

Churchcraft and Statecraft, part 2

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An Unholy Alliance

Daniel 2

⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 1168, 1169:

We have come to a time when God's sacred work is represented by the feet of the image in which the iron was mixed with the miry clay. God has a people, a chosen people, whose discernment must be sanctified, who must not become unholy by laying upon the foundation wood, hay, and stubble....The mingling of churchcraft and statecraft is represented by the iron and the clay. This union is weakening all the power of the churches.

THE inspired commentary on *Daniel 2:41-43* clearly shows that the mixing of iron and clay represents the unholy alliance of churchcraft and statecraft.

The fourth kingdom of the image, which has been clearly identified as the Roman empire, became a divided kingdom. On the one hand were the different governmental structures where ruling power was in the hands of kings, cabinets, and diets. These have continued until the present day although they are now ruled by presidents and parliaments. The Roman system of government has been incorporated in many governing systems of today and is particularly evident in the political structure of the USA. On the

other hand, there were the machinations of a fallen Church which is still ruled today by its head, the Pope.

These two differing systems have tried to unite themselves for more than a thousand years, and the only result has been a greater enmity between them. The reason for this is that in the final analysis the question has been, "Who rules over whom?"

The fallen Church was clearly the ruling element for a long time whereas the state institutions began to increase in power with the beginning of the Reformation. Today, this is reversing, so that the Church is slowly but surely regaining power prior to its finally obtaining the supremacy again, though only for a short time.

In the battle of Armageddon, however, both of these parties will finally separate forever. Then it will be demonstrated once and for all that they cannot successfully mix.

The careful student will ask the question, "Why is it that these two elements cannot stay together?"

The symbol leaves no room for uncertainty. Mire clay and iron simply do not adhere to one another. The one represents churchcraft, and the other statecraft. Churchcraft and statecraft are principally two different things, and therefore cannot mix. People have tried to unite these two elements again and again, but without success. And we too are in danger of mixing these two things together. It is therefore imperative for us to understand what it means to mix them, and why it will always lead to disaster. Therefore, we need to ask:

What is Churchcraft?

In the original text of the New Testament, *techne* (from which the word technology is derived) is used to designate *craft* (see *Revelation* 18:22). The word *craft* is employed to describe a special procedure, science, skill, or the work of a master craftsman.

What is the special procedure, science, skill, or work of the Church? It can be summed up in one word: creation. The thought of this is well expressed in *Genesis*:

Genesis 2

² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Creation is God's work, and He has given this work to His Church:

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.

³ The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

God gives spiritual light to the world today in the same way that He gave physical light in the beginning: by the process of creation. It is the same creative work, but this time God uses His Church as His agent. God has given His people His word, that is, the present truth, and the creative power of God is resident in that word. The Church's work is to be stewards of this word.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 122:

The same power that Christ exercised when He walked visibly among men is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea and raised the dead, and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken to all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ.

We also find the prevailing power of truth and love in God's word. We find the Sabbath rest principles there, and all the other aspects of truth that have become so precious to us. The ability to handle the word of God is a part of true churchcraft.

And in this connection we should look at another important aspect of our work: prayer. Our connection with God in prayer is a real treasure, a wonderful privilege.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 564:

Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character.

To know the secret of this power, to experience it, and to use it to bless others, is the work of the Church. In other words, it is *churchcraft*.

If the Church is weak, then it is only because she is not a master of her craft. However, when the Church is no longer master of her craft or has neglected her work to the extent of becoming inept at it, she then turns more and more to statecraft to accomplish her work.

What is Statecraft?

But what is statecraft, or in other words, the work of the state?

Romans 13

³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

⁴ For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

So then, the work of the state is, among other things, the rightful use of the sword. The work of the state is essentially different from that of the Church.

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 77:

The germ in the seed grows by the unfolding of the life-principle which God has implanted. Its development depends upon no

human power. So it is with the kingdom of Christ. It is a new creation. Its principles of development are the opposite of those that rule the kingdoms of this world. Earthly governments prevail by physical force; they maintain their dominion by war; but the founder of the new kingdom is the Prince of Peace. The Holy Spirit represents worldly kingdoms under the symbol of fierce beasts of prey; but Christ is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. In His plan of government there is no employment of brute force to compel the conscience.

Churchcraft wins the hearts of men, but statecraft forces men to abide by an external code of behavior. This is not the only difference between churchcraft and statecraft.

An important aspect of statecraft is that it leaves God completely out of the picture. Instead, it depends on the application of natural law and the power of man to solve problems and build up the kingdom. This is really faith in God's instruments rather than faith in God Himself. Faith in God is not required to become a master of statecraft, but what is required is a strong faith in the agencies He uses as His instruments, and an intimate knowledge of the same.

The rulers of the nations throughout all the ages have usually recognized that something hindered them from exercising absolute power. For this reason they employed the Church, which was supposed to understand churchcraft, to achieve their ultimate objectives.

Conversely, whenever the Church has lost its divine skill, it saw, and still sees, the perfect supplement in the powers of the state.

This is why mankind has tried again and again to join the forces of churchcraft and statecraft.

But why is it so dangerous to use statecraft as a compensation for our lack of ability in churchcraft? The world understands its trade very well and even achieves remarkable success. If we understood our craft as well as the world understands its craft, then

the achievements of statecraft would pale into insignificance by comparison. But because the world can show results that we do not seem to be able to match, we think we have to rely on its skills.

However, a church or believer that succumbs to this temptation becomes even weaker than before. The following quotation clearly reveals this principle:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 299:

As Aaron and Hur supported the hands of Moses, they showed the people their duty to sustain him in his arduous work while he should receive the word from God to speak to them. And the act of Moses also was significant, showing that God held their destiny in His hands; while they made Him their trust, He would fight for them and subdue their enemies; but when they should let go their hold upon Him, and trust in their own power, they would be even weaker than those who had not the knowledge of God, and their foes would prevail against them.

If God's children show themselves to be deficient in the skills of which they should be the master, then it will not help them to turn to statecraft. They will become weaker than their enemies who have often reached a high level of ability in the area of statecraft.

But it is not a lack of skill in statecraft that makes the Church so weak, but rather the mixing of churchcraft with statecraft. God's work is to separate the two, not combine them. The feet of the image represent God's work in this respect—the clay and iron will not mix. It is God's work to separate these two elements. Whoever tries to join them together is fighting against God. That is the reason why clay and iron cannot mix, and why the person who tries to combine them weakens himself so thoroughly. Two examples of people who tried this are Balaam, and Ananias and Sapphira.

Finally, let us take a short look at a question which might arise in this connection. Did not Daniel, that man of God, exercise

statecraft? The answer is no. If we apply the above definition of statecraft. Daniel exercised churchcraft even as a statesman, by relying on God's power and not on his own. Prayer and the word of God were his strength, and therefore he always acted according to principle. This was what made him a blessing to the Babylonian nation.

Similarly, God wants us to be in the world, but not of the world. Naturally, if we imitate Daniel, we will often come into conflicts because of our stand, and it is only through God's power that we will be saved from these situations. The first six chapters of Daniel reveal the truth of this. They are also a witness to the fact that Daniel never gave up the principles of churchcraft, regardless of the circumstances. The contrast between churchcraft and statecraft was thus clearly manifested in his life.

Let us be resolved to learn and to master the art of churchcraft, then every desire to connect ourselves with statecraft will cease, and the Lord will finish His work in and through us.