

## SOP Day Sermon

### Back to the Altar

By Dwain N. Esmond, Assoc. Director, WHT

If the Bible were to be compared to something, perhaps a rollercoaster would be appropriate. Its stories capture the highs and lows of humanity's first few millennia on earth. There is the high of creation, and the low of the fall (Gen 3, 4). There is the high of a people birthed in the loins of a patriarch whom God wants to use to help save the world from sin (Gen 12:1-3; Gen 17:4). But then there is the low of lost purpose and lack of commitment, of sin and national apostasy, such as we find in 1 Kings 18:16-45. In this sobering passage, we experience the mighty power of the Almighty God and the utter weakness of human gods. Here we see the mountaintop of God's forbearance and the valley of humanity's disobedience, the zenith of true worship and the nadir of false worship, the victory of the true God and the defeat of false gods!

The atmosphere that fateful day on Mount Carmel was charged, though an eerie silence had settled over the assembled throng. In previous times this elevated wooded mount was lush, green, and beautiful. It received plenty of rainfall and was considered a holy place, a place of blessing and fertility.<sup>1</sup> But all that had changed. What used to be green is now burnt and bare, the result of a painful three-and-a-half-year drought (1 Ki 17:1; 18:1; James 5:17). Here's Ellen White's sobering description of Israel at the time:

The earth is parched as if with fire. The scorching heat of the sun destroys what little vegetation has survived. Streams dry up, and lowing herds and bleating flocks wander hither and thither in distress. Once-flourishing fields have become like burning desert sands, a desolate waste. The groves dedicated to idol worship are leafless; the forest trees, gaunt skeletons of nature, afford no shade. The air is dry and suffocating; dust storms blind the eyes and nearly stop the breath. Once-prosperous cities and villages have become places of mourning. Hunger and thirst are telling upon man and beast with fearful mortality. Famine, with all its horror, comes closer and still closer.<sup>2</sup>

### The Drought Within

Perhaps even greater than the physical drought gripping the Northern Kingdom of Israel was their lack of faithfulness, a spiritual drought which had left God's people thirsty and dehydrated, and seemingly oblivious to their dire condition. Israel was at the time ruled by the evil King Ahab and his notorious wife, Jezebel—perhaps the worse choice ever made in a wife. As he sought to appease his Sidonian bride (1 Ki 16:29-33) he shifted his allegiance from the true God to the worship of false gods. The choice of a mate has eternal consequences and few seriously consider its generational ramifications.

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), pp. 124-125.

What started out as small acts of religious compromise became full blown apostasy by the time one gets to 1 Kings 18. Israel's seventh king had gone so far as to build his evil wife a temple to Baal in Samaria, the capital of the empire, and he was not done. Ahab also erected an Asherah Pole, complete with 400 priests to administer its pagan worship. Jezebel had not one, not two, but 850 prophets serving Baal and Asherah, her gods. All this did not appease her!

### **Uneasy Coexistence**

Jezebel's first recorded act in Scripture is "Prophet Genocide." False worship and false worshippers will always seek the death of true worship and true worshippers. False worship and true worship cannot coexist. One has to die for the other to live.

In 1 Kings 18:4, the Bible says that when Jezebel slaughtered the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah—an officer in Ahab's court who feared the Lord greatly—hid 100 of them in two caves and secretly fed them with bread and water. The Bible declares that "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him" (1 Kings 16:33). Ahab, Jezebel, and Israel now had God's full attention. Ellen White observes, "Oft-repeated appeals, remonstrances, and warnings had failed to bring Israel to repentance. The time had come when God must speak to them by means of judgments."<sup>3</sup>

It was into this devastating spiritual crisis that God called the prophet Elijah, a man whose name means "Jehovah is my God." It's almost as if God saw this moment in history and dreamed up Elijah to meet it. God knew Elijah before he was born, sanctified him a prophet, and brought him to confront Ahab and Jezebel at an appointed time. Satan may have had his couple in the palace, but God has His servant in the field.

Friend, you may not know it right now, but your gifts, your talents, and your unique capabilities have been ordained by God for some higher purpose. Never doubt that God has something great for you to do! Of Elijah, Ellen White comments, "There dwelt in the days of Ahab a man of faith and prayer whose fearless ministry was destined to check the rapid spread of apostasy in Israel."<sup>4</sup>

### **God Sends a Prophet**

When Elijah confronted Ahab, he accused God's prophet of being a "troubler" of Israel (1 Ki 18:17). Perhaps that was understandable, for it was Elijah who had declared that not a drop of rain would fall on Israel but at his word (1 Ki 17:1). Three years later, Ahab's resolve had been broken. When Elijah ordered Ahab to meet him on Mt. Carmel, along with all the prophets of Baal and Asherah, he meekly obeyed. Such was the spiritual authority and favor resting upon God's servant. How did he possess such power? He was on a sacred mission to rebuild Israel's broken altar of worship to the true and living God!

This, Dear Friends, is ever the focus of God's intervention in the affairs of men. God is always seeking to bring human beings back to true relationship with Him, and He calls prophets

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<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), p. 119.

and prophetesses to deliver His message when we go astray. The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that Ellen G. White possessed a modern-day manifestation of the prophetic gift to call men and women—especially those of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—back to the “alter” of Scripture.

In the sixth volume of *Testimonies for the Church*, she writes: “We are to receive God’s word as supreme authority.”<sup>5</sup> She further comments in the Introduction to *The Great Controversy*, her landmark work on the conflict between good and evil, “The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience.”<sup>6</sup> In the book *Life Sketches*, she observed, “If you had made God’s word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God’s inspired book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.”<sup>7</sup> And lest we think that her testimonies should in any way supersede that of Scripture, she makes clear that “the testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God’s Word is the unerring standard . . . Let all prove their positions from the Scriptures and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed Word of God.”<sup>8</sup>

In calling God’s remnant Church back to the Bible, Ellen White was doing a work very much in the spirit of Elijah on Mt. Carmel in 1 Kings 18. They that worship God must worship Him in Spirit and in truth (Jn 4:24). Elijah was calling the Israel back to Word of God as well as the worship of God. In like manner, Ellen White’s writings are meant to call us back to the Word of God, as well as the worship of God!

“Meet me on Mt. Carmel,” God’s servant commanded. “Bring all 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah! Let’s see who the real God is! Make sure everyone who is anyone is there,” said the man of God. When all of Israel had assembled on the barren mount, Elijah ordered that two bulls be brought. He would slay and prepare one and the prophets of Baal would prepare the other. “Then you call on the name of your god,” he continued, “and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God. Then all the people said, ‘What you say is good’” (1 Ki 18:24).

The rest of the story is all too familiar. The prophets of Baal called to their god from morning until noon and no fire consumed their sacrifice. Years of false worship, years of sin and apostasy, years of spiritual impotence was on display for all the nation to see. The flowing priestly robes did not mean that Baal’s spiritual charlatans possessed power. The prosperity sermons that they had preached for years were of no avail on this day. One either knew the true God or not. Powerful religious alliances were futile on Mt. Carmel that day. The only thing that

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<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 6 (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1855) p. 402.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911) p. vii.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Assoc., 1880), p. 198.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), p. 256.

mattered was whether one knew the true and living God or not. Whether one could get a prayer through to that God or not!

As Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal, urging them to shout louder to catch the attention of their god, the scene turns nightmarish: “At this they began to slash themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until the blood flowed” (1 Ki 18:28). They continued their frantic, bloody cries until the time of the evening sacrifice, but no fire came from their god. Baal had no “fire-power”!

### **Fire-Power**

1 Kings 18:30 says, “Then Elijah said to all the people, ‘Come here to me.’ They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down.” The prophet then took 12 stones, one for each of the 12 tribes descended from Jacob/Israel, and with them he built an altar and dug a trench around it (verse 32). He then arranged the wood atop the altar, set the sacrifice on it, and asked that four large jars of water be poured over the sacrifice. With parched tongues tasting the dusty air, with thirsty lips aghast at Elijah’s “waste” of water, the man of God yells, “Do it again!” He repeats his command two more times until water ran down the altar and filled the trench surrounding it (verse 35).

1 Kings 18:36 to 39 records God’s magnificent triumph on Carmel:

And it came to pass, at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah prayed to God, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again. Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”

The demonstration of God’s power was unmistakable, unparalleled, and unforgettable! In an instant God had rebalanced the scales, restored His honor, reclaimed His credibility, and re-ordered the spiritual priorities of the nation.

Friends, has God ever rebalanced things in your life when it seemed like evil was winning? Has God ever left you shouting, “The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!! The Lord, He is God!”?

### **Back to the Altar**

We cannot help but shout over God’s fiery triumph on Mt. Carmel, but there is a part of this biblical narrative that is often overlooked. I am deeply moved by something Elijah does on that special day. Let us look closer at the story.

Have you ever thought of the multitude of ways that God could have demonstrated His power on Mt. Carmel? For instance, if God is one who gave us breath (Gen 2:7), could He not have withheld His breath from the prophets of Baal and Asherah? They would have fallen lifeless to the ground. That would have been an amazing proof of His deity, but the people at Mt. Carmel and succeeding generations would forever serve God out of fear. Perhaps they would have dubbed Him “Jehovah, the God who takes your breath away.” Every breath would be a fear-filled enterprise with such a God.

Elijah could have asked God to levitate him high above the false prophets at Mt. Camel. Surely, if the people saw him suddenly rise unaided into the sky, this would be a miraculous sign that his God was the true God. That might have worked for some curious onlookers that day, but many would attribute it to magic—some sorcery of the wind, some gale-force breeze, everything but God.

Beloved Family of God, Elijah could have asked God to demonstrate His power that day in multiple ways, but on that fateful day, Elijah chose one: He asked God to prove Himself on an altar! When the contest was set, when the prophets of Baal had slaughtered their bull, when they had cried and cut themselves until evening, Elijah said to apostate Israel, “Let’s go back to the altar—the broken altar, the forgotten alter, the seldom-used altar of the true and living God!”

### **Altars in Scripture**

This isn’t the first altar mentioned in Scripture! There is an altar implication in Eden, after the fall of Adam and Eve. God made Adam and Eve skins to cover their nakedness (Genesis 3:21), sacrificing an animal to cover their physical nakedness, a type of Christ whose sacrifice would later cover humanity’s spiritual nakedness. In Genesis 4 when Abel brought the firstlings of his flock to the Lord as an offering, there is an altar implied there.

When God delivered Israel from Egyptian captivity, He told Moses in Exodus 25:8, “Let them make me a sanctuary that I might dwell among them.” The sanctuary had a brazen altar on which daily sacrifices were offered to God. Indeed, there are more than four hundred altars mentioned in the Bible. Altars in the Scripture represent places of commemoration and consecration. They are symbols of one’s devotional experiences with God, of one’s worship of the true God. Altars in Scripture were often built to commemorate encounters with God that had a profound impact on one’s life. When God did something supernormal, supernatural, super-special, or super-peaceful, the beneficiaries of God’s blessing wanted to remember what God had done.

For instance, when God told Abram that He would give the land of Canaan to his descendants (Gen 12:7), Abram built an altar there because his encounter with God was “Supernormal.” In that moment God promised to transcend everything normal in Abram’s life and make from his seed a great and mighty people.

When Isaac was wandering the desert of Gerar and fighting the locals over well-water, God appeared to him and said, “I am the God of your father, Abraham, do not be afraid. I will be with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants” (Genesis 26:24–25). Isaac

commemorated this divine encounter by building an altar on the very spot because his encounter with God was “Supernatural.” God had broken through the natural order of Isaac’s life to affirm that His promise to Isaac’s father was now his.

Isaac’s son, Jacob, traveled to a place called Bethel (Genesis 35:3) and there built an altar in honor of God who had appeared to him during his flight from Esau. Because that encounter with God was “Super-special,” Jacob built an altar there!

A fearful Gideon was pleasantly surprised when God appeared to him in peace and called him to lead the nation to victory. Gideon was so moved that he built an altar on the spot and called it “Jehovah is peace” (Judges 6:24), because his encounter with God was “Super-peaceful”!

Altars represent a person’s desire to consecrate him or herself fully to God and to never forget what God had done on his or her behalf. They are an acknowledgement that we are not God! There are things we cannot do for ourselves! They give visual presence to the invisible God, and they challenge us to remember Him. That’s why Elijah’s first act in seeking to reconcile apostate Israel to God was to call Israel back to the altar of worship to the true and living God!

### **Who Broke It?**

A question one must wrestle with in this narrative is, How did Israel’s become broken and dilapidated? Israel’s altar got this way because the nation had added things to their worship that eventually led them away from God. In Exodus 32:8 Aaron did not prohibit true worship; he simply added a calf and said “These are your gods that brought you up out of Israel.” After all, Moses was on the Mount and God seemed silent, and the people were restless. They needed something, so Aaron got creative. He added to their worship experience at a time when they were just learning anew how to worship God in spirit and truth. Family of God, be careful what you add to your life when God seems out of sight!

Jeroboam did not prohibit worship at the temple in Jerusalem. He just added two calves in Dan and Beersheba (1 Ki 12:26-30). He was a weak leader with a narcissistic complex. If the people in the Northern Kingdom of Israel went to worship at the Lord’s temple in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, their hearts would leave him, he reasoned. It was just more convenient to keep them close. God would understand, would He not? Israel became broken, largely because of neglect. They developed conveniences that made worship “easier.” Family of God, be careful about conveniences that replace true worship with false worship!

### **Altars in Crisis**

Right now we are witnessing one of the most significant challenges in history to the personal and family worship altar. Studies show that in 2022 most people spend an average of 2 hours and 27 minutes on social media each day.<sup>9</sup> Most of this time is spent on our Smartphones.

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<sup>9</sup> World Economic Forum.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/04/social-media-internet-connectivity/#:~:text=Global%20internet%20users%20spend%20an,these%20markets%20potentially%20driving%20growth.>

Children between the ages of 8 and 12 in the United States spend 4-6 hours a day watching or using screens.<sup>10</sup> Teens spend up to 9 hours per day in front of screens, and this data is echoed in other parts of the world. Studies are increasingly raising alarms about what those screens are doing to us!

Studies show that our unhealthy uses of technology, especially smartphone and social media is doing great damage to us: Unhealthy social media usage:

- Damages our ability to concentrate and focus
- Makes us feel lonely
- Raises our stress levels
- Increases depression and anxiety
- Tends to negative body image
- Encourages unhealthy sleep patterns
- Leads to addiction (dopamine cycle)
- Promotes cyberbullying
- FOMO (Fear of missing out)
- Promotes unrealistic expectations
- Causes memory deficits<sup>11</sup>

One author notes that we live lives mediated by screens. Screens stand between the person who creates and the person who receives. The more face-to-face time dwindles, the more we lose the richness of face-to-face communication. “We were created by God with an innate desire for unmediated contact and communication with God.”<sup>12</sup> What happens when the mind is so changed that it struggles to worship God unmediated? Can we worship God this way without feeling like we want to abort the experience?

Long before scientists found these effects, Ellen White wrote in 1888, “It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence.”<sup>13</sup>

In 1872 she makes this startling statement: “Every organ of the body was made to be servant to the mind. The mind is the capital of the body.” And again, in 1896: “The mind controls the whole man. All our actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. It is the mind that worships God and allies us to heavenly beings.”<sup>14</sup> Devices have increasingly become gods to us, and you know it is a god when you cannot imagine life without it.

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<sup>10</sup> “Screen Time and Children” (2020). American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry. [https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx#:~:text=On%20average%2C%20children%20ages%208,use%20may%20lead%20to%20problems.](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx#:~:text=On%20average%2C%20children%20ages%208,use%20may%20lead%20to%20problems.)

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Tim Challies, *The Next Story: Faith, Friends, Family and the Digital World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1977), p. 331.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 2 (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1977), p. 800.

Is it any wonder that a recent worldwide survey of Seventh-day Adventists showed that only 52% of members have personal morning and evening worship, and only 37% of families do?<sup>15</sup> How does a church with a message centered on accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and worshipping Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water (Rev 14:6-7) deliver that message if they themselves are not worshipping? How do we call people to the altar when our altars are broken?

Our devices are not evil. Technology is not evil, but how we use them can rob us of precious time with God, and the mental capacity to even experience full communion with Him. By beholding we are becoming changed! Too often the biggest result is neglect of the worship altar—time set aside to spend in devotion to God.

Ahab and Jezebel had simply done what leaders before them had done. They added gods that stole time from the true God. They added gods that stole minds from the true God. They added gods that changed them and their desire for God and His altar. The altar Elijah saw on Mt. Carmel was broken down because the people's commitment to the true God had broken down. The altar Elijah saw that day was torn because the people's hearts were torn. What we behold, what we desire, what we set before our faces, changes us! It is a law of nature as sure as the law of gravity. No wonder King David declared, "I will set no evil thing before my eyes" (Psalm 101:3). What we set before our faces changes us.

### **A Hidden Gem**

Often missed in the story of Elijah on Mt. Carmel is a note hidden in 1 Kings 18:36. It was "at the time of the evening sacrifice" that Elijah prayed for the fire to fall from heaven, for God to show that He was Israel's God. Morning and evening worship experiences were the spiritual bookends of Israelite life. God had instituted this personal/family worship experience to develop a devotional cadence in His people: "One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight" (Ex. 29:39), said God. In a very real sense, Elijah was not just calling the nation back to the altar of true worship; He was calling the nation back to the altar of regular, systematic worship of the true God! Israel's corporate worship altar was broken, but Israel's personal and family altars were broken long before.

Beloved, Elijah chose to rebuild the altar first because he did not want some euphoric, momentary, temporary epiphany. God's consuming presence was meant to come down every morning and every evening when the Israelites assembled before the altar. He wanted to restore the worship of the true God not just for a moment, but as long as the people had breath! Here are two things we can take from this wonderful story:

**1. If we Rebuild Our Altars, God will Come Again!** It was after Elijah had rebuilt the altar, doused it with water, and lifted his heart to God in prayer that the fire came from Heaven and consumed the sacrifice. Notice Elijah's prayer. He did not want to be proven a true prophet. He wanted God to be proven to be the true God! Miracle was not about him; it was about God.

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<sup>15</sup> The Global Church Member Survey. (2018). Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2018).



The fire was not for him, the fire was for God. The fire was to lift up the name of God and identify Him as the True God!

Beloved of God, when you build your altar for God, God will come to you. Don't allow anything to steal time from this sacred space with God. If God has done something for you, if God has been there for you, if God has kept you through difficult times, rebuild your worship altar and He will come to you!

Ellen White wrote in 1886, "In the morning the Christian's first thoughts should be of God. Come before Him with humility, with a heart full of tenderness, and with a sense of the temptations and dangers that surround yourself and your children. Morning and evening, by earnest prayer and persevering faith, make a hedge about your children. Patiently instruct them; kindly and untiringly teach them how to live so that they may please God."<sup>16</sup>

That's not all, Friends. There is more.

**2. If We Build it, it will Build Us.** Elijah was a man of worship. How do we know that? Read again his prayer on Mt. Carmel (1 Ki 18:36-37). You will notice no frantic shrieks, no senseless frenzy, no sharp gestures, no loud cries, no praise team required—just pure authority, pure power, pure faith, and no fear. You can tell a lot about a person's altar by how they pray.

When Jesus fed a multitude with five loaves and two fish, the Bible says He looked up to heaven and blessed them, then started to break them (Lu 9:16). He did not beg God for a miracle; He simply acknowledged that the miracle was already done. Jesus had an altar! When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He looked up to heaven and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me, and You always hear Me. He said this for the benefit of the people, not for Himself" (Jn 11:41-42). Jesus had an altar!

Often, Jesus' miracles were not even preceded by prayer. There is a sense in the Scripture that Jesus has more power than the perils that He faced from day to day. Where did Jesus get that power? He worshipped. Jesus had an altar—a regular time when He would come aside for private worship to His Father! Mark 1:35 tells us that after He had spent a whole day healing and helping people, He spent the night at His altar in prayer to His Father. When He chose the 12 disciples, He did so after spending an entire night in prayer (Lu 6:12-13). Jesus had built His altar and the time spent at His altar built Him into the powerful exponent of righteousness that He was. If we build our altars, they will likewise build us! If we rebuild our personal and family altars as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they will rebuild us! They will prepare us for service to our God!

Elijah also had a personal worship altar. From his altar he saw the devastating course of Israel: "Viewing this apostasy from his mountain retreat, Elijah was overwhelmed with sorrow. In anguish of soul he besought God to arrest the once-favored people in their wicked course." He was not willing to see people being lost to sin. He was not comfortable being part of the faithful remnant while not caring about the rest of the world! He wanted God to do something and so he spent long moments, bent over his altar in supplication to God.

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<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 18, 1886.

This kind of devotion was also the heartbeat of Ellen White's life and ministry. She spent long hours in prayer, long nights writing the counsels that God had shown her in vision, and long days laboring on the "Mt. Carmels" of her day, calling the Seventh-day Adventist Church back to the Bible and back to its sacred altar of personal and family worship!

Beloved Friends of God, now is the time to rebuild our broken altars of personal and family worship. If we rebuild them, God will come to us again and consume our sacrifices. If we build them, they will build us. They will prepare us to take our place in the proclamation of the three angels' messages, God's final message of love and warning for a perishing world. They will ready us for the Second Coming of Jesus. May God take us back to the altar of His Word and back to the altar of worship to the true and living God. We cannot go forward until we go back!

*\*All Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version of The Holy Bible*