quite a length, and ran into fanaticism. They mistook zeal and fanaticism for conscientiousness. Instead of being guided by reason and sound judgment, they allowed their feelings to take the lead. They were ready to become martyrs for their faith. Did all this feeling lead

them to God? to greater humility before Him? Did it lead them to trust in His power to deliver them from the trying position into which they might be brought? Oh, no! Instead of making their petitions to the God of heaven and relying solely upon His power, they petitioned the legislature and were refused. They showed their weakness and exposed their lack of faith. All this only served to bring that peculiar class, Sabbathkeepers, into special notice, and expose them to be crowded into difficult places by those who have no sympathy for them. {1T 356.3}

Some have been holding themselves ready to find fault and complain at any suggestion made. But few have had wisdom in this most trying time to think without prejudice and candidly tell what shall be done. I saw that those who have been forward to talk so decidedly about refusing to obey a draft do not understand what they are talking about. Should they really be drafted and, refusing to obey, be threatened with imprisonment, torture, or death, they would shrink and then find that they had not prepared themselves for such an emergency. They would not endure the trial of their faith. What they thought to be faith was only fanatical presumption. {1T 357.1}

Those who would be best prepared to sacrifice even life, if required, rather than place themselves in a position where they could not obey God, would have the least to say. They would make no boast. They would feel deeply and meditate much, and their earnest prayers would go up to heaven for wisdom to act and grace to endure. Those who feel that in the fear of God they cannot conscientiously engage in this war will be very quiet, and when interrogated will simply state what they are obliged to say in order to answer the inquirer, and then let it be understood that they have no sympathy with the Rebellion. {1T 357.2}



There are a few in the ranks of Sabbathkeepers who sympathize with the slaveholder. When they embraced the truth, they did not leave behind them all the errors they should have left. They need a more thorough draft from the cleansing fountain of truth. Some have brought along with them their old political prejudices, which are not in harmony with the principles of the truth. They maintain that the slave is the property of the master, and should not be taken from him. They rank these slaves as cattle and say that it is wronging the owner just as much to deprive him of his slaves as to take away his cattle. I was shown that it mattered not how much the master had paid for human flesh and the souls of men; God gives him no title to human souls, and he has no right to hold them as his property. Christ died for the whole human family, whether white or black. God has made man a free moral agent, whether white or black. The institution of slavery does away with this and permits man to exercise over his fellow man a power which God has never granted him, and which belongs alone to God. The slave master has dared assume the responsibility of God over his slave, and accordingly he will be accountable for the sins, ignorance, and vice of the slave. He will be called to an account for the power which he exercises over the slave. The colored race are God's property. Their Maker alone is their master, and those who have dared chain down the body and the soul of the slave, to keep him in degradation like the brutes, will have their retribution. The wrath of God has slumbered, but it will awake and be poured out without mixture of mercy. {1T 358.1}

Some have been so indiscreet as to talk out their pro-slavery principles--principles which are not heaven-born, but proceed from the dominion of Satan. These restless spirits talk and act in a manner to

bring a reproach upon the cause of God. I will here give a copy of a letter written to Brother A, of Oswego County, New York: {1T 358.2}

"I was shown some things in regard to you. I saw that you were deceived in regard to yourself. You have given occasion for the enemies of our faith to blaspheme, and to reproach Sabbathkeepers. By your indiscreet course, you have closed the ears of some who would have listened to the truth. I saw that we should be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. You have manifested neither the wisdom of the serpent nor the harmlessness of the dove. {1T 359.1}

"Satan was the first great leader in rebellion. God is punishing the North, that they have so long suffered the accursed sin of slavery to exist; for in the sight of heaven it is a sin of the darkest dye. God is not with the South, and He will punish them dreadfully in the end. Satan is the instigator of all rebellion. I saw that you, Brother A, have permitted your political principles to destroy your judgment and your love for the truth. They are eating out true godliness from your heart. You have never looked upon slavery in the right light, and your views of this matter have thrown you on the side of the Rebellion, which was stirred up by Satan and his host. Your views of slavery cannot harmonize with the sacred, important truths for this time. You must yield your views or the truth. Both cannot be cherished in the same heart, for they are at war with each other. {1T 359.2}

"Satan has been stirring you up. He would not let you rest until you should express your sentiments upon the side of the powers of darkness, thus strengthening the hands of the wicked, whom God has cursed. You have cast your influence on the wrong side, with those whose course of life is to sow thorns and plant misery for others. I saw you casting your influence with a degraded company, a Godforsaken company; and angels of God fled from you in disgust. I saw that you were utterly deceived. Had you followed the light which God has given you, had you heeded the instructions of your brethren, had you listened to their advice, you would have saved yourself and saved the precious cause of truth from reproach. But notwithstanding all the light given, you have given publicity to your sentiments. Unless you undo what you have done, it will be the duty of God's people to publicly withdraw their sympathy and fellowship from you, in order to save the impression which must go out in regard to us as a people. We must let it be known that we have no such ones in our fellowship, that we will not walk with them in church capacity. {1T 359.3}

"You have lost the sanctifying influence of the truth. You have lost your connection with the heavenly host. You have allied yourself with the first great rebel, and God's wrath is upon you; for His sacred cause is reproached, and the truth is made disgusting to unbelievers. You have grieved God's people, and despised the counsel of His ambassadors upon earth, who labor together with Him, and are in Christ's stead beseeching souls to be reconciled to God. {1T 360.1}

"I was shown that as a people we cannot be too careful what influence we exert; we should watch every word. When we by word or act place ourselves upon the enemy's battle ground, we drive holy angels from us, and encourage and attract evil angels in crowds around us. This you have done, Brother A, and by your unguarded, willful course have caused unbelievers to look upon Sabbathkeepers all around you with suspicion. These words were presented before me as referring to the servants of God:

'He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me.' May God help you, my deceived brother, to see yourself as you are, and to have your sympathies with the body." {1T 360.2}

Our kingdom is not of this world. We are waiting for our Lord from heaven to come to earth to put down all authority and power, and set up His everlasting kingdom. Earthly powers are shaken. We need not, and cannot, expect union among the nations of the earth. Our position in the image of Nebuchadnezzar is represented by the toes, in a divided state, and of a crumbling material, that will not hold together. Prophecy shows us that the great day of God is right upon us. It hasteth greatly. {1T 360.3}

I saw that it is our duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger. "I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." He who has God's law written in the heart will obey God rather than men, and will sooner disobey all men than deviate in the least from the commandment of God. God's people, taught by the inspiration of truth, and led by a good conscience to live by every word of God, will take His law, written in their hearts, as the only authority which they can acknowledge or consent to obey. The wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme. {1T 361.1}

I was shown that God's people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a continual violation of conscience. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other. Worldly policy and public opinion comprise the principle of action that governs them and leads them to practice the form of rightdoing. But God's people cannot be governed by these motives. The words and commands of God, written in the soul, are spirit and life, and there is power in them to bring into subjection and enforce obedience. The ten precepts of Jehovah are the foundation of all righteous and good laws. Those who love God's commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man? {1T 361.2}

In consequence of long-continued and progressive rebellion against the higher constitution and laws, a gloomy pall of darkness and death is spread over the earth. The earth groans under the burden of accumulated guilt, and everywhere dying mortals are compelled to experience the wretchedness included in the wages of unrighteousness. I was shown that men have carried out the purposes of Satan by craft and deceit, and a dreadful blow has recently been given. It can be truly said: "Justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter," "and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." In some of the free states the standard of morality is sinking lower and lower. Men with depraved appetites and corrupt lives have now an opportunity to triumph. They have chosen for their rulers those whose principles are debasing, who would not check evil, or repress the depraved appetites of men, but let them have full sway. If those who choose to become like the beasts, by drinking liquid poison, were the only sufferers; if they alone would reap the fruit of their own doings,

then the evil would not be so great. But many, very many, must pass through incredible suffering on account of others' sins. Wives and children, although innocent, must drain the bitter cup to its dregs. {1T 362.1}

Without the grace of God, men love to do evil. They walk in darkness, and do not possess the power of self-control. They give loose rein to their passions and appetites until all the finer feelings are lost and only the animal passions are manifested. Such men need to feel a higher, controlling power, which will constrain them to obey. If rulers do not exercise a power to terrify the evildoer, he will sink to the level of the brute. The earth is growing more and more corrupt. {1T 362.2}

Many were blinded and grossly deceived in the last election, and their influence was used to place in authority men who would wink at evil, men who would witness a flood of woe and misery unmoved, whose principles are corrupt, who are Southern sympathizers, and would preserve slavery as it is. {1T 363.1}

In positions of trust in the Northern army there are men who are rebels at heart, who value the life of a soldier no more than they would the life of a dog. They can see them torn, and mangled, and dying, by thousands, unmoved. The officers of the Southern army are constantly receiving information in regard to the plans of the Northern army. Correct information has been given to Northern officers in regard to the movements and approach of rebels, which has been disregarded and despised because the informer was black. And by neglecting to prepare for an attack, the Union forces have been surprised and nearly cut to pieces, or what is as bad, many of the poor soldiers have been taken prisoners to suffer worse than death. {1T 363.2}

If there were union in the Northern army, this Rebellion would soon cease. Rebels know they have sympathizers all through the Northern army. The pages of history are growing darker and still darker. Loyal men, who have had no sympathy with the Rebellion, or with slavery which has caused it, have been imposed upon. Their influence has helped place in authority men to whose principles they were opposed. {1T 363.3}

Everything is preparing for the great day of God. Time will last a little longer until the inhabitants of the earth have filled up the cup of their iniquity, and then the wrath of God, which has so long slumbered, will awake, and this land of light will drink the cup of His unmingled wrath. The desolating power of God is upon the earth to rend and destroy. The inhabitants of the earth are appointed to the sword, to famine, and to pestilence. {1T 363.4}

Very many men in authority, generals and officers, act in conformity with instructions communicated by spirits. The spirits of devils, professing to be dead warriors and skillful generals, communicate with men in authority and control many of their movements. One general has directions from these spirits to make special moves and is flattered with the hope of success. Another receives directions which differ widely from those given to the first. Sometimes those who follow the directions given obtain a victory, but more frequently they meet with defeat. {1T 363.5}

The spirits sometimes give these leading men an account of events to transpire in battles in which they are about to engage, and of individuals who will fall in the battle. Sometimes it is found to be as these spirits foretold, and this strengthens the faith of the believers in spiritual manifestations. And again it is found that correct information has not been given, but the deceiving spirits make some explanation, which is received. The deception upon minds is so great that many fail to perceive the lying spirits which are leading them on to certain destruction. {1T 364.1}

The great leading rebel general, Satan, is acquainted with the transactions of this war, and he directs his angels to assume the form of dead generals, to imitate their manners, and exhibit their peculiar traits of character. And leaders in the army really believe that the spirits of their friends and of dead warriors, the fathers of the Revolutionary War, are guiding them. If they were not under the strongest fascinating deception, they would begin to think that the warriors in heaven (?) did not manifest good and successful generalship, or had forgotten their famed earthly skill. {1T 364.2}

Instead of the leading men in this war trusting in the God of Israel, and directing their armies to trust in the only One who can deliver them from their enemies, the majority inquire of the prince of devils and trust in him. Deuteronomy 32:16-22. Said the angel: "How can God prosper such a people? If they would look to and trust in Him; if they would only come where He could help them, according to His own glory, He would readily do it." {1T 364.3}

I saw that God would not give the Northern army wholly into the hands of a rebellious people, to be utterly destroyed by their enemies. I was referred to Deuteronomy 32:26-30: "I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?" {1T 365.1}

There are generals in the army who are wholly devoted and seek to do all they can to stop this dreadful Rebellion and unnatural war. But most of the officers and leading men have a selfish purpose of their own to serve. Each is looking for gain from his own quarter, and many of the true, whole-hearted soldiers are becoming fainthearted and discouraged. They nobly perform their part when in an engagement with the enemy, but the treatment which they receive from their own officers is brutal. Among the soldiers there are men that have fine feelings and independence of spirit. They have never been accustomed to mingling with so degraded a class of men as war brings together, and being tyrannized over and abused, and treated like brutes. It is very hard for them to endure all this. Many officers have brutal passions, and as they are placed in authority they have good opportunity to act out their brutal natures. They tyrannize over those under them as Southern masters tyrannize over their slaves. These things will make it difficult to procure men for the army. {1T 365.2}

In some cases when generals have been in most terrible conflict, where their men have fallen like rain, a reinforcement at the right time would have given them a victory. But other generals cared

nothing how many lives were lost, and rather than come to the help of those in an engagement, as though their interests were one, they withheld the necessary aid, fearing that their brother general would receive the honor of successfully repulsing the enemy. Through envy and jealousy they have even exulted to see the enemy gain the victory and repulse Union men. Southern men possess a hellish spirit in this Rebellion, but Northern men are not clear. Many of them possess a selfish jealousy, fearing that others will obtain honors and be exalted above themselves. Oh, how many thousands of lives have been sacrificed on this account! Those of other nations who have conducted war have had but one interest. With a disinterested zeal they have moved on to conquer or to die. Leading men in the Revolution acted unitedly, with zeal, and by that means they gained their independence. But men now act like demons instead of human beings. {1T 366.1}

Satan has, through his angels, communicated with officers who were cool, calculating men when left to themselves, and they have given up their own judgment and have been led by these lying spirits into very difficult places, where they have been repulsed with dreadful slaughter. It suits his Satanic majesty well to see slaughter and carnage upon the earth. He loves to see the poor soldiers mowed down like grass. I saw that the rebels have often been in positions where they could have been subdued without much effort; but the communications from spirits have led the Northern generals and blinded their eyes until the rebels were beyond their reach. And some generals would rather allow the rebels to escape than to subdue them. They think more of the darling institution of slavery than of the prosperity of the nation. These are among the reasons why the war is so protracted. {1T 366.2}

Information sent by our generals to Washington concerning the movement of our armies might nearly as well be telegraphed directly to the rebel forces. There are rebel sympathizers right at the heart of the Union authorities. This war is unlike any other. The great lack of union of feeling and action makes it look dark and discouraging. Many of the soldiers have thrown off restraint and have sunk to an alarming state of degradation. How can God go forth with such a corrupt army? How can He, according to His honor, defeat their enemies and lead them on to victory? There is discord, and strife for honor, while the poor soldiers are dying by thousands on the battlefield or from their wounds and from exposure and hardships. {1T 367.1}

This war is a most singular and at the same time a most horrible and heartsickening conflict. Other nations are looking on with disgust at the transactions of the armies of both North and South. They see such a determined effort to protract the war at an enormous sacrifice of life and money, while at the same time nothing is really gained, that it looks to them like a strife to see which can kill the most men. They are indignant. {1T 367.2}

I saw that the Rebellion had been steadily increasing and that it had never been more determined than at the present moment. Many professed Union men, holding important positions, are disloyal at heart. Their only object in taking up arms was to preserve the Union as it was, and slavery with it. They would heartily chain down the slave to his life of galling bondage, had they the privilege. Such have a strong degree of sympathy with the South. Blood has been poured out like water, and for nought. In every town and village there is mourning. Wives are mourning for their husbands, mothers for their

sons, and sisters for their brothers. But notwithstanding all this suffering, they do not turn to God. {1T 367.3}

I saw that both the South and the North were being punished. In regard to the South, I was referred to Deuteronomy 32:35-37: "To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. And He shall say, Where are their Gods, their rock in whom they trusted?" - {1T 368.1}