

The Apis Bull Part 2: The Idolatry of Conservative Adventism

In the last article we reviewed Elder Tess' first presentation on the Apis Bull. We saw how the spirit of the Apis Bull pervaded ancient Israel's mindset to the point that their desire for a courageous, battle-hardened, and strong, male leader eventually caused them to reject their Messiah. Then we saw how all four alpha and omega lines of both ancient and modern Israel all parallel each other, hence our need to study the three historic lines in order to understand ours. In this article we will look at the alpha of modern Israel and try to understand the parallels for us today.

We have often drawn a parallel between Laodicea and the Pharisaic church. For example, using parable methodology we can line up the last Jewish church with the last Christian church, but Ellen White also draws this parallel,

[Laodicea represents] *a people who pride themselves in their possession of **spiritual knowledge and advantages**. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God; and still He has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted His grace, abused His privileges, slighted His opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, **hollow formalism**, and **hypocritical insincerity**. **With pharisaic pride** they have vaunted themselves till it has been said of them, "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"* (Faith and Works, 83.1)

So according to Ellen White, what is causing the Laodicean condition is not the kind of liberal immorality that most Adventists immediately associate with worldliness. It is not computer games, movies or gay rights which make us like the world. It is the conservative mindset which thinks they are in need of nothing because spiritually they already have everything they need, when in fact, all they have done is adopt a pagan god from Egypt (Egypt representing the world, or worldliness, or Laodicea), in the spirit of the Apis Bull, and all the while they think they are worshipping Jehovah. So how did the spirit of Apis enter the Seventh-day Adventist mindset? It was already present in the socio-religious environment that the Millerites grew out of. This being the conservative elements of Protestantism which formed around 1798, and steadily strengthened in order to mobilise against a perceived threat - a new and liberal Protestant movement. We will see that this was also the birth of conspiracy theories as the conservative Protestant's weapon and methodology against this threat.

The Great Awakening

An enormous religious revival swept across America and even into Europe in the early 1700s, known as the Great Awakening. This created a new order within the churches, where liberal minded members now felt they could understand God for themselves and had little need for a minister to interpret the Bible for them. Oppositely, the conservatives retained the view that the typically older ministers, with decades of experience, were their moral guides and should be looked up to. They had commanded a great deal of respect from their congregations and had, for a long time, defined the Word of God to them. This kind of new, liberal view, of having spiritual freedom and independence from the religious establishment, complemented the ideals of the American Revolution and the Constitution, and the individual liberty, and the freedom and independence associated with them. Upon realising they were losing their status in society, these aged, conservative ministers began to fight back against this Great Awakening, declaring it to be utter disrespect, and this created two warring factions within Protestantism. This new, liberal movement never really died out, but just grew until the 1790s.

The Second Great Awakening

The 1790s saw the Second Great Awakening which brought another flurry of religious activity, with missionaries travelling the country and churches holding outreach campaigns and camp meetings. It lasted for about thirty years, and by the 1840s their zeal had largely died out. We see this in Ellen White's description of the churches in 1844 as being in spiritual declension (GC 376.2), but this Second Great Awakening still had profound and lasting effects, fundamentally altering the character of religion in America. The Millerites and therefore Adventism grew out of this second Great Awakening, and when we read about the conversion of some of our pioneers, it was all under this second Great Awakening.

The other movement which grew out of the Second Great Awakening was Mormonism, almost as a twin movement to the Millerite movement, or perhaps it would be more accurate to describe it as a rival movement. The Mormons would attack William Miller and often cite the same arguments that we are all familiar with - that no one knows the day nor the hour. While other denominations may well have gone through various changes under the Second Great Awakening, it was really only the Seventh-day Adventist and the Mormon denominations that were actually born from it. The Mormon leader was Joseph Smith, a staunch conservative who ran for president of the United States in 1844 and campaigned for the combination of church and state, believing that America was the new Israel. The logical end to this ideology would of course be that God was directly leading the president and therefore Smith believed the president

should hold dictatorial power. Again portraying the idolatrous spirit of Apis - a strong, even dictatorial male leader who claims to be directly led by God. You will remember how Apis was akin to Pharaoh, and both were akin to gods. During the election year of 1844, Joseph Smith was assassinated and the leadership was passed to the second leader. Even in that we see our parallel, when in 1844 Samuel Snow became our second leader and William Miller retired.

The 1798 Dispensation and Jedidiah Morse

Jedidiah Morse was very much the leader of the aforementioned conservative faction within Protestantism, and really possessed the nationalistic spirit of Apis, aggressively defending their nation as God's kingdom on Earth. Whilst they correctly understood America to be the modern-day glorious land, in a horrific failure to understand and apply literal to spiritual parable methodology, they wrongly concluded that there must therefore be the unification of church and state.

“Generations before the Revolution, New Englanders maintained the importance of a cooperative relationship between religion and government, public virtue and public duties. This created a volatile mixture when coupled with republicanism and liberalism. In the clergy’s interpretation of the state of virtue in American society, the increase in infidelity and irreligion in the post-war period meant the forces of evil were winning. This turn of events was particularly critical to men who entertained dreams of creating a “New Israel” in the American nation.”

(Rachel A. Snell, “Jedidiah Morse and the Crusade for the New

Jerusalem: The Cultural Catalysts of the Bavarian Illuminati Conspiracy”

<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=honors> 2006)

They also believed in the millennium of peace on Earth which affected their view of the American Revolution, and boosted their Pharisaic pride in their self-proclaimed, national greatness. Remember, Apis was a staunchly nationalistic and courageous warrior-god, capable of defeating all foreign threats. At that time, there was a threat from the British, and a fear that they were about to go to war with France, so there was a conspiracy theory that France was secretly plotting with the Catholic Church to attack America, as they saw themselves as God's elect.

“This civil millennialism would perform a large role in the coming Revolutionary struggle with Great Britain, as “New England ministers of the Revolutionary era resisted tyranny in God’s name, hailed liberty as the virtue of the ‘New American Israel,’ and proclaimed that in sharing these

values with all mankind America would become the principal seat of Christ's earthly rule."... New England society was particularly susceptible to the forging of a connection between religious and political spheres for several reasons. Several sources influenced the development of civil millennialism... First, the conflicts with France renewed anti-Catholic sentiment in America and fit neatly within millennial theory, "These perceptions of a massive French-Catholic conspiracy were linked directly to an apocalyptic interpretation of history in which the French were accomplices in Satan's designs to subjugate God's elect in New England." (Ibid.)

This conservative branch of Protestantism blamed the decline in the morality of their society, on *"the rise of evangelical faiths"* which we have already identified as the new, liberal mindset which rejected the long established clergy of the day.

"At the end of the eighteenth century there was enormous popular interest in the apocalyptic books of the Bible." This upsurge in the popularity of millennial thought during the early republic was fueled by the drama of recent events... Millennialism thrived on dramatic events... The conservative.... clergy led by Jedidiah Morse believed the decay of public virtue, the rise of evangelical faiths and Democratic-Republican politics posed dire threats to their social power." (Ibid.)

We see this parallel in our line today, and at the same, parallel waymark. Prior to 1989 we see the establishment of the Moral Majority and Jerry Falwell, and their counter attack on the liberal mindset, upon whom they blamed the decay of morality in modern society, and preached their need to return to God through religious laws and the unity of church and state, so God can supposedly bless America again. Again, this is the strong and combative spirit of Apis which sought to establish and defend an earthly kingdom for God.

"During the 1790s... Yale College... was a bastion of orthodox Old Calvinism and Timothy Dwight, its president from 1795 until his death in 1817, would be a crucial ally of Jedidiah Morse. During the 1790s Dwight focused on the social duties of the church, therefore he identified with the goals of the orthodox, Old Calvinist clergy." (Ibid.)

So again, just as they were centred around Yale University, presided over by Timothy Dwight, the Religious Right in our dispensation are centred around Liberty University and Jerry Falwell.

“From the moment of the ratification of the Constitution in 1789, Dwight corresponded with fellow religious leaders and stressed the importance of morality, “Here he would warn that the new Constitution, however indispensable as a purely negative system of restraint ‘will neither restore order, nor establish justice among us, unless it be accompanied and supported by morality, among all classes of people.’” Echoing the arguments of the conservative clergy throughout southern New England, Dwight became “an outspoken advocate for the public role of... the clergy as moral monitors” of society.” (Ibid.)

So Timothy Dwight fully supported Jedidiah Morse and other politicians who saw America as the modern Israel, coming out of slavery and into a free nation. Thus they concluded that during the establishment of the Constitution, they must ensure it enforces Christian morality by law.

“In his 1799 fast day sermon, Morse discussed the criticism the clergy had received for meddling in politics, but Morse asked, “Is this any new crime? No; it is as old as Christianity; nay it is as old as the priesthood itself. The priests and prophets under the Old Testament dispensation; Christ and his Apostles under the New; the faithful Christian Clergy in every age and every country, have preached politics; that is, they have inculcated subjection to civil magistrates, and obedience to the laws; have cautioned the people against animosities and divisions; warned them of their dangers, whether from foreign or domestic enemies, and have exerted their talents and influence to support the religion and lawful government of their country.”” (Ibid.)

In 1798, the president of America, John Adams, was supported by Jedidiah Morse. To offer a glimpse into the Adams administration, in 1798 he instituted the Alien and Sedition Acts, which imprisoned anyone who criticised the government publicly, and advocated harsh anti-immigration laws. This is why Morse and Dwight’s narrative concentrate so much on the importance of the state. It was because they had a like-minded president in power at the time.

“Furthermore, New England’s Congregational clergy found the notion of a separation between church and state inconceivable. Puritan theology emphasized an intimate relationship between church and state, particularly in the influential doctrine of civil millennialism... However, the majority of the American citizenry were no longer willing to allow elites to

interpret political events for them... Despite this new set of challenges, the conservative New England ministry was unwilling to discard their visions of a religious and republican utopia in the United States; furthermore, they were unwilling to give up their role in forming this utopia... Continuing the Biblical imagery used to describe the Revolutionary struggle, New Englanders now applied similar themes to the social development of the New Republic, "Having watched the divine wonders against 'Pharaoh' and having quickly taken up arms to overthrow 'Egypt,' New Englanders knew that their perilous experiment, now in the wilderness, depended on nothing but their own moral fitness." (Ibid.)

So they thought the British represented Pharaoh, and while they undertook this new experiment with democracy, they believed they were wandering in the wilderness like the children of Israel, just waiting to take the Promised Land. Also paralleling themselves with the children of Israel, they thought if their own morality was not strictly enforced, they would fail.

This very nationalistic mindset, of being the chosen nation, is again repeated in the history of the Civil War. Just as the children of Israel were to cleanse the Promised Land of its indigenous people, they believed that was their God given task in America, and thus they justified their own genocide of native Americans. In a horrific failure to correctly understand literal to symbolic parable methodology, they simply reasoned that just as Joshua literally cleansed the Promised Land to inherit his earthly kingdom, God wanted them to establish an earthly kingdom and kill the native Americans. Once they had achieved this and cleansed the land, again falsely using the model of ancient Israel, they justified themselves in institutional slavery.

"This new society did not mirror the virtue the clergy wanted to see in society. Their concern for the fate of society in both a religious and political sense, as well as their own personal fears, [of becoming obsolete under the new liberal movement] prompted them to search for a solution." (Ibid.)

This "search for a solution" created a partnership between the Federalists and the conservative clergy. Morse continued to directly link the morality of the nation as a cure or solution to the political problems he faced at home, as well as foreign threats such as France. In his thanksgiving sermon in 1798,

"Morse still informed his congregation of a very grave threat, suggesting that if American citizens did not change their behavior the civil future of the

government was in question. In presenting a solution Morse first decried the lack of laws against such behavior, "Many of our laws, indeed, against vice and immorality, those particularly against profane swearing, debauchery, gaming, and Sabbath-breaking, are but a dead letter." Clearly, Morse believed the government had neglected its moral duties." (Ibid.)

At that time it was Thomas Jefferson who was challenging John Adams for his presidency. So now Thomas Jefferson became the object of Morse's offensive, being likened to the weak and wicked Ahaz, while John Adams was portrayed as a pious and wise Hezekiah. So two streams had developed, John Adams backed by Jedidiah Morse was the conservative, false stream, fighting for church and state, while Thomas Jefferson backed by liberal Protestant preacher William Bentley represented the true stream, opposing church and state.

Conspiracy Theories

Now firmly as the leader of this conservative movement, and under the backdrop of dramatic world events such as the French Revolution, the American Revolution, an unprecedented experiment with a new democratic system, the framing of the Constitution, the two Great Awakenings and the perceived liberal threat to their very existence in society, Jedidiah Morse ascended the pulpit in 1799 and fabricated a grave threat to American society by introducing a conspiracy theory.

"It has long been suspected that secret societies, under the influence and direction of France, holding principles subversive of our religion and government, existed in this country." Furthermore, by emphasizing concerns held by both the political and religious leaders in New England, he provided the conservative elements of American politics and religion with an immensely effective scapegoat. The Bavarian Illuminati combined the threats presented by the French and the growing evangelical faiths into one and fashioned a scapegoat New Englanders in particular could identify as the ultimate enemy, the ever-present Anti-Christ of civil millennial discourse." (Ibid.)

Apparently, according to Morse, everything that threatened the reelection of John Adams in 1800 could be blamed on the French and the Illuminati. Morse bundled the immoral members of society, with the supporters of Thomas Jefferson, with the liberal Protestant faction, with the threat from France, and claimed without evidence, it was all the underhanded work of France, secretly united with the papacy and working through the Illuminati to thwart the reelection of John Adams.

Eventually Adams lost the election, but there was no clear winner on the Democrat-Republican side. Simply, both Aaron Burr and Thomas Jefferson received an equal amount of votes. So now there was a battle for the presidency between the two candidates from the same party. A supporter of John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, recognising the defeat of his candidate, decided to back Thomas Jefferson, in the Jefferson v Burr stand off. Suddenly and without evidence or explanation, Hamilton now was a member of the Illuminati according to Morse! Which suddenly introduced the concept that politicians from both parties could be members of the Illuminati, thereby fabricating the idea of a satanic, deep state which was secretly controlling the government from behind the scenes.

Morse did actually claim to have evidence, as is so often the case with conspiracy theories. Morse claimed he had a letter from a gentleman in Europe which proved his theory was true, but he refused to release it. However, the leader of the liberal branch of Protestantism, William Bentley, proved the letter actually contradicted Morse's conspiracy theory, which left Morse deeply embarrassed. So 1798 was really the turning point for conservative Protestant methodology, which uses conspiracy theories to blame liberal politics, and indeed any foreign or domestic threat to their agenda.

The Illuminati

The Illuminati were not only the target of the original conspiracy theory in 1798, but remain central to conspiracy theories even to this day. The end of the Dark Ages saw the Enlightenment, a time when fear of contradicting the Catholic Church on matters of science and culture were just beginning to subside, and three years after the Jesuit order was abolished, the Illuminati was formed. The names Illuminati and Enlightenment both reflect the same anti-Catholic sentiment. The Illuminati was established as an underground movement because it attempted to circumvent the control the papacy had over education, science, politics and culture. So, while conspiracy theories represent the Illuminati as a malevolent secret society, its purpose was actually benevolent! It only existed for about ten years when a list of its members was uncovered and the society was forcibly dissolved and its members persecuted. There is not a single shred of evidence that the Illuminati has existed past the 1840s.

Jedidiah Morse claimed the Illuminati surreptitiously started the French Revolution, but Ellen White tells us exactly what caused the French Revolution. It was the French rejection of papal tyranny.

“Rome had misrepresented the character of God and perverted His requirements, and now men rejected both the Bible and its Author. She

had required a blind faith in her dogmas, under the pretended sanction of the Scriptures. In the reaction, Voltaire and his associates cast aside God's word altogether and spread everywhere the poison of infidelity. Rome had ground down the people under her iron heel; and now the masses, degraded and brutalized, in their recoil from her tyranny, cast off all restraint. Enraged at the glittering cheat to which they had so long paid homage, they rejected truth and falsehood together; and mistaking license for liberty, the slaves of vice exulted in their imagined freedom.” (The Great Controversy, 281.3)

Nowhere in the Spirit of Prophecy do we find such absurd conspiracy theories, like the founding fathers were Illuminati-controlled puppets of the antichrist! None of our pioneers perpetrated conspiracy theories, so if not from Ellen White or our pioneers, where do Adventists adopt these ideas from? It is from Apostate Protestantism. Adventists have adopted the methodology of Apostate Protestantism due to their own inability to interpret prophecy, and have fashioned this idol in the form they think is a doctrinal feast to Jehovah. They have adopted the Apostate Protestant doctrine of the kingdom of God, and are therefore bound to adopt their understanding of a powerful, courageous, warrior-king, who will go forth to conquer New World Order elites so-called, and heroically defend their special nation, and make it great again.

In the current pandemic we see again how conservative Adventists have adopted the methodology of Apostate Protestantism in their anti-vaccine stance. Again, because they no longer know how to read Inspiration. If Ellen White was pro-vaccines, and was indeed vaccinated herself (see 2 Selected Messages, 303.6), from where have Adventists adopted the idea that it is disobedient to God? If she never mentions secret societies in the context of conspiracy theories, then from where do conservative Adventists inherit this lie too?

Secret Societies in the Spirit of Prophecy

Ellen White does indeed mention secret societies, but nowhere does she perpetuate the baseless speculation that a secret group bent on world domination exists in the shadows. In the quote below she is identifying the Ku Klux Klan for example, which was founded in 1865 at the end of the Civil War.

“At present, persecution is not general, but let the Southern element have word come to them of a nature to raise their excitable disposition, and the whole cause of truth would suffer, and the great missionary field be closed. Let all be warned. Let the instruction be given to this much oppressed class that the keeping of the Sabbath does not

necessitate their working on Sunday: for, if they should do this, they would have instigated against them all the powers of the white population, who are transgressors of the law of God. Church members and priests and rulers will combine to organize secret societies to work in their hand to whip, imprison, and destroy the lives of the colored race.” (Spalding and Magan, 28.1)

The Ku Klux Klan were never secret in the conspiracy theory sense of the word. Yes their members tried to hide their identity with a ridiculous pointy hat, but everyone recognised their voices anyway! Their purpose, existence, and even their founders and leaders were never secret. One can prove the existence of the Ku Klux Klan unlike the Illuminati in today's affairs. They had no secret handshakes, secret agenda, secret numbers, or elite leaders working together to overthrow the governments.

Notice in the next quote, Ellen White knows the secret society in question exists, and knows the addressee is a member. So neither the existence of the society nor its membership is secret, again, nothing like the conspiracy theory's version of secret societies. She is talking about business networking societies, and her admonition is against the love of money and the kind of company he is keeping in order to further his financial gain.

"One great hindrance to your clear spiritual eyesight is your connection with secret societies... It is far worse to choose your own way, to love money, to love those things that minister to selfish gratification and indulgence. It is a terrible thing to imperil the soul's highest interest for any temporal gain or worldly advantage... I have been permitted to look in upon these secret societies, their feasts, their order, their works, and my prayer has been, "Hide them from my sight forever... The longer you associate with these men, the more will you become assimilated to their customs, their spirit, their practices. The unbelief, the infidelity, which is expressed by them will come to intrude upon your thoughts, and weaken your faith.... Could a child of God, an heir of heaven, be found in such society? The men who drink wine prepare the way for further excess. The tobacco devotee worships an idol... All the enjoyment you can have in this riotous mirth and in the conversation of these men, unfits you for the study of the Scriptures, for the hour of devotion, for the service of God... The money paid in to increase their revenue is God's money, perverted to a wrong use. The tax you pay in your

feasts had much better be put into the treasury of God to advance His cause.” (20 Manuscript Releases, 285-287)

In this final quote, Ellen White is not explicit in what she means. So all the conspiracy theories that Adventists have adopted from Apostate Protestantism would have to hang on this singular, and very vague quote. So ask yourself, would you be comfortable basing your entire methodology of end time prophecy, and therefore your salvation, on the following quote?

“Deceptions Through Secret Societies —The world is a theater; the actors, its inhabitants, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. With the great masses of mankind, there is no unity, except as men confederate to accomplish their selfish purposes. God is looking on. His purposes in regard to His rebellious subjects will be fulfilled. The world has not been given into the hands of men, though God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama,—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect.” (8 Testimonies, 27.4)

So this would be the only passage in all of the Spirit of Prophecy you could even attempt to use to justify conspiracy theories, and it is most likely that it is referring to the secret movement for Sunday Laws, and the confederation of church and state in her dispensation.

“The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent is tending....” (Review and Herald Extra, December 11, 1888)

Today that kind of confederation would be epitomised in the secret confederacy between Steve Bannon, Stephen Miller and Jeff Sessions and their work in our history. If so, then this quote would actually be warning against Apostate Protestantism and their use of conspiracy theories to further their agenda for church and state, not against some New World Order conspiracy to overthrow the Religious Right! It would be the complete opposite of what Adventists will try to use this quote for, and all because Adventists do not know how to study

prophecy, and so they are forced to look to Apostate Protestantism for their methodology, namely conspiracy theories.

Like the children of Israel, Laodicea today has adopted the spirit of the Apis bull from Egypt, from the world, and attributed it to Jehovah. While the Laodicean church is seduced by the worldliness of the Egyptian Apis, it also thinks it is spiritually “*rich... and [has] need of nothing*” (Revelation 3:17), paralleling the Pharisaical church. So Laodicea or worldliness today is also Pharisaism, or right wing conservatism. Whether it is the worship of Apis from Egypt, or the Apis spirit of the Pharisees, it is all the same right wing conservatism. Whether it is the sexist, nationalistic and homophobic earthly governments and earthly media, or the same sexist, nationalistic and homophobic doctrines from the Protestant churches, it is all the same Apis spirit found in both Laodicea and the Pharisees. So in Apis, in sexism, nationalism and in homophobia, Apostate Protestant churches, the world, and the Seventh-day Adventist church have all joined hands and united, ready to worship the image to the beast.

We saw in part one how the Jews rejected their Messiah because they could not let go of the spirit of Apis, and today they are still looking for their Messiah. In exactly the same way, Adventists today cannot let go of the spirit of Apis from Apostate Protestantism, and long after the mark of the beast law has passed, they will still be looking for a Sunday Law. Only correct methodology, only parable methodology, the very language of the Messiah Himself, will remedy Modern Israel from their Laodicean condition.

Source: Elder Tess Lambert. “2. *The Idolatry of Conservative Adventism (16-05-2020)*”, Australia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhUCe6m9R7w>