

## The Midnight Watch Vespers

### Elder Tess Lambert – There is no “Church”-State Union Part 1

5-21-22

Prayer: Dear God in heaven, thank you for the Sabbath day and for the rest and for the blessing. Thank you that we can all come together and be benefitted by this afternoon’s vespers. I pray that your Holy Spirit will be here to help us to grasp the importance of what Elder Tess is teaching us. Help us to not miss the key points and help us to be able to take it away and meditate on it and allow it to change us, change our minds, change our behaviors, change the way we think. In your mighty name. Amen

Thank you, Marie. That was an encouraging start. We’ve lost our board work from last night, which isn’t a negative because of the fellowship held this morning. I was just seeing something from the New York Times that I thought was interesting to mention. We know that the election is today and it validated I think what we’re seeing. They made the point about the Australian election and they say that the coalition in many ways is being pulled to the right wing on a number of issues. There is an increase effort by labor to move to the center to try to pick up some of those moderate liberal voters. That’s Natasha Casand, director of public opinion and foreign policy program at the Laurie institute. (?) it said so explicitly, what I think we’ve kind of seen and said, that the conservative party, the liberals are moving even more right wing. I suppose the coalition has something to do with that. But the labor is trying to pick up the centrist voters that they’ve left behind. They make a point that this is strategic and some of them say how clever this is. This is clever because they’re trying to pick up the centrist voters that the liberal party, in moving more right wing, has left behind. I do think that left wing portion is a little bit more empty, at least when it comes to the two most major parties. Just interesting to hear that and comment from the election.

I asked last night why are we studying the trinity and I think that all of the answers were good ones. I didn’t see anything that I would disagree with. They were reasonable. They were all, I think, defensible. But I believe the most important reason that we’re doing this is not to see what is in existence outside but what is in existence inside the movement. And to try and demonstrate how that happens, I talked about the “straw man” arguments. I’m waiting for someone to write to me to say “straw person”. I’m not sure. That kind of “straw person” image that we can create and it’s very tempting because that is what especially since the beginning of cable news has been popular on both sides although the left wing is often accurate. For example, on abortion, they are always seen as creating this “straw man” argument where the right wing is trying to abolish Roe v Wade and the right wing would say, “No we’re not. We’re just nice little Supreme Court justices. We know what precedent means.” And often the left wing was quite accurate in how they portrayed the evidences of that are becoming more apparent. But it is something that both can engage in. And this isn’t something new that is

being said in these classes. We went right back to libertarianism when we discussed the freedom truckers. So it is all too easy and we made this point. It's all too easy for the media to go down to those protests and see the neo-Nazis and find the swastika. That's kind of what happened. News now is built upon ratings. They need engagement. It's not just there to share news. It's now increasingly become a form of entertainment. The written media is a lot safer than what people find on cable. CNN is kind of a headline but I would probably not watch CNN and go to a written source. But it is based on viewership and engagement.

So, if they're going to go and speak to their base and they're going to go and see the freedom truckers in Canada, they're going to take their cameras and show their base something sensational and it is there. The far right is there. They'll find the swastika. They'll find the neo-Nazis. They'll find the white supremacists. But when they do that, the problem is they miss all these people when they find the neo-Nazis. They miss pop who's been trucking for 30-40 years and he's concerned about the erosion of his freedom and he's there with his grandkids. He doesn't want violence. And that is a much larger portion of that group than the neo-Nazis. But when we it's all put over here over here (neo-Nazi –far right) and it's all too easy to say, for those who consider themselves "democrat" or "progressive" in the United States, to say, "Look how good we are."

"We don't like swastikas. We don't like neo-Nazi. We don't like white supremacy. Aren't we great? It's too easy to do that." We needed to go in and see the argument about freedom. And I wanted to sell it. I wanted to make it look beautiful: small government, education, individual philanthropists doing that work of educating, raising money to support schools and mental health institutions, churches taking care of the poor and needy, that's their purpose. So it's built around such a beautiful argument. I wanted us to see the beauty of the argument so that we could identify the libertarianism in ourselves and then have us see the reality of that when it comes head to head with equality and how that is playing out prophetically in the United States over civil rights and then if we don't get what's happening in the last 30 years, take it back to the civil rights movement and say if you like that picture, we need to start dismantling the civil rights amendment/act.

We didn't quite get into the far right militia groups like Gavin McInnes, the proud boys. That's when you also see all of it and when it's sold to predominately young men, it is sold in a beautiful package and that is what is so dangerous and that is what has been pervasive throughout this movement and some people, a vast minority, have written to me since those presentations and said, "I get it now, I was thinking that way. I thought freedom was beautiful. That's why I was doing these things, wearing these things, or acting this way and now I can see it." And that has been encouraging. I just wish it was not a minority.

So we can't just go to the freedom protests and see the swastikas. There is a reason why the swastika is there. There is a demographic in which you feel comfortable and there is a demographic in which you don't feel comfortable. There is a reason that far right groups feel comfortable in that kind of environment.

I don't know how many people have a Netflix account or know someone who does. Even if you were to spend a little, I don't like to promote things that cost. But I do think it is worthwhile and watch the two part Netflix documentary on Jimmy Savile. Does everyone know who Jimmy Savile is? There are few people don't know who Jimmy Savile is. This is a very painful documentary. Does everyone know who he is and would like to explain who he is? If not, I'll just open up Wikipedia and do my best.

Katherine: He was a man, a philanthropist that he raised fund raiser for helping institutions in England and then he was exposed for having abused girls in those institutions.

Elder Tess: Yes. He was a cultural icon for about half a century, fifty years. He was one of the most famous figures in the UK, from about 1950 through the early 2000s. He died in 2011. He was an English DJ, television and radio personality on the BBC, hosted a number of shows including shows targeting children like "Jim will fix it". He'd take requests from children who wanted him to fix something and then he'd make these children and fix things. He was a huge philanthropist and raised 40 million pounds for charities during his lifetime. He was widely praised for his personal qualities and a he was a fund raiser. The problem was that for over fifty years he was sexually abusing mostly underage women. I can't express how awful that documentary to watch but it is so educational on how society and culture treats these personalities.

The reason I mention him in this context is because he had an order of the British empire and one of the reasons he was knighted as Sir James Wilson Vincent Savile was that Margaret Thatcher petitioned the queen over and over again. Margaret Thatcher loved Jimmy Savile. In fact, the whole royal family loved Jimmy Savile. When there was national emergencies, a disaster, a plane crash, Prince Charles actually wrote to Jimmy Savile and said you're really good with the public, you tell us, you tell the royal family how we can respond to the public, what we need to say, how we need to present ourselves before the public. And he sent the royal family and it was given to the queen to read advising the royal family on how to handle themselves in public view. He was the favorite of Margaret Thatcher. He was also very popular with Princess Diana. She used to go visit him to hang out. He was incredibly popular. But his misogyny and sexual abuse of underage women was not very hidden. And the reason I just mentioned him now was because of his popularity with Margaret Thatcher.

The reason Margaret Thatcher loved him was she was a right wing conservative libertarian. And with that mindset, the government needs to be small. The government doesn't raise money to keep key institutions funded. Instead, you have people raise this money and he represented to Margaret Thatcher what libertarianism was capable of when you have just an ordinary citizen go out to the public and say, "Look, this institution that houses vulnerable young women needs funding and will the public please donate to fund this institution?" And people love him and people donate. Government is entirely out of it. That's the beautiful libertarian view. It's these philanthropists, these activists that are completely separate to control of big government appealing to the good hearted members of society to help fix and educate their society and

support these institutions. But because the government was not involved, he was then able to turn up in his car and take those vulnerable young women with whatever he wanted with whomever he wanted. And those women, hundreds and hundreds of them, because they were vulnerable, because he was famous and loved by society, he was untouchable until after he died. He had put on his tombstone after he died, "It was good while it lasted." And that was seen as so offensive to the people he had abused that when the full scale of his abuse came to light, they took his tombstone under cover of darkness, tore it up and took it down to shed, this is like police officers, people who were angry. It was too late for justice because he was too popular, because government was not involved, because you don't take down a great man just because of a few troublesome young women. And they spent all night hammering and chiseling that phrase off of his tombstone, kind of like Hitler's bunker is a parking lot today so no one could ever admire it again. That was the extent of his fall after he died. He lay in state for a number of days after his death. I think there are a few things we can learn from that. But that's the danger of the beautiful trust that libertarianism wishes to have with society and how it empowers individuals without big government oversight. That is the reality of Margaret Thatcher's vision and it is horrific. It's worth watching the documentary just to get that point.

So we tried to show how there are these extremes. It's easy to see and create this straw man over here (referring to neo-Nazi side). They are all neo-Nazis; they are all Roy Den Hollander and that's not the reality. The vast majority are in here (referring to middle area – freedom) and when we see this, we make ourselves feel good and we feel comfortable sitting in here (freedom). We don't realize that's where most of the right wing is. And I hope that point had come through when we discussed libertarianism. It sells itself as progressive and beautiful. The reality of it, whether you want to look at Jimmy Savile, the civil rights act, January 6, the reality is always awful, and that is the type of way Satan messages. It sounds wonderful, but there's been a lot of talk this last week about the white supremacist terrorist – he's here (pointing to far-right neo-Nazi side). But I just want to mention Tucker Carlson and his popularity.

"In October 2018 Tucker Carlson tonight was the second highest rated news show in all of prime time after Hannity with 3.2 million nightly viewers. By April 2020, Carlson's program surpassed Hannity as the highest rated prime time cable news show with an average audience of 4.56 million viewers. During the second quarter of 2020, Tucker Carlson tonight garnered an average audience of 4.33 million viewers, the largest for any program in the history of cable news. In July 2020, Tucker Carlson tonight broke the record for the highest rated program in US cable news history garnering an average nightly audience of 4.33 million viewers. In February 2022 media reported that in the month of October, Tucker Carlson was the number one watched host among democrats in the key 25-54 age demographic across all networks."

So that is 4.33 million people minus a few who don't intend to engage in white supremacist terrorism. That is 4.33 million people who do not consider themselves racist and you have the left wing connecting Tucker Carlson to a white supremacist terrorist and 4.33 million people in the United States would disagree with that because they see Tucker Carlson as logical and

reasonable. He says he's not racist. He's in here (pointing to freedom section on white board), 4.33 million people in here. More people who say that they are democrats aged between 25 and 54, more in that age range of democrats watched Tucker Carlson than Rachel Maddow. That's the scale of the problem and it's kind of frightening when we see it that way.

So if we take the message and we cut it down and we twist it slightly and then we add to that what is left a little of our own dropper full of justification, what we do is we essentially just...it's like process food. We process the message through our own little factory. And what it does it puts all of the bad people over here. And it puts us as left wing progressives. It's not that simple externally. It's not that simple internally. And we're going into men's rights arguments and libertarianism to try and prove that point. I agreed with everything that everyone said and put up yesterday. We discussed then how do we vote. I wanted to make the point that it can't be through what we say we are. We have to when it comes to someone like Tucker Carlson, we have to listen to what they say because if we put 4.33 million Americans here (pointing to far-right neo-Nazi) and they say that they are not, then they're going to start saying, "well the left wing just put out fake news because I know that I'm not a white supremacist terrorist." So they start seeing the left wing as creating that "straw man" argument and I think it damages the cause. Tucker Carlson doesn't come out looking better by understanding the complexity of what he's saying. The rationality and reasonableness seemingly of what he's saying. I don't believe that he comes out looking better, but we come out with a much clearer view of the dangers of some of their own thinking, especially when it comes to gender.

1 -So listen to what they say and 2- don't listen to what they say. Because when an evangelical pastor says I am not a member of QAnon but these pedophile cults in congress, these pedophiles like Hillary Clinton and key members of Hollywood, someone doesn't need to say that they are a member of QAnon group. It's not really a formalized group that way. Men's rights activists and the men's rights movement- I think that's a misleading term. It's not such a coalesced movement. It's not necessarily all activists. All we have to do is support their ideology. If a pastor stands up and starts talking about Hillary Clinton being in a pedophile ring, then I don't care whether or not he is or isn't part of a QAnon movement. He is part of that ideology and I wanted to make that point also when it comes to the men's rights arguments. It's about the ideology that we believe in and we promote. That is how we vote. And I also want to be clear, what we say does matter and Elder Parminder and I discussed that afterwards and he got your point and I think you have a point. Sometimes what we say is the only thing we've got and our voice is important. The point I was trying to make, though, is it can be very misleading. **It's ultimately not our words that determine which way we vote in this political election that we term the great controversy.**

So why is all this sexism in the world? We've been going into the misogyny and I just want to read from the book *The Gendered Brain*. We went into the sexism that pervades. Just a little paragraph she thought to put it in the beginning by Steven Gold (Sp?)

“Few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life. Few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive, or even to hope, by limit imposed from without but falsely identified as lying within.”

The way she’s using that thought in the context of this book is she’s talking about that tragedy of the stunting of life and how extensive this occurs when it comes to gender. The injustice, the gendered injustice when women lose the opportunity to strive or even to hope, not by something that lies within, not by biology, but by a limit imposed by society and culture that she says is falsely identified as biology, a biological limit. And it’s that concept of the biology that she’s fighting and we’ve tried to show how this is not the standard thought of the scientific community. This is not the standard thought of atheism and has never been.

So I want to ask, if we can see this (pointing to SL diagram) that when it comes to the Sunday Law – which is misogyny and the attack on women’s and LGBT rights through the branches of US government and also worldwide, when we see that the escalation towards that and we say that it’s not Protestantism, not the whole Protestantism, and it’s not the cause, we wanted to say, what is the cause?

What, then, is the cause of this misogyny and the development towards the Sunday Law if it isn’t church and state? Does anyone have any thoughts that they wanted to share, or perspectives, before I continue?

So I’ll ask a question, what’s the purpose of the midnight cry?

Ray: it’s the light that guides us all the way to the Second Advent, that’s a nice textbook answer. I guess the purpose of light is to show us the way by showing us obstacles that might be in our path, showing us where not to tread as much as where to tread.

Elder Tess: Sometimes the textbook is the post poetic and I think you said that in a lovely way. I just want to draw up what this movement has been since 1989.

1989, we’ll skip to the midnight cry- remember they don’t understand the nature of the kingdom until you get into this history. 2001. 2014. 2016. 2018. You lose sight of this on the line of the 144K, but like you said Ray, this is the light that doesn’t stop shining. So it’s not restricted to that. It’s going to go all the way, and I don’t want to cut the line on this. It’s going to go all the way to the Sunday Law, Close of Probation, and Second Advent.

But I want to take this history especially (referring to 2018 to SL) and expanded it some more.

We’ll take 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. I’m getting tied up with dates.

Brodie: I’m answering the question about the purpose of the midnight cry. I was going to say to wake us up.

Elder Tess: Yes, because what’s coming?

Brodie: Second Advent. The wedding.

Elder Tess: and before the wedding, the door is shut and before the door is shut what it's warning us is to see the Sunday Law. We know that there's a wedding down here and there's a shut door and it's complicated parable depending on the lesson people want to draw. There are a couple of applications I there. I'll leave that one to Elder Parminder. But they need to waken because the Sunday Law is imminent now. And they have to understand it. So the midnight cry is going to go and give the sleeping virgins a little bit of a kick and say "can't you see it? It's here. You need to be ready for this". And if I can combine some parables, maybe I'm not allowed to do that, you don't understand what it looks like. Open your eyes; see what it looks like.

Can someone give me the dates for this? Midnight cry was 2018. November 9 2019. May 2020 which was externally George Floyd and internally Apis bull. 2021.

Katherine, you have a good memory.

Katherine: 2021 we had the formalization of the wedding of Cana and I think that was in August 2021 and then in 2021 we had radical feminism and I think that was in October. And I don't think I know anything beyond that.

Elder Tess: when did we do LGBT?

Katherine: that was August 2021. So we understood gay marriage, radical feminism (October 2011), Apis bull (May 2020). So the virgins need to be awoken because the Sunday law is coming with a test, a test for them. The midnight cry is given in Arkansas in 2018. The first angel is there, doesn't understand the nature of the kingdom and he's not going to like it. But I have so much respect for him. I do believe that he had insight that was not human and I think we can learn a lot from his response and I don't mean to be disrespectful to someone who I do think suffered more for the development of this message than we realize and I still feel the need to show him utmost respect for what he has done. But his response when he heard the message "wake up the Sunday law is coming", what did he say?

Marie, did I miss you?

Marie: I put my hand up for the question you asked before about why did we have the midnight cry. So, I'm not sure if we want to go back. I was going to say that it was to take us out of the conservative Adventist mindset and to put us into a liberal way of thinking. That's very broad to say that, to prepare us for the Sunday law.

Elder Tess: Yes. So it's going to take Elder Jeff and it's going to wrench him from something and how does he respond to that when he's wrenched from something?

Raymond: didn't he say like after two streams of information was taught like, "Why did she have to teach that?"

Elder Tess: yes, it was offensive and painful because he felt he was being attacked.

Josephine: I may be thinking wrongly because I was thinking about when it was said that Sunday law, how did he respond and he thought it was fanaticism. I could be wrong.

Elder Tess: he loved everything except for two streams of information. He loved everything except what I said about Fox news and right wing politics in America. Everything else, Raphia, Panium, general concept of information wars as it relates to the King of the North, King of the South, November 9, WW II, Pyrrhus. He loved all of that. When Ray said, "Why did you have to teach that?" He (Elder Jeff) didn't mean the whole message. He said "I love this message, why did you have to go ruin it by teaching two streams of information and attacking right wing American politics."

Josephine: what's wrong with that?

Elder Tess: that's what I want us to see.

Katherine: Are you asking specifically like on the day, because I'm thinking about how he said that he wanted to get back to Laodicea but I'm not sure if you want to get that far ahead.

Elder Tess: I wasn't because he has a full year to develop that argument. This was his initial reaction to feeling attacked because I think it is in that initial reaction that initial defensive posture that he hit the nail on the head of what he felt he was being attacked over.

Katherine: I wasn't there but did he say something about the next thing they're going to do is like gay marriage is okay.

Elder Tess: he doesn't really say that until 2019. That all comes later, that wasn't his original concern. We weren't even teaching gender equality in 2018 explicitly. It's built in to attacking right wing politics which I'm sure was all the subject of gender had to be on his mind because we're attacking right wing position but that wasn't his underlying issue.

Graham: I was there and there was lot of different things that were said so I'm not entirely sure precisely the one that you're talking about. But if I was to merge a couple together from that time period, it would be that a weaker vessel who is a European socialist is telling me an American about my politics and how I receive my information here in the U.S.

Elder Tess: Yes, that is precisely the point I wanted us to see. His first gut defensive position was that he was being attacked and where in that do you see he's not saying, "You, Tess, are attacking Protestantism. You're attacking Adventism. You're attacking Ellen White." That's not his problem in 2018. All of those arguments develop later. His initial problem was not anything that we said about Christianity, Protestantism, Adventism, the Bible, how to read. He didn't care about that in 2018.

Raymond: I thought it might have been that Nethinims and Levites are being plowed by sources outside the movement has flowed from those two streams.



Elder Tess: what happens is that because he makes that argument that he's under attack, not his Christianity, but something else. Then in the late months December 2018 we come back in and use the line of the Nethinims to try and show him that it has to be this way, that there has to be two streams of information externally. That kind of comes later to try and help him see. It's an irrefutable point if you follow the reform lines. So yes, that's important but it kind of comes later, that particular defense of two streams.

Brendan: So he felt attacked. This is more of a question, did he feel attacked because it identified what his political ideology was actually on the wrong side, is that so everything would have been fine if you didn't say that. Is that basically where he's at? He felt victimized by the left coming in. How is it possible that this left wing is the correct stream? Is that something he couldn't compute in his mind?

Elder Tess: Yes, I think so. When he hears two streams of information, which is the midnight cry and he digests that, he is upset that Wednesday night when prayer meeting is cancelled and we all stand in one room and I try to bury myself in a corner. He is upset. But not once was how he read the Bible, or what we were doing with Ellen White quotes, or that we're attacking. He's spent 20 -30 years attacking Adventism. He doesn't care if we attack Adventism. He spent 20-30 years going to Ellen White quotes to make points. We weren't attacking him on the level of his religion. If we did he would have come back with a religious argument. He does do that but it is months, a year later that he's able to scramble together religious arguments to fight this. But that was not what this fight was ever really about.

Josephine: I'm guessing but I think was it his political stand that he was closer to the right side rather than the left and that means he's going to have to change. That's a guess.

Elder Tess: Yes to a degree. I just don't want to give out what I think until I get through people's questions. So I'm sorry if it's not a good answer yet. I'll come back to it but it might not help for me to blurt out if people still have points to make.

Marie: it seems from what Graham said that the fact that you were a female and that the message was coming from outside the USA this seem to be more of an issue than anything else. I'm sure there was more to it than that. Definitely there must have been very big issues in his mind that for him to actually spell that out.

Elder Tess: I think it added to the feeling of being bruised for sure.

Brandon: In what Graham said you know that you're a European socialist coming intervening and it seems nationalistic as well. I don't know, you've got external people coming in telling me what is right and wrong and I'm not sure. I'm just trying to get my head around it.

Josephine: what I'm going to say might sound offensive but I'll say it because I don't mean it that way and I'm going to say what I think. Do you think it was because he feels that this whole thing is being wrenched from his hand? The message is going to a different messenger and that

he loved this, he loved that and this other thing but he wasn't aware of certain things and he didn't understand it and could God be giving it to someone else to carry it on and he feels hurt?

Elder Tess: this isn't kind of getting to the point that I wanted to make. But just going off of what you said, he saw the midnight cry. He cut off the bit about two streams of information and gathered what was left. He twisted what was left to what he more suited his beliefs and then he started his own including concepts such as predicting all kinds of events like Panium. He went through this exact process (pointing to white board on message being twisted) between the giving of the midnight cry when he finally left. So there is, I think, in that process the feeling that this message no longer suits him. But why does it no longer suit him? What did it attack that he no longer felt that he had to do this?

Sharon: I'm not sure if this is relevant. It's more of a question I guess. I've only really heard bits and pieces as to his response. But, was it that he could see through the two streams of information the issues that would come that he would have to address as in like feminism, LGBT. I know that it was very early on. I don't know if it was a question or a point.

Elder Tess: works either way. **I do believe that the increase of knowledge of the Sunday law in 2019 is feminism, gender equality. The formalization of understanding the Sunday law is 2021, radical feminism, radical gender equality. Both of them are left wing concepts.** They are not right wing. They are not conservative. They are absolutely not libertarian. Both of them are left wing concepts and so I'm sure that everything that comes packaged with the left wing, whether it was on his conscience or subconscious that was part of what he was hearing. I do think your point is valid.

Moli: I think from the response that he came especially what Graham was saying is that he feels weakened when the midnight cry came with two streams of information. He realized he was exposed to him being nationalism and sexism and he knew by the two streams of information that the movement would be split and that's why he responded so defensively. That's what I'm gathering.

Elder Tess: no other part of the message attacked him and that's why he was not defensive to any other part of the message. The point I want to ask to bring us to is precisely what was attacked because what was attacked was not his Adventism.

Lynn: I was going to say that some of his traditional Adventist views, however I was also going to say that he had a very literal to literal perspective of prophecy from what I observed and we all did, not just him and he really had a very patriarchal view and I think that even though he voiced the political perspective that challenged him, the two streams of information I think that really highlighted and that's why it was seen to mention things like the weaker vessel and that sort of thing because it kind of would have been really hard to compute how that would fit into his Biblical patriarchal perspective of world view. And that couldn't sit with the democratic, well he couldn't sit with the democratic view because it had to sit with the opposite of the democratic, the republican. It just really didn't compute in his patriarchal worldview and his

religious worldview, or political or religious anything. It would have been very challenging. That was my thought.

Elder Tess: At this stage of two streams of information, we're not going into two streams within Adventism. We haven't done two streams within Protestantism. We don't do two streams within Catholicism until late 2019 over a year later. All we have done is go into US itself and look at Donald Trump, look at Fox news versus CNN, look at Tucker Carlson versus Rachel Maddow for example and say that these two sides that are fighting in the US is part of the fight over Sunday law and that Fox news and that stream and everything including Trump that it's connected to is the stream that is wrong and is the stream that will bring about the Sunday law. So we haven't gone into attacking his Adventism, his religion. What I believe Elder Jeff was saying was not you're attacking my religious beliefs, not that you're attacking the Bible or the reading of Ellen White, not that you're attacking Adventism or Protestantism. **What he said was you're attacking my culture.** I don't believe it would have mattered if I was Australian and a woman or a Californian man who watches Rachel Maddow and is left wing and male. I don't think it would have made him accept the message any more if I was from some liberal from California or some socialist apparently, I didn't vote for the socialist party primarily I must be that socialist, I don't know why that came to mind. I don't think that was the core issue. What he said was you're attacking my culture. **And it is culture that I want to say is the cause. It's not Protestantism. It's not religion; it is culture and we need to understand the difference between the two.**

There is no "Church" –State part 2, 05-21-22

Have you all heard the term of "culture war"? I'm not sure if people have understood the concept of culture war. But I want to go into that just a little, explaining what the culture war means.

If you were to go to the Wikipedia page and look up culture war, it will divide it into sections. It will discuss 1920s to 1980s as a kind of origin between the '20s to the '80s in the last century. It was used but it wasn't very common, it wasn't very popular as a phrase. It started to be popular, guess when? When did the concept of culture war just be introduced and modern polarization in the United States began to be understood so clearly through the lens of the culture war? When did that happen? It was a singular event, a singular year.

Ray: I was going to say second wave feminism until you said singular event.

Elder Tess: it was a bit after then.

Ray: when you said a singular year, I was going to guess 1989?

Elder Tess: close, really good attempt. Marie, I've missed you. Sorry Ray, were you done?

Ray: yeah

Marie: you said singular year does stump me, but I would suggest, or I would guess 2016 and Steve Bannon, although that was all happening well before then. I would guess again and say around, between or actually probably around 2012?

Elder Tess: I don't mind if you want to search if people want to have a look. I don't mind that. I think by then the culture war, you're seeing the fruits of the culture war, not where it begins to actually be understood as an issue.

Graham: I was going to say around 1996, where we see two streams of information brought into the You Tube and the internet that we develop a really dividing culture.

Elder Tess: you and Ray have book ended it. It's 1991. You're on the right track. 1989. 1996. But when is the increase of knowledge? 1991 and it was then that the increase of knowledge that people start to understand that they are in the midst of a culture war in the United States. What happened was James Davison Hunter, a sociologist at the University of Virginia introduced the expression, again it was known before, but he introduced it in his 1991 publication Culture wars: the struggle to define America. Hunter described as what he saw is a dramatic realignment and polarization that had transformed American politics and culture. So they divided the 1920s to 1980s, it's used infrequently and then they divided 1991 to 2001. That ten year period it took off because of what James Hunter wrote.

He argued that " on an increasingly number of hot button defining issues including abortion, gun politics, separation of church and state, privacy, recreational drug use, homosexuality, censorship. There existed two definable polarities. Furthermore, not only were there a number of divisive issues, but society had divided along essentially the same lines of these issues, so as to constitute two warring groups defined primarily not by nominal religion, ethnicity, social class or even political affiliation but rather by ideological worldview."

So what he identified as in the past, prior to 1991 you had the moral majority, you had the three movements, you had a lot of conflict of civil rights over mid/late 1900s, but now you had two sides, two opposite poles. And over these divisive issues, if you believed in one divisive issue you tended to believe or have similar positions on all the others, so people didn't have just a wide spectrum or smattering of some of the others. They're generally divided into two poles and these two poles were now at war. What he also identified was that in past decades and centuries, this would be fought over based on someone's religion, Christianity, a defense of traditional family values through the Protestant lens. And he says not so anymore. **Now it's not about religion; it's not about ethnicity. It's not about social class and it's not even really about what political party you belong to. It's about your ideological worldview. It's about which culture you want to belong to.**

In 2021, he was interviewed by Politico. It was the 30 year anniversary of him bringing this concept of culture war into the mainstream and it taking off from there. So Politico interviewed in 30 years later last year and asked for his views on America today, where he sees the culture war over the last 30 years. I'll come to that in a moment.

Katherine: it's okay, it was for when you wanted to know which year and I was going to say 1991. I would have been wrong on the reason because it would have been about Anita Hill. It would have been the beginning of the third wave I was thinking. It was the logic that maybe started to agitate.

Elder Tess: I'm sure that was part of the context this man is seeing when he writes this publication. It would have reinforced that same culture war. It's a Politico article. The reason why I haven't shared it in the media broadcast is because without context, there's things he says and his political position that I don't believe we can adhere to the movement, they are not prophetically. He makes a lot of mistakes, I think. He identifies himself as a conservative, but a kind of liberal conservative. So the modern day conservative wouldn't be happy with him. In other words, he's a centrist leaning towards the conservative. And I think partly because of that, he's quite blind to some issues. He has such eyesight into some things, but then in others, he has completely missed the boat. For example, he said that the modern culture war is not at all over abortion, that it has moved on to the subject of racism. And the modern culture war is all about race and whereas it was about abortion decades ago and that's done. And this is only last year. I think to think that abortion was not an issue and not part of the culture war, obviously we know now that he was wrong, but he should have known that last year. He should have known that gender was the central issue of the culture war last year and not race. But he misses that and I think part of the reason he misses that is because if you're going to take the centrist conservative worldview, I think he's missing some things. But he does have insight into the culture war that is relevant. It was relevant in 1991.

So I'll just quote from this Politico article: "Thirty years ago, sociologist James Davison Hunter popularized the concept of culture war. Today, he sees the culture war that has gotten worse--and that spells trouble for the future of the American experiment. In 1991 with America gripped by a struggle between an increasingly liberal secular society that pushed for change and a conservative opposition that rooted its worldview in divine scripture, James Davison Hunter wrote a book and titled it with a phrase for what he saw playing out in America's fights over abortion, gay rights, religion in public schools and the like: 'Culture Wars.' "He then goes on to explain I won't read it all but then as they interview him that he goes on to explain that he no longer believes over the last 30 years it hasn't been a fight over religion any more. It's a fight over the culture you belong to. It's a fight over your ideology. He says "politics is an artifact of culture. It's a reflection: culture underwrites our politics."

So it's not a fight over politics. Elder Jeff couldn't have said you're attacking my politics. What we were attacking, what the midnight cry attack was something more fundamental.

**Underneath politics exists culture. "Politics is an artifact of culture.** It's a reflection: culture underwrites our politics. One--probably the most prevalent way--is to think of it as a political battle over certain kinds of cultural issues, like abortion, sexuality, family values, church-state issues and so on. And therefore, the 'culture war' is really about the mobilization of political resources--of people and votes and parties--around certain positions on cultural issues. In that

sense, a 'culture war' is really about politics. But the biggest story is about the cultures that underwrite our politics and the ways in which our politics become reflections of a deeper cultural dispositions--not just attitudes and values--that go beyond our ability to reason about them. On political matters one can compromise. On matters of ultimate moral truth, one cannot. Conservatives see an existential threat and that's an important phrase. They see it as an existential threat to the way of life to the things that they hold sacred."

**It's culture that it seems to be ultimate moral truth, culture that is considered sacred.**

The interviewer speaks, "there's a passage you wrote 30 years ago that seems relevant to this point. 'We subtly slip into thinking of the controversies debated as political rather than cultural in nature. On political matters in a superficial level one can compromise; on matters of ultimate moral truth, one cannot. This is why the full range of issues today seems interminable.'"

"I kind of like that sentence. Culture, by its very nature is hegemonic. It seeks to colonize. It seeks to envelope in its totality. The root of the word culture in Latin is 'cultus'. It's about what is sacred to us. Culture comes from Latin "cultus".

Elder Tess: What are some other words that come from this word cultus? Culture. Does anyone have any others?

Marie: cult?

Sharon: I was actually going to say cult, too.

Elder Tess: great minds think alike.

Josephine: how about culprit?

Elder Tess: you could be right. My research has not gone that extensive.

Raymond: Cultivate?

Elder Tess: Cultivate. Those were the ones I particularly want to see. Cult and cultivate. It all comes from the same root word. It's all about what is sacred to you. What you want to feed. It's about what is sacred and the reason that sexism exists here (pointing to men's rights, atheism, libertarian) is not because of religion. It's not religion that society holds sacred any more. I don't even think that Adventists are that religious any more. It's not ultimately their Adventism that they are considering sacred to them. It's their culture. So when we come in and say in 2018 that Fox news is bad. Ellen White didn't say anything about Fox news. But he (Elder Jeff) felt that because he's on one side of that culture war and that culture war is not fundamentally religious. Adventists today looking for the Sunday law believing it will be a Sunday law issue, how are they tracing its steps? Oh vaccine mandates. Where do you find that in scripture or Ellen White? It's George Soros. Where do you find George Soros in Ellen White? Or, their steps towards their own Sunday law are not found in their religion. Their steps are found in the culture that they have embodied. Adventists are not that religious. What

undergirds politics is the same thing that undergirds people's religion and its culture. So you can say religion. You can say lack of religion. It's culture that undergirds atheism. It's a Protestant pastor who believes that women were created by God to be nurturers and not rational thinkers as is required by politics. He believes they're created that way. If Dawkins and Harris think that women don't have that kind of rational brain, they say that evolution just made them that way over millions of years. They don't need religion to undergird sexism because I would suggest on both sides, what is undergirding the positions they take today on these things society's fighting over are not religious, they are cultural.

We attack culture because the Sunday law is just one key waymark in 30 years of increasing birth pains clustering of waymarks, about a developing culture war and the Sunday law, the war fought against the Sunday law, is nothing more than the war between two cultures in the US today. So we attack culture and Elder Jeff said, "Don't attack my culture." It didn't really matter if I was Australian or Californian because a liberal in California is on a different culture wavelength to him, the polar opposite. I was the polar opposite. He's going to bring gender into that and it didn't help. Ultimately, it's the fact that we're on two different cultural platforms and I was saying that the cultural platform of the midnight cry was prophetically accurate because of reform lines and that was too hard to swallow.

November 9, 2019 – it's from here that we start having this fight in the movement. It really begins in the fall but because immediately when we start talking about feminism, a fight occurs in the movement between three different concepts of feminism. What are they? Explain to me the three? We know the radical.

Ray: so you have cultural, liberal or mainstream.

Elder Tess: what's the issue with the cultural?

Ray: they use essentially the same argument that was used to enforce segregation: equal but separate, same but different, or equal but fundamentally different. There's a feminine essence that ethics of care that is distinct to women that men just don't have.

Elder Tess: and they know that women don't have that because that is what their culture embodies. Does that make sense?

Ray: yes

Elder Tess: it's the southern romanticization of the southern woman putting together the thanksgiving feast, wearing the apron, bringing in the children. It's that glorification it's built into their culture. So cultural feminism, it's built into the words, it's easy to say defends culture and refuses to root sexism out of their culture, so they say we'll be feminist as long as you don't touch our culture.

We'll be feminist. We'll promote gender equality in every area that does not touch or harm our culture, liberal feminism. First of all what's the mantra of radical feminism? "The personal is political." And what is the personal? The personal equals?

Raymond: I can't remember. I'm sorry.

Elder Tess: it hasn't been said before. The personal equals your culture. So you don't get to hold on to the sexism of your culture if they work against gender equality. Radical feminism says it's not really feminism if it holds to any sexism embodied in culture. In fact, we need to root it out of culture and Elder Terry has spoken about the concept of the word radical connected to the word root. I don't know if we know the mathematical symbol for calculating the square root of it. You're saying get to the heart of it.

Liberal feminism says that the personal is not political. So we will support gender equality as long as you do not touch my culture.

Culture- it's a different aspect of culture than cultural feminism but it's still culture. So it doesn't matter if it's bleaching your skin in South Korea. It doesn't matter if it's beauty standards in the US. It doesn't matter the different ways it manifests. But it manifests differently in different locations because it is cultural to those locations. How it manifested in one part of the movement liberal feminism was different to how it manifested in other parts of the movement. Radical feminism doesn't do that. Radical feminism is the same whether it's Australia, Fiji, Ghana, Germany, and California. It doesn't matter. Radical feminism, as we teach it in this movement, is the same in every single country. Liberal feminism is not because they have to have liberal feminism that does not dismantle, not necessarily what cultural feminism treasures, but what you find in the personal and some of that is and there is some overlap here (pointing to cultural and liberal): how they see the home life, the domestic goddess, combined around beauty standards and those issues. Both cultural and liberal feminism say don't touch our culture. While Elder Jeff is going to say, I love all this message but part of it attacks me personally so I'm going to take that part out, I'm going to twist it slightly and I'm going to add some of my own and he leaves. Soon after, some people in the movement will say we love feminism. We love the left wing, but the way we've always advocated for more freedom in this movement because they keep limiting our freedom. We like feminism, but don't touch our culture (pointing to cultural feminism) and don't touch our culture (pointing to liberal feminism).

Continue to be a culture war – it was never when it comes to this (pointing to feminism: radical, cultural, liberal) really about their interpretation of scripture. We could defend ours based on scripture, reform lines, prophecy. They could not defend theirs. That **ultimately didn't matter because what people held sacred was not their religion, it was their culture.** Very few people over the last few years have left over anything we said about Ellen White or Bible texts or Adventism or Adventist leadership. People have not left the Movement over that. They have



consistently left the Movement, whether going back to Protestantism, letting go of Christianity altogether; but what they have always left for is to go back to their culture.

May 2020 Apis bull – the point I wanted to make is yes, you can trace it from 1798 and see Protestantism interact with Adventism, but what was the problem with ancient Israel? It wasn't Protestantism, it was paganism. It was paganism but it was also Egyptian culture. How Egyptian culture viewed masculinity. If you see the time of Christ and he's dealing with the fact that the Jewish culture had embodied the pagan culture the way paganism viewed what to expect in a king. Again, if you can see it, it's about culture. Then we come to LGBT, by this time in the Movement some people are already teaching and saying that we should by now be accepting LGBT people publically in this Movement. And there was a delay because we needed to get to that point from equality and not from freedom. But when we did, I disagreed with those who were saying that the root of homophobia was Protestantism and religion and I said it was not. We went back to Assyrian culture, Babylonish culture, Medo- Persian culture, especially Greek culture and Roman culture and you see that embodied in Roman Catholicism. Modern atheism and the four horseman – they might be pro gay marriage but they are still homophobic and they have no tolerance for trans people. Why? Because the underlying root cause has never been religion; it has been culture. So here (pointing to LGBTQ 2021), we said homophobia, the underlying issue from homophobia for thousands of years has always been a cultural one. Then we come to radical feminism and we double down on this (pointing to radical feminism) and we said no to culture (cultural feminism), no to culture (liberal feminism). It has from the day it was presented in 2018 to now been an issue of attacking culture.

When I went to early 2020 in here (pointing to May 2020 on board work), I go to Africa, we hadn't lost very much of Africa to Elder Jeff. We had, in Elder Jeff's mind, attacked Ellen White and disrespected her, attacked Adventism, attacked the foundations of our faith. People in Eastern Africa, by and large in the Movement, didn't care. We could have said a lot of things about Ellen White, they would have said okay, great. Some might have needed more of an explanation but sure, no problem. They didn't mind us looking over the gulf and attacking American culture, sure, that's fine. But when we stepped foot in first Kenya and then Uganda, particularly the school in Uganda, we started attacking their culture. We had lost hardly anyone to Elder Jeff by that point in time and by and large they never fully went to him and they would go back to Protestantism or back to Adventism mainly. There was not much of a conflict. Nothing that we said about feminism, women wearing trousers, sure- maybe explain the verses, there's no problem with that. But then we touched what was sacred, and religion was not what was sacred to the vast majority of the members of the Movement in eastern Africa. It was not religion. It was not Adventism or the prophetic teaching of this Movement that was sacred to them. It was culture and we started to touch what was culture and then we went from losing maybe 1 in 100 to 95+ in 100 by now. Anything that was said about Christianity or religion didn't do anything, didn't offend people. Anything we said about Ellen White didn't really offend people. It was when we touched what was actually sacred. People left this Movement because they preferred liberal feminism to cultural feminism. People left this Movement

because what was sacred, what was cultus, was culture, not the prophetic message, not the everlasting gospel. So I hope we can see now.

Brenden, can you see now how a new atheist doesn't need dominionism or Protestantism? Does that make sense? Or, we will keep going over this again.

Brenden: yes, it makes perfect sense. It's just culture built over decades, centuries, millennium and that is the underlying cause of many things including sexism. I can see it, thank you.

Elder Tess: the root of the word culture is Latin cultus, it's about what is sacred to us. The very nature that is sacred is that it is special and it cannot be broached and that is why you have absolute polarization in the US today. And he says every time you have a civil war, it's preceded by a culture war. I don't know post Sunday law how heated everything will get, but it's incredibly dangerous. They're already at war. They're already so opposed because what is sacred to Tucker Carlson is not his Protestantism, it's not his Christianity. It's his culture. That's why you'll find things that he says that line up with something that an evolutionist would say, that one of the four horsemen will say. It is that sacred to them.

"Culture in one respect is about that which is pure and that which is polluted. It is about the boundaries that are often transgressed and what we do about that. And part of the culture war, one way to see the culture war, is that each has an idea of what is transgressive or what is a violation of the sacred and the fears and resentment that goes along with that." Every culture has its view of sin. You don't have to be religious to have a concept of sin. For Dawkins, for Hitchens, for Harris, there are things that they see as sin. "Sin is an old fashioned word" quoting him, "but it refers to that which is ultimately profane and cannot be permitted, must not be allowed. Understanding those things that underwrite politics helps us understand why this persists the way it does. Why it inflames the passions that we see."

They are all religious. They all worship something. They are all viewing something as sacred but whether they subscribe to Protestant beliefs or they don't, whether they subscribe to evolutionary biological Darwinianism, whether or not they are psychological evolutionists or social Darwinists, or a conservative Southern Baptist pastor, they all have a concept of what is sacred and what is profane. What is sacred or what is sin. And an atheist is going to view many of the exact same things as sin as a Protestant will view, the transgression of what is meant to be biological. Trans rights, radical feminism – they're going to see all of that as irrational because evolutionary or evolution or God made us that way and it is a transgression of what evolution created. He makes the point that it is no longer based on Christian context and I think that we need to keep saying that because it's hard to get home but it is also what has happened inside this Movement and what's frightening is no amount of reform lines, nothing that is said, nothing will get through to anyone unless they are willing to let go of culture. If it is still culture, and the way that I think it is best described is that when we think it through religion, it's superficial.

When it's politics or it's religion, it's superficial. You can compromise. You can work around things. You want to say something about Ellen White which doesn't make her look good, sure just explain it. It's the superficial and people in this Movement thought they could get in the shower and they could wash up that those parts of their superficial Christianity, like a film on their skin, and come out without being sexist. And when we said it isn't your religion and when we said it isn't primarily Adventism, but we started targeting culture, we said it is fundamentally who you are. It's built into the wiring of your brain. It's built in to the very things that you love and that you hate. Women come to me and say, "I have to be with a man who's not a member of this Movement because I cannot live him unless I get married." My issue is that is that's your culture. That's not even Christianity. That is your culture and unless you're willing to question it, fight it and rewire your brain, you will choose your culture- what you love and treasure and hold sacred over the truth of this Movement because I believe for the vast majority of people in this Movement and the shakings we've had over the last four years give evidence for that. For the vast majority of people in this Movement they're actually not very religious with the concept of Christianity. They hold something sacred but it's not the everlasting gospel. It's culture. If it wasn't, people would have shed their culture to embrace the everlasting gospel that they couldn't because it wasn't what they fundamentally held sacred. We will continue this next time we come. I have a little bit more to quote from him. We're mostly done with that. Then I want to come back around to some of these men's rights argument because they are embodied not necessarily in what people are taking from Protestantism or Adventism but what we have imbibed from culture, whether that be comes through the superficial voices of Christianity or new atheism or just people that we think are logical.

We have six days until our next vespers now and if those that have their hands up could hold their thoughts so I don't go further overtime. Sorry for that. If you don't think you're going to remember the point you wanted to make, please write it down. And we'll close in prayer.

Prayer: Dear Lord, it's frightening to see how superficially we have treated your truth, how little it has mattered when it touches that which we actually love, what we actually hold sacred. I pray, Lord, that you find a way to break through that. I can't seem to find a way to break through that for people. I don't know the words. I don't have them. I can't do that for them. I pray, Lord, that you will work with the members of this Movement, work with the inquiring minds that are questioning, that are watching and following along that are unsure what the point of all of this is. I pray for all women as well as men that they look at the sexism that they have imbibed from their culture and even the abuses of it. How much they have actually loved and treasured it. That everyone might be able to shed the ugliness of the culture that we've learnt to love. I pray, Lord, that we will be saved from the things that we love. In Jesus' name. Amen