

THE ADVENTIST CRISIS OF SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

by

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Dedication

Dedicated to the many Adventists who see "the everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14:6) as the heart of God's last message to the world, and the touchstone of all else in doctrine and behaviour.

PREFACE

* * * *

The issue that faced Caiaphas is everlastingly alive in your heart and mine.... No need to crucify Christ so that the institution may be saved. Unless Christ lives, the institution is dead.

- Arthur Beitz

The Holy Spirit has always been troublesome to officialdom, to institutionalism, because He's unruly and unpredictable and erratical. The call to the ministry is to be alert to discern every movement of the living, confounding, uncontrollable Spirit of God, in what someone has called His Sovereign Unpredictability.

- Henry P. Van Dusen

God, through the work of the Spirit, has always been at war with human institutionalism, because the institution becomes idolatrous, self-perpetuating, and self-worshipping; because church membership becomes synonymous with the new birth....

- Ernest Wright

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There are many troubled hearts in Adventism today, not only in the lay community but in the ministerial and administrative sectors as well. Almost everybody knows that all is not well with the Church and in a sense that is different from the problems of preceding years. Long cherished beliefs and traditions are being challenged as never before--and this time from within not without. Most of us have friends who have left or are leaving the community.

Something similar happened in the days of Jesus. At the close of John 6 we read that many of Christ's followers left him and to the twelve the Master put the question: "Will ye also go away?" Peter's reply was not entirely positive though acknowledging that the words of Jesus alone had the ring of eternity. "To whom shall we go?" In their case the traditions of a lifetime had been shaken, yet they knew God had called them. And so Adventists in their most depressed moments today enquire: "But where could we go?" To those who no longer take the Bible seriously? To those who believe that God has an ever-burning hell for the lost, and that the dead saints right now are beholding the agonies of their surviving loved ones? To those who ignore the plain words of the fourth commandment? To those who insist that if one does not speak in tongues he has never been converted? To those who teach the secret pre-tribulation rapture and the Palestinian focus for eschatology? To those who consider that Genesis 1-3 is irrelevant for the twentieth century? To those who have never rejoiced in "the blessed hope"? To those who think that because law has been abolished as a method one can live as one pleases and still make it? To those who see no virtue in taking seriously the Great Commission and who regard the Eastern religions as equal in value to Christianity? To whom could we go?

Chaos seems the order of the day in the world we live in. It seethes at the very heart of our civilization and permeates all its forms -- social, economic, political, and religious. History and nature help us by the reminder that upsets are sometimes necessary in order to set up. Consider that when God began the great work of Creation, He began with chaos. In many other great matters He has proceeded similarly. Every Spring we behold on all sides the wrecks of bursting seeds. The grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies that it might bring forth much fruit. In human life, the mother's travail before birth teaches the same truth, and likewise the frequent storms which affect the church. Said C.H. Spurgeon:

I do not think times of storm to a church are in the long run to be regretted; a calm is much more dangerous. The plague bearing miasma settles and festers in the vale till the atmosphere becomes deadly, even to the casual passenger; but the storm fiend, as men call him, leaps from the mountains into the sunny glades of the valley; with terrific vigour hurls down the habitations of men, and tears up the trees by the roots; but meanwhile all is superabundantly compensated by the effectual purging which the atmosphere receives. Men breathe more freely and heaven smiles more serenely now that the heaviness of the death-damp is gone, and the poisonous vapour clings no longer to the river's bank and the valley's side. (12:271-272).

- Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit

Six centuries before Christ the chosen people went into the Babylonian captivity. To one man of God standing by the waters at the age of thirty the heavens opened and he saw visions of God. But first came the whirlwind--uprooting everything, damaging, decimating, and devastating. Then a cloud enveloping all, cold, clammy, miserable, depressing, bringing fear and sapping initiative and confidence. But after the whirlwind and the cloud, in the center of a confusion of eye-spangled wheels was seen a man's hand controlling all. Ultimately Ezekiel realized he was being privileged to see the mysterious symbolism of God's sovereignty, the divine throne supported by the winged cherubim ruling and overruling. And even thus in every age has come the whirlwind destroying traditional and ideological foundations. Then has always followed the cloud of bewilderment and a fear that enervates sensitive spirits. But for all who cling to the Unseen, eventually the throne and glory of God appear.

There never was a blacker day than Calvary's bloody Friday. But it was succeeded by Easter Sunday. The valley ever precedes the mountain-top. The torn flesh is prior to the glorified body. Christ suffered, yes, but then He entered into His glory. That is ever God's way and it is for His children today.

As one more involved perhaps than most I have attempted a sympathetic appraisal of the Adventist dilemma -- its crisis of spiritual identity. I write as a Seventh-day Adventist, a conservative indeed, though not traditional in many respects. At this very moment of writing some in high places seek to have my ordination annulled and the church membership of my wife and myself removed. Others in similarly high places think this would be a mistake. But this book is no sop to those who differ with me for personal or official reasons, but a prayerful attempt to suggest truth that is healing. Believing wholeheartedly that God was behind the Advent movement of the nineteenth century and that He has committed to Seventh-day Adventists not only significant but vital truths (though not infallibility) I have

endeavored to honestly face certain of our doctrinal and administrative problems (acknowledged by most of our scholars and some of our church leaders) while simultaneously stressing the "plusses" in our denominational configuration. For those who believe "the everlasting gospel" of Rev 14:6 to be the heart of Adventism the best is yet to be for God is with us. No movement that refuses to make the Cross the center of all faith and practice can hope to survive.

My special gratitude goes to a good friend, Becky Millican, who has typed and retyped most of this manuscript. Her willingness, fidelity, and skill, and the generous help of other friends who wished to see these reflections in print, have made this book possible. As always I am in unpayable debt to my wife Gill, not only for her written contribution (the chapters on Glacier View, the nature of Christ, and Enquiry's Progress), but for her patience with an absent-minded spouse who is often blind and negligent regarding homely but sacred duties. His theological plea that "in many things we all offend" (James 3:2) has been accepted beyond seventy times seven. Grace indeed! Let all such wives be encouraged -- the day of glorification draws on apace. Our united love to all who for the gospel's sake are patient with those who see things differently, for they know well that though opinions may be wrong, love never is.

Maranatha !

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THE REALITY OF THE CRISIS

(Chapter 1)

* * * *

Crises are inevitable, for they are ordained of God. History is filled with them. All great reforms come by crises, for evil grows strong while men sleep. Escape from crises is impossible. God is in them and eternal verities would be forgotten but for them. All great movements, whether political, social, or religious are born in some crisis in which elements of the outgrown are destroyed.

- A. H. Lewis

In time of doubt and questionings, when our belief is perplexed by our new learning, new teaching, new thought, when our faith is strained by creeds, by doctrines, by mysteries beyond our understanding, give us the faithfulness of learners and the courage of believers in Thee; give us a boldness to examine, and faith to trust all truth; patience and insight to master all difficulties; stability to hold fast our tradition with enlightened interpretation, to admit all fresh truth made known to us, and in times of trouble to grasp new knowledge readily and to combine it loyally and honestly with the old; insight to refrain from stubborn rejection of new revelations and from hasty assurance that we are wiser than our fathers. Save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

- George Ridding

In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.

- Augustine

At the outset of every spiritual movement, there is a creative minority with a vision. When the idea takes root, a movement comes into being rapidly. Then come the danger that the original ideas may become commonplace and quantity becomes a major goal. When that happens, standards are lowered, politicians and financiers take over, the vision is replaced by creeds and sometimes by an absolutist organization. The message goes on paper, the faith is away and a reformation becomes imperative.

- Daniel Walther (AU), RH, Oct. 26, 1967.

* * * *

That Seventh-day Adventism is in ferment today, has been recognized by observers and the news media across the world. Several articles by the leading voice of conservative Christendom, Christianity Today, documented the Adventist crisis over the last three years, and hundreds of inches in national weeklies and dailies, as well as Adventist college campus newspapers have discussed the doctrinal and financial upheaval within the Church.¹ In addition, a virtual paper war of criss-crossing missiles propelled by orthodox and heterodox alike, have encompassed all the lands of earth. Compare, for example, the divergent approaches of Spectrum, Verdict, Evangelica, Limboline, Collegedale Tidings (SDA press release), and Good News Unlimited.

In terms of professional personnel, the loss to the Church has been heavy, and has only just begun. Over one hundred ministers in the USA alone have left their pulpits either voluntarily or under pressure since Glacier View. In Australasia, the number is approximately one-third of this, while in South Africa the president of the union, Francis Campbell, has resigned carrying with him other sympathizers. Congregational Adventist churches have multiplied, particularly but not solely on the American continent, where there are approximately three score of such.

In the educational institutions, especially the colleges and the universities of Adventism, unrest pervades the faculties. Many are studying other disciplines on the side in preparation for a new calling should that be necessary. Administrative decisions for the schools, such as the recent selection of Dr. G. Hasel as Andrews University dean, have never before been under such critical fire.

The publication of Omega by lawyer Lewis Walton gives a fair indication of the fears of many in Adventist leadership. This book has split churches and led worshippers to regard each other with a suspicion that some might be demons in human form. Despite condemnation of the book by General Conference Archivists (who have listed at least 30 inaccuracies and distortions of sources), and loyal scholars (see Spectrum, volume 12, no. 2), the President of the church has endorsed the accusing volume in the Review, and no retraction has been made, though there is a general awareness of the book's inaccuracies and inadequacies. Probably the worst of the latter is the suggestion that dependence on the imputed righteousness of Christ may be the very omega of spiritual decline (see page 54, Omega).

In prominent administrative circles, fears expressed about the decline in tithes and offerings suggest that all is not well with Adventist loyalty so far as the laity is concerned. The Davenport debacle, with its revelation of lost millions of consecrated dollars, and its threat of bankruptcy to the church through litigation expense, has added fuel to the fire, and for many has aroused suspicion regarding the integrity of church officials.²

April 1982 heralded the publication of Walter Rae's long-promised The White Lie challenging traditional views regarding Ellen White and thoroughly documenting little known sources used without credit by the denomination's most gifted and influential writer. For those who have clung to a superstitious view of how Ellen White received messages for the church (the stainless steel pipeline direct from heaven), Rae's revelations have proved devastating. Neither should it be thought that challenges to the official stand on Ellen G. White have been limited to critics of the denomination. From within have come many acknowledgments of matters never before dreamed of -- errors in doctrine and fact in the White books, as well as the concession that accusations regarding uninspired sources are essentially correct. Even the General Conference president has written to this effect in the main magazines of the church. All this, however, only after Rae's revelations.

Continuing research on the shut-door problem by scholars such as Ingemar Linden and Rolf Poehler have compounded the problem for all who once held to a semi-inerrancy of E. G. White. Ronald Numbers precipitated something of a landslide by his initial challenges to the uniqueness of the White position on health reform.

The center of the earthquake, however, is a doctrinal one--the gospel and the sanctuary. That the Pauline righteousness of faith is the technical term for justification alone, that Christ's human nature was spiritually like that of Adam before the fall, that believers have the verdict of the Last Judgment the moment they believe and for as long as they believe, and that the investigative judgment has no basis in Scripture, nor the date 1844--these revelations have left many reeling and dazed, while having an opposite impact on others who are worshipping in the same pews. The new doctrinal convictions have also aroused interest in the New Testament teaching on church government and the priesthood of all believers. Acknowledgment by Adventist leaders before the courts of the land that Adventism is controlled by a religious hierarchy does not rest pleasantly on the palates of the laity, and demonstration at the Dallas General Conference where lay representation was no more than 2%, adds to the discomfort and concern.

Some things need adding to this brief sketch in the endeavor to maintain a true sense of proportion. First, it should be emphasized that any church which can still be rocked by doctrinal controversy obviously has spiritual life, even if a clean bill of health cannot be conceded. Some denominations are too far removed from the evangelical convictions about Scripture to be at all concerned by doctrinal divergency. It is not entirely a bad thing when sincere believers challenge each other's interpretation of the Word. Second, for those familiar with many of the dimensions of the crisis, it would be folly indeed to suggest that all the failings were with traditionalism and that all the rebels are automatically "the good guys". Depravity characterizes all mankind, including the saints, and in every religious debate, there are errors of thought and practice on both sides. Humanity is well represented by Luther's drunken peasant who insisted on falling out of his saddle on one side of his horse or the other. In every revival of truth, the pendulum tendency to extremes finds abundant illustration. All reform movements, including the present one, are characterized by "a lunatic fringe".

Neither should it be thought that only Adventism is being rocked by dissension and dispute. Within the Episcopalian Church, there is controversy over the method of baptism and other matters. The evangelical Low church finds itself mountains removed from the High church division of that denomination. Within Roman Catholicism, divergencies are wider still. Since Vatican II, the younger priests have been more given to the study of the Scriptures and there is a great ideological gap fixed between them and many of their older superiors. In the Lutheran Church, debate over the nature of inspiration continues. Even in such groups as the Salvation Army, there are some who recurrently raise the question as to why the divinely entrusted ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not kept. The most numerous group of evangelicals is the Southern Baptist communion, and here for years, controversy has existed over the issues of dispensationalism, such as the secret rapture and the pretribulation removal of the faithful. Such controversies represent growing pains within the groups concerned, and it is a pity that administrators have not always recognized that it is a matter of health when opposite positions are being discussed within the church. Anyone who reads the New Testament finds that it is full of controversy. Certainly, the administrators of Judaism condemned Christ out-of-hand, not so much because of the content of what He taught, but because He divided the people and disrupted the peace of Judaism. But Christians should remember that peace is a virtue which can be too dearly bought and that compromise is not a part of the Christian's spectrum of behavior.

Returning to the Adventist scene, the essence of the Church's faith should not be caricatured by suggesting that it is essentially what some administrators say it is. There is in Adventism, as in most conservative church bodies, a great gulf fixed between administrators and scholars--not in sympathies but in concepts, and especially in the knowledge of the Bible. That some administrators might suggest that 1844 is the heart of Adventism does not make such the case, for hardly a scholar would agree with that suggestion. Again, it must be emphasized that this also is not a case of the "good guys" versus the "bad guys", but the inevitability of divergence between two prominent groups in the Church because of their respective professional hazards. Most administrators would not make good scholars, and the reverse is almost as true. In the more representative literature of the church, "the everlasting gospel" is seen as the hub and essence of the Adventist message, not chronological dates or geographical descriptions of heaven. Once more, it needs to be said that this type of caricaturing by administrators through stressing certain distinctives is not unique to our particular church. Many denominations have as the root of their tensions the fact that administrators and scholars, leaders and laity, conservatives and liberals, diverge as to what is the essence of their particular message for the world. Administrators with their eyes on quantity rather than quality often see in their denominational distinctives the hub of the church wheel, rather than a spoke or two. So, it must be stressed that Adventist human nature is not worse than the human nature found elsewhere. It just happens to be no better!

For those who prize Christian charity, there is yet another consideration of importance. A facial disfigurement can divert attention from all the normality that otherwise characterizes a particular person, and its apparent importance can be exaggerated. In this world, we walk beneath a sun that has spots on it, and we do so with no conflict of conscience over the matter. Similarly, where is the human organization that is free from defect, or the church that is infallible in faith or practice? It does not, and never will, exist in this life. Certain it is that Adventism has much to offer the world. Its emphasis on creation in an age when atheistic evolution has led to a philosophy of meaninglessness; its stress on law in a time of anarchy; its teaching on the return of Christ in a nuclear age of fear; its doctrine of the unity of man's nature and his conditional immortality at a time when men are more repulsed than ever by the traditional teachings on hell and purgatory; its demand for Christian education as part of the fulfillment of the first great commandment; its offer of the Christian Sabbath as the outward sign of perpetual rest of conscience for those who accept the finished work of Christ; the everlasting gospel for an age desperate for the good news--these features and many others enshrine the essence of Seventh-day Adventism where it appears to diverge from some other groups, and the features are not repugnant, but winning and attractive.

Now, a final word of charity should be extended on behalf of those who receive most of the brickbats of critics--church administrators. It is easier for all to be critical than correct, and sometimes it is the case that those who can, do; but those who can't, criticize. To be a conscientious administrator in the Adventist Church is no sinecure, and all of us who have mixed with such men must confess a measure of admiration for them, despite the uneasiness engendered by their professional hazards (such as the tendency for the urgent to ever crowd out the important, and the occasional solving of problems by expediency rather than by Christian principle). I, for one, esteem very highly many of the men carrying heavy responsibilities in church government within Adventism, and the purpose of this book is certainly not to add to the burdens of those seeking to guide the flock of Christ, but to challenge all--clergy and laity alike--to be honest to God and to find the peace that only openness can bring. Only the everlasting gospel is of sufficient value to justify denominational dispute! Those who cherish the gospel must also manifest a gospel spirit. None should engage in religious polemics unless they can disagree without being disagreeable. All must continually remember that while opinions may be wrong, love never is!

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(This listing is representative only and by no means complete.)

2. For example, see the protests of former Adventist professor, Sidney Allen of Redlands, and those of the Adventist Laymen Council (headed by John Felts and John J. Adam) which publishes the SDA Press Release (P. O. Box 1790, Collegedale, TN 37315)--a project which so far has cost over \$30,000 dollars to "bring the Davenport fraud to its close". The San Bernardino Sun of May 30, 1982 went to the heart of the matter as follows:

Adventist laymen and spiritual leaders for years invested millions with Davenport in the form of loans repaid at interest rates two to three times the prevailing rate.

Adventist organizations also loaned Davenport millions, and for years were regularly repaid. But property records show Davenport seemed to repay loans with funds from other loans.

Many of Davenport's transactions with Adventist entities and church officials seemed to violate the church's own investment and conflict of interest guidelines.

Some Adventist investment officers made personal deals with Davenport at substantially higher interest rates--up to 80 percent - than their church entities received.

Some church loans to Davenport were unsecured, and other loans were secured by third and fourth trust deeds and trust deeds for property valued at considerably less than the loan....

The bankruptcy report lists more than a dozen lenders to Davenport whom The Sun found were top church officials on the governing boards of various Adventist entities that also made loans to Davenport.

The personal deals these officials made with Davenport seemed to violate the church's conflict of interest guidelines.

On the other hand, it should be remembered that the G.C. Treasurer Emmerson had repeatedly warned against Davenport investment, and General Conference was not corporately involved. In August 1979, the General Conference sent out a lengthy questionnaire to church officials seeking detailed information regarding loans to Davenport. The General Conference has admitted that tithe funds are involved.

From the new manager of Gencon Risk Management Service, a January memo (1982) warned church leaders of the possibility of "disastrous litigation between conferences, between conferences and church officers, and between conferences and the church-owned insurance company". Frederick declared that insurance company underwriters were convinced "that the investment losses were, instead of

errors day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, and year-by-year, a result of deliberate decision-making procedures. In their opinion, based on available information to date, these decisions involved the majority of church officers in these conferences, even in opposition to church operating policies and that such business activities cannot be construed as an error of a particular officer but rather the responsibility of all management and the controlling board of directors or conference committee". Frederick warned that unless immediate steps were taken "the church cannot afford to pay the legal fees which are already astronomical for the church and Gencon Risk Management Service. Also, in the absence of an impartial arbitration board, the church may shortly face other possible litigation which could arise out of allegations that the existing committee, which cannot possibly function as an arbitration board, is engaged in a cover-up scheme to protect their own selfish or individual interests". "The Davenport fiasco has, I hope, taught us that the church desperately needs to put its house in order." "...greediness for the almighty dollar is the source of our trouble with Davenport investment. Also, greediness towards the insurance company for recovery of uninsured losses, without due respect to business ethics and the moral concept of contractual provisions in the insurance policies, is responsible for turning the church toward the entanglement of litigation which may end in disaster. Even the gentiles know that this may be a disastrous course for the church to follow." All these warnings come from the head of G.C.'s own insurance service.

Again, it should be stressed that officials in the G.C. Treasury were for a decade anxious about the Davenport investments and opposed to them. Emmerson on April 5, 1979 wrote to W. J. Blacker, Lorna Linda University vice-president for financial affairs as follows:

To put it mildly, I was alarmed, concerned and almost angered over the thought that anyone at Lorna Linda University would even entertain such an approach. I shall not write at length, Jack; but I should state that it would be totally unacceptable to the General Conference and to some of us as Lorna Linda University Board Members if the University were to have any connections or dealings whatsoever with Dr. Davenport. The program he suggests has legal and moral implications that may not be clear to some, but they are very clear to a few of us.

General Conference has been blessed with treasurers of integrity including the present incumbent Lance Butler, but the question has been repeatedly raised as to why the G.C. was unable to do anything about the Davenport matter except give warnings. In other matters, the church has argued that it is of the "hierarchical variety" with "orders of ministers," and a "first minister at the top". This has been explained as meaning that "a 'hierarchical' church is one in which final decisions are made at the top of the organizational ladder, in contrast to a 'congregational' church organization in which every local group, like the Baptists and Unitarians, is free to go its own way." See Spectrum, Vol. 12, No.1, p. 61.

If rumours of recent disastrous falling off in tithe income are true there is probably some connection with the distrust engendered by the Davenport affair. It is certainly true that more and more Adventists are following Ellen G. White's own example of placing their tithe where they believe it will do the most good. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the church administrators have been engaged in very thorough investigation of the Davenport matter and they have no intention of permitting the guilty to escape without a reckoning. Probably by the time this manuscript goes to press that reckoning will have begun.

CHRISTIANITY TODAY

October 10, 1980

The Adventist Showdown: Will It Trigger a Rash of Defections?

Over the last three decades, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been shaken to the core by a few of its theologians, who believe the church has erred in the basic beliefs that separate it from historic Protestantism. A showdown on whether to adapt to the new scholarship or stand fast on the teachings of founder-prophetess Ellen White has been building for some time.

Finally the volcano blew. Last month church administrators moved to strip the ministerial credentials from Australian theologian Desmond Ford, one of Adventism's most widely known thinkers.

"This probably won't blow over," said Adventist professor Raymond Cottrell of Loma Linda University, near Los Angeles, in what may be a sublime understatement. Already, at least one minister has resigned and led his congregation out the door, and he predicts dozens more will follow. A dissident Adventist group has been planning a meeting in San Diego for Adventist churches contemplating independence from the general conference. The meeting was to be held next summer, but because of the Ford affair, it was moved up to October 13-16. Organizers had been expecting about 500. Now, they're planning for more.

Ford challenges the heart of what traditional Adventists cherish, namely, the events of 1844 and their significance. William Miller, a Baptist preacher and Bible scholar, rode the waves of Second Coming fervor that swept many American churches in the 1830's. Basing his stand on the cleansing of the temple mentioned in Daniel 8:14, which Miller took to mean Christ's return to earth, he predicted that the Second Coming would occur in 1844. Miller and his 200,000 followers were crushed when the time came and Christ didn't.

Two followers, Hiram Edson and Ellen Harmon, the future Mrs. White, then reported visions of Christ entering "the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary," just as the priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year in the Jewish Tabernacle to make blood atonement for sins. This is what Christ actually did in 1844, the visionaries said, and thus the movement was saved.

Through her writings, Ellen White expanded her vision into the doctrine of the investigative judgment of Christ. This says that although man's sins are forgiven at the Cross, they must be blotted out by Christ before man can enter heaven. This blotting out of sin is what Christ has been doing in the heavenly sanctuary since 1844. But he blots out the sin record only after evaluating the life of each professing believer, to see how well he has kept God's commandments. Some will pass the judgment, some will fail. According to this teaching, salvation is never secure. Ellen White wrote prolifically on these matters, and on all aspects of Christian life. Although Adventists officially claim the Bible as their first standard, many, in practice, regard Mrs. White's books as at least equal.

Ford contends that the Hebrew word for "cleanse," in the key verse, Daniel 8:14 (as in Daniel cleansing the heavenly temple by blotting out sins), carries the notion of "restoring," or "putting right," and doesn't really mean cleanse at all, even though the King James Version uses it. As evidence, he offers the fact that most modern translations interpret it as he does. (Ford's opponents in the church acknowledge this but still contend the word can have the meaning of cleanse.)

Now comes Desmond Ford, a man of great learning and gracious personality, who argues forcefully against most of this cherished tradition, all the while claiming to be an Adventist from head to toe. "Ellen White never claimed to be a basis of doctrine," Ford said in a telephone interview. "She never claimed to be inerrant. Adventists have used her in a way she would be horrified at... Our administrators (who took his credentials) unfortunately, are not well read. There's a great gulf... not in sympathies, but in understanding, between administrators and scholars in the church." Ford hastens to add that he cannot blame them for their actions since they cannot have both time to run the church and to delve into theology, as can the church's scholars.

Regarding the investigative judgment, which is the fundamental belief of Adventists, Ford said, "You can't find the investigative judgment in the Bible. You can get it out of Ellen White. The fact is, she got it out of Uriah Smith (an early Adventist writer and editor)."

Traditionally, Adventists are taught they can't be sure of heaven until they have lived lives good enough to have their sins blotted out during the investigative judgment. That, in many cases, has spawned an attitude of "perfectionism," always striving to be good enough, but never sure just how good that is. The reason Ford has grown so popular among some Adventists is that he is throwing all that out the window, telling Adventists they can indeed be happy and sure of salvation because Christ finished his work on the Cross, where their sins were forgiven and the eternal punishment due them erased.

"I always thought I was a Christian until I heard Dr. Ford speak, and then I found the real peace of Jesus," said an Adventist medical doctor on the West Coast. He continued: "There is a vast youth movement in the church identifying with the evangelistic gospel (as a result of Ford). There's a renewed excitement about the Cross."

Ford headed the theology department of the Adventists' Avondale College in New South Wales, Australia, for 16 years. He holds doctoral degrees from Michigan State University and Manchester University in England. He earned the latter in New Testament studies under noted scholar F. F. Bruce. Ford has written nine books--seven of them published or in process--and has about 250,000 cassette tapes in circulation in the United States alone.

The year 1844 has no biblical significance, Ford says, but he adds that God did raise up the Adventists in that year as a movement that would emphasize his creation, a doctrine Adventists stoutly defend. Ford notes that 1844 is the year Charles Darwin wrote the first sketch of his Origin of Species. Ford is also in complete accord with Saturday worship, another cardinal Adventist doctrine. Seventh-day worship signifies God's completed creation, for it's the day on which he rested, Ford said. Adventists have traditionally held that in the end times of the church, Saturday worship will separate those who are true believers from apostate Christians who worship on Sunday. Ford himself does not criticize those who do so.

Aage Rendalen, a Norwegian Adventist editor, said of the Ford situation that, "Among denominational theologians, it is openly conceded that Ford's basic criticism of the sanctuary theology is valid." But he says most of the others keep a low profile about it because the laity and the church administrators don't like to hear it.

The flap began building a head of steam a year ago, when Ford was asked to present his views before a layman's forum at Pacific Union

College, an Adventist school in northern California where he has been a visiting professor... When tapes of his talk began circulating, the phones started ringing off the hook at church headquarters in Takoma Park, Maryland. "Some old Miss Muffet out in Nebraska somewhere probably got hold of it," said a disgruntled Adventist professor who is in sympathy with Ford.

Ford was given a paid, six-month leave to defend his views, which he did by producing a document running 990 pages in length. In August, about 100 Adventist churchmen from around the world gathered at a church camp at Glacier View Ranch, Colorado, near Boulder. They spent a week poring over the manuscript in detail. At week's end, they found themselves differing with Ford on 10 major points, which cover most of the controversy. Because Ford wouldn't compromise, the President's Advisory Committee decided to ask the church's Australasian Division to revoke Ford's credentials as a minister, which it did.

Church administrators point to the friendly spirit at Glacier View, and the strong consensus against Ford, as evidence that the church is united in its traditional views. The Norwegian Rendalen, however, contends the theologians sided with the administration not out of contempt for his theology, but because he was not willing to compromise, as most other theologians have been doing.

Many followers of Ford can't figure out why the administration acted so severely against such a popular figure. They must have been able to predict the commotion that has ensued. One high official explained it, but only on condition his name not be used:

"We met with Ford for 50 hours, and with all that talk he never changed a pinpoint. You just can't be right on everything." The official said it was further frustrating because although Ford refused to budge an inch, he was so nice about everything. "I guess his tremendous amount of research has made him infallible," the official said.

Cottrell, who said he knows many of the men who made the decision against Ford, said he believes they reacted harshly because Ford's teachings have greatly polarized the Adventist church in Australia, and it is turning older traditional ministers against younger ones in this country as well as in Australia. "He has become a world figure in Seventh-day Adventist churches," Cottrell said, "and his students react very positively toward him, almost without exception." Ford has trained hundreds of ministers during his teaching years.

Cottrell may be on target when he says the situation is turning younger ministers against the church. John Toews, 30, is the California pastor who resigned his Adventist credentials because of the Ford decision. He and his 150-member congregation changed its name from the South Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church to the South Bay Gospel Fellowship. "We feel we want to move into the mainstream of Christianity now because we feel that Adventism is very definitely way off to the side." Toews, who graduated from the Adventist seminary at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, predicts that there will be "many, many pastors who will be leaving."

Another young minister, who asked not to be identified, says he's known Adventists who for years have never had assurance about whether they'll get to heaven. "That breaks my heart," he said, adding that he is also contemplating leaving the church.

J. R. Spangler, secretary of the church's ministerial association and editor of one of its magazines, said he believes the controversy will spark a renewed interest in the doctrine of the investigative judgment of Christ, which all who were interviewed say has not been a topical subject in the church's pulpits for some time. Spangler said, "We realize there have been some exegetical problems with the heavenly sanctuary, but we feel we've handled some of them quite well." Spangler was speaking for Neal Wilson, president of the church's general conference.

Ford has taken a job as chaplain in an Adventist medical ministry in California, and plans to keep writing and preaching, even if, as he suspects, he will never be able to teach again in an Adventist school. He plans to remain in the United States if he can get a permanent visa. He is convinced his views are right, and he is equally convinced the church will head in his direction as more and more of its bright young people take seminary training, and learn the issues for themselves.

CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Editorial, October 24, 1980

* * * *

For nearly a century and a half, Seventh-day Adventism has hovered on the fringe of solid evangelical faith. The denomination now stands at the crossroads as it chooses to identify either with the biblical heritage of Protestant Christianity or to solidify alienation from the gospel and from the final authority of Scripture. We can only pray earnestly that its leaders will discover the means to preserve their unique distinctives within the framework of unequivocal loyalty to Scripture and its gospel.

* * * *

Taking Courage to Stand Beside Luther

Desmond Ford, brilliant Seventh-day Adventist theologian, stands under discipline of his denomination, and a pall of fear hangs heavily over many, especially the younger clergy, whom he has influenced during recent years. The issues at stake touch the essence of biblical Christianity: (1) What is the final authority for determining Christian teaching? and (2) How do sinful human beings find forgiveness and a right relationship to a holy God? Traditionally, Seventh-day Adventists acknowledge Holy Scripture to be the final authority for discovering God and his truth. On this basis they vigorously teach the necessity for keeping the seventh-day Sabbath and condemn all bodies that reject this teaching, willfully choosing to worship on Sunday. Yet they also have accepted the teachings of Mrs. Ellen White as the authoritative and infallible interpretation of Scripture.

This ambiguity toward the sole authority of Scripture has brought to focus the second issue now troubling the denomination. Ford argues for the basic biblical and evangelical doctrine of justification by faith and the rejection of good works as a ground for divine forgiveness and acceptance. Most Adventist theologians, we are told, are in basic agreement with Dr. Ford, but they and their denominational leaders are unwilling to make the bold and dangerous move to set the denomination upon a solid biblical doctrine of justification by faith and to reaffirm unambiguously and firmly the sole authority of Scripture to determine the teaching and preaching of the church of Christ.

This is not a time for pleasers of men. Adventists have won the admiration of evangelicals for their uncompromising witness to the truth as they see it, no matter what the cost.

We who look on from the outside can only express our deep concern and assure our Adventist friends of our earnest prayers. To us it seems a clear-cut choice between expediency and obedience to God. We commend to them the example of another defender of the sole authority of Scripture and of its precious gospel of salvation by grace through faith--Martin Luther. In a moment of destiny, with all the world looking on and pressing him to compromise his convictions (ever so slightly), the great Reformer uttered those noble words: "My conscience is bound in the Word of God: I cannot and will not recant anything since it is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against the conscience. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me!"

Of such stuff are heroes made--and the kingdom of God goes forward.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CRISIS

(Chapter 2)

* * * *

We cannot then take a position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of scripture in the very same light. The church may pass resolution upon resolution to put down all disagreement of opinions, but we cannot force the mind and will, and thus root out disagreement. These resolutions may conceal the discord; but they cannot quench it, and establish perfect agreement. Nothing can perfect unity in the church but the spirit of Christ-like forbearance.... The great truths of the word of God are so clearly stated that none need make a mistake in understanding them.

- EGW Ms 24, 1892

The doctrine that God has committed to the church the right to control the conscience, and to define and punish heresy, is one of the most deeply rooted of papal errors.

- EGW The Great Controversy, p. 293

If God abhors one sin above another, of which his people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime, and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.

- E. G. White, 3 Testimonies, p. 281

* * * *

The Figuhr administration of the Church in the 1950's marked an era of increasing openness towards new ideas and approaches by Seventh-day Adventism. Walter Martin came to Takoma Park, Washington, DC with his inquiries and found hospitality, cooperation and comparative frankness. As a result, Questions on Doctrine was published, undoubtedly the greatest forward step theologically in decades. For the first time in Adventist history, leaders repudiated the sinful nature of Christ concept, the exclusive remnant church theology, sectarian bias against other Christian bodies, the ceremonial uncleanness basis for abstaining from certain foods, literalistic extremes regarding the heavenly sanctuary, etc. With great emphasis the book rejected the idea that the Ellen G. White writings had doctrinal authority, and the Protestant position of "the Bible only" was strongly affirmed.

Reaction to Questions on Doctrine rippled around the globe. M. L. Andreasen, respected veteran scholar, was in the vanguard. But even in distant places such as Australia, there were murmurs of discontent from arch-conservatives. The protest became a crescendo in Washington, DC in the Pierson administration with Kenneth Wood and Herbert Douglass declaring that the Questions on Doctrine publication had been a mistake.

In 1959, the Australian "Awakening" movement commenced.¹ Robert D. Brinsmead, of Reform Adventist stock, in basic Adventist doctrine "a pharisee of the pharisees" raised a banner of protest over the neglect of Daniel 8:14 and the investigative judgment by the Church. After much study of E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, Robert Brinsmead had "solved" the traditional Adventist dilemma of how to survive after the close of probation by suggesting that the Latter Rain would cleanse the soul temple of believers from all propensities to sin in order that they might be as perfect in the flesh as Christ was. It cannot be overemphasized that the young Australian farmer had put his finger on Adventism's most crucial theological weaknesses. Believing that Christ would soon close His work of mediation and that all must stand then by virtue of their own imparted righteousness (sanctification) and be found in absolute harmony with that law which demanded perfect truth and righteousness in the inward parts, conscientious Adventists could not but view the eschatological prospect with fear. The Church had not made prominent the traditional Protestant truth that at all times Christians stand before God only on the basis of Christ's imputed merits. As a result, lack of Christian assurance permeated Adventist ranks at all levels.

At this time, Desmond Ford, at the request of the Australasian Division, was completing a Ph.D. at Michigan State University. In a letter to Robert (whom he had met at Avondale on returning to college to complete a degree after six years in evangelism), he suggested that the former should study Hebrews 9 which clearly affirmed that the cross-resurrection-ascension event fulfilled the Day of Atonement type. (Ford, however, also believed then as now that the Day of Atonement had a consummative fulfillment in the last judgment.) Robert Brinsmead could see no light in this position and with great vigor began to present his views around the world. It should be stressed that these new teachings were not identical with the typical perfectionistic syndrome of contemporary Adventism. Robert Brinsmead had clearly seen that there is no hope of perfection through the usual path of sanctification and he was offering something quite distinct, though unbiblical. Many received his teachings with great enthusiasm and joy.

Thus began more than a decade of friendly warfare between Ford and Brinsmead. The former illustrated his own position in summary and in contrast to Robert's belief by saying that on the Cross, Christ had sin on Him, but not in Him, whereas the penitent thief had sin in him, but not on him (like all believers until the Second Coming), while the impenitent member of the Calvary trio had sin both on him and in him. Ford rejected both the sinful nature of Christ teaching and also perfectionism of all types. This was in harmony with the well-known teachings of Dr. Edward Heppenstall at Andrews University over many years.

In 1970, Robert Brinsmead through his study of the Protestant Reformers, particularly Luther on Galatians, repudiated the aberrant features of his own theology and rejoiced in the standard Lutheran republication of Paul's gospel of righteousness by faith. Undoubtedly, the new articles now flowing from Brinsmead's pen were more technically precise on justification than anything available from official Adventist sources. An increasing number of readers received joy and comfort in these presentations, and Ford and Brinsmead found a new theological unity over the gospel, though contact between the two was rare and spasmodic.

Simultaneously with the Brinsmead reversal, the Review and Herald with its new editor, began to set forth the theology which was actually a reaffirmation of traditional Adventist doctrinal heresies which had been gradually dying before the Pierson administration. For a significant and accurate account of what now began to happen theologically and administratively, one should read Raymond Cottrell's

account of those years.²

Increasing controversy over the Review's emphasis on perfectionism and Christ's sinful nature led ultimately to the Palmdale Conference in 1976. Here for the first time in history, Adventism officially set forth righteousness by faith as justification only, with sanctification as its accompanying fruit. This was a tremendous advancement for it encapsulated the teaching of the everlasting gospel, that believers though sinful in themselves are accepted as perfect in Christ. Not all were happy with the Palmdale announcement and in particular Drs. R. Standish and J. Clifford in Australia began to campaign against the non-traditional gospel emphasis coming to the front in the Church. The General Conference felt that the removal of Ford from his Avondale teaching position might ease the doctrinal tensions, and he was invited to join Pacific Union College as an exchange teacher in 1977. He continued to be a member of the top level study committee of the General Conference on the topic of righteousness by faith until these meetings ceased in October of 1979 when the Church agreed on a definitive statement far removed from the perfectionism of earlier years.

At the time when Ford was invited to join PUC, the visiting General Conference representative promised that he would in the USA sit on a committee to study the sanctuary problems which he had long emphasized needed urgent attention.³ The promise was not fulfilled though this failure may have been accidental rather than deliberate. Nevertheless, it was the enticement of at last being able to see the Church come to grips with its central theological problems that was influential in Ford's decision to accept the American invitation.

In the USA, most weekends Desmond Ford had the privilege of addressing Adventist Church groups including ministerial workers' meetings and college constituencies. He took weeks of prayer at most of the American colleges. The theme was, always the everlasting gospel with the Cross as the lodestar. Question and answer sessions were a prominent feature of this ministry. According to PUC's president, Dr. John Cassell, the reactions throughout America to this ministry were almost universally irenic.

In 1978, Robert Brinsmead's 1844 Reexamined was published repudiating the traditional Adventist positions on 1844 and the investigative judgment. Possibly the Walter Rae research had strong influence on the Australian "Awakener" for his former positive stance on Ellen White changed drastically and carried him theologically to positions which would ultimately separate his message from Ford's. But Ford did agree with most of the positions in 1844 Reexamined and out of necessity said so when questioned during his preaching itineraries.

By strange coincidence, it was on another October day when the historic Adventist Forum meeting on the investigative judgment convened at PUC in 1979. Faculty members had requested Ford to be the speaker, assuring him that the Forum had "diplomatic immunity". He was given the topic and the title by Forum leaders and approximately 1,000 people assembled to hear the presentation. The latter itemized the theological problems long known to most Adventist scholars (and presented just a week earlier by Raymond Cottrell at Andrews University), and suggested a tentative solution employing the apotelesmatic principle--namely, that which was fulfilled in inaugurated eschatology at the cross was also to be filled full by the events of consummative eschatology.⁴ The presentation was positive on the providential role of Adventism and Ellen G. White, but refused the latter any sort of veto power over Scripture.

Within a matter of days and without consultation with Ford, Verdict publications scattered thousands of the Forum tapes across the world causing theological schismic disturbances in many quarters, and a kind of sweet-bitterness to many perfectionists who rightly saw that the Forum speaker would never survive the new debate. Many did what they could to bring about this consummation so devoutly desired, and brought pressure on the General Conference. PUC administrators did all in their power to save Ford, requesting a fair trial for him, and a sabbatical in Takoma Park, Washington, DC, for the writing of what became known as the Glacier View manuscript. Ford has only praise for the administrators of PUC, and for the faculty as a whole.

On the first meeting in GC between Ford and administrators, he was asked to agree never to release his manuscript without General Conference consent. This he refused on the ground that too many people knew of the assignment to make possible secrecy as to the results. In the following months before the Colorado meeting, Ford met with a study committee several times for approximately 50 hours in all. Interaction was very half-hearted on the part of those appointed by the Church.⁵ Members of the committee were assigned the task of reviewing each chapter of his manuscript as it was completed and giving to Ford a regular detailed critique, but this was never done by most of the committee, despite repeated requests from the committee chairman and the writer. An exception to this general dereliction was the regular critique from William Johnsson from Andrews University. Two or three others on the 15-member committee were also more or less regular with very brief (with the exception of G. Damsteegt, who was detailed) reviews of his approximately 150 page chapters. Similarly, in a table discussion, the vast majority of the committee said nothing most of the time. Apart from four or five men, the greater number would not individually have spoken in total for longer than five to ten minutes over the 50 hours of meeting. It was a strange committee with fear or ignorance rendering impotent most of the men appointed to challenge and correct heresy! All the meetings were recorded and the General Conference retains the tapes. If these could be released, many matters now clouded in the minds of observers would be made clear.

The Glacier View Colorado meeting convened August 10-15, 1980. Most who attended gave no evidence of having read the manuscript, though General Conference had requested all to do so. The manuscript was not used throughout the meetings, and its writer was permitted only to answer questions and not to make a presentation. Neither was he permitted to attend the regular study committees. The administrators were always courteous, and it would be quite wrong to picture the occasion as one where church leaders in general with malevolent intent consciously longed for a martyrdom. The outcome was motivated by "pastoral concern" and certainly not by the theological facts of the case which were hardly skimmed. No academic peers of Ford were permitted to be on the Friday afternoon jury which tried him. Only administrators were present. Nevertheless, Christian love was manifested in sincerity by several of those involved in the decisions that day. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the theological situation was the fact that none of the administrative jury were aware of what all the scholars knew--that the consensus statement reflected many of the key positions of Ford's Glacier View document, "and that for the first time in Adventist official theological pronouncements, it confessed that Christ did enter indeed the Most Holy Place at His ascension, and that Hebrews did not teach a two-apartment heavenly ministry.

Much more could be said on Glacier View, but this writer is a biased witness. So is his wife who was permitted also to be present, but her version is nevertheless presented elsewhere in this book, for the sake of those who have read only the accounts given by the Review and Herald and Ministry. The most detailed presentations of all of Glacier View are to be found in the Spectrum of November, 1980. Following issues of Spectrum also touched upon the issues of Glacier View.

Many scholars expressed their concern over the Glacier View decision both orally and in writing. Simultaneously, the Walter Rae findings and the Davenport issue became increasingly clamorous. Ministers everywhere, now reading things unknown to many of them before,

found their consciences sounding insistent warnings.

And the rest, the Adventist world knows. Good News Unlimited, a nonprofit evangelistic association (not a church) which ministers to all churches and the unchurched by its approximately 50 radio stations weekly across the USA, Canada, New Zealand, and also in Australia and South Africa, and its monthly magazine and regular gospel meetings, has become a regular factor in the Adventist religious scene. With Ford is Smuts van Rooyen, prominent preacher in the US scene for many years who was forced to resign from Andrews University in 1981; Calvin Edwards, an Australian-trained teacher and minister who has taught in our colleges and also part-time at Andrews; and Noel Mason, able Australian pastor. These four supported by a board of laymen strive to show malice toward none and charity for all, in a growing ministry which reflects not only the true landmarks of the everlasting gospel, but also the insights given by Providence to the Advent Movement.

References for Chapter Two

1. The General Conference Biblical Research Committee asked Ford to write against the Brinsmead theological positions which he did in an 82 page manuscript entitled "The Sealing of the Saints--Before or After the Loud Cry?--An Enquiry into Some Aspects of Adventist Eschatology". Robert Brinsmead in courteous fashion wrote a rejoinder of considerable length and Ford responded with another booklet of 63 pages entitled "A Review of R. D. Brinsmead's The Timing of Revelation 18 and the Perfecting of the Saints-An Answer to Dr. Desmond Ford and Pastor L. C. Naden". The central issue in the discussions was whether the saints would ever have spiritual perfection imparted to them in this life. Ford affirmed no, Brinsmead yes. But again it must be stressed that the Brinsmead perfectionism was not that of traditional Adventism which looked upon such a state as attainable by the usual spiritual discipline of believers. On biblical grounds, he correctly repudiated any such view. It is unfortunate that Robert Brinsmead's views were often misrepresented over the years of the controversy. Furthermore, it has not always been admitted that Robert Brinsmead frankly admitted his change of viewpoint in the early 1970's.
2. "Our Present Crisis: Reaction to a Decade of Obscurantism."
3. Ford has published in church papers on the issues for over 20 years. Some of these articles are reproduced in the Glacier View manuscript now in print under the title Dan. 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment (available from Desmond Ford Publications, 7955 Bullard Dr., Newcastle, CA 95658. \$15, includes postage and handling.) From the early 1950's, Ford had exchanged correspondence with church leaders on the sanctuary problems. Respondents included F. D. Nichol, L. E. Froom, R. A. Anderson, E. Heppenstall, R. Cottrell, G. Hyde, and others.
4. See p. 54 of this book.
5. See April 2, 1980 letter to Dr Hammill by this writer. This and other reactions to the Glacier View affair appear on the following pages.

April 2, 1980

Dear Dr. Hammill,

As one vitally concerned in our meeting this Friday (and Sunday), may I share a conviction with you?

Having studied closely the criticisms of my first chapter I am very disappointed to find that most of the writers have dealt on very secondary points and often insignificant matters (such as a dangling participle, reversed initials, typographical errors, debatable issues in history). One has even dragged in my Ph.D. Manchester thesis. The real issues have been studiously avoided. I have written an article discussing these criticisms in some detail but may decide to scrap it if my fears concerning the coming meetings prove groundless. Honest criticism does not come to negative conclusions through avoiding the central issues and dwelling on trivia such as grammar, dates, and initials. Similarly, every critic in art, literature, theology, etc. worth his salt has recognized that genuine criticism means judging or assessing and must always include recognition of the good as well as disparagement of the bad. This is significantly missing from most of the letters I have received from the committee, and indicates either that they are unaware of how a critique should operate if worthy of that name, or that the writers through prejudice have made up their minds beforehand and in order to have something to say practiced nit-picking rather than grapple with the issues.

On Friday we have it seems to me a choice--to get into the heart of the matter, or spend our time on trivia which is not decisive one way or another. Do not the important matters include the following?

1. Is it true that at least several of the basic arguments used for our traditional sanctuary doctrine in the 19th century have in the 20th appeared untenable to a significant number of Adventist scholars? For example, do our scholars today use the old arguments for "within the veil", "hagia", Heb. 9:23, and the key verses of Heb. 9:8, 12, 24-25?
2. Is it true that a significant number of scholars have refused to even patch up the argumentation for the traditional position and admitted that to them there does not seem evidence at all in Scripture for our traditional position and that therefore we should rely on the Spirit of Prophecy for the doctrine?
3. Is it true that practically all classical commentaries on Hebrews have seen chapter 9 as applying the Day of Atonement to what Christ has already done?
4. Is it true that practically all classical commentaries on Hebrews have seen 9:8 as saying that the first apartment represented not a ministry in heaven but the limited Jewish cultic practices?
5. Is it true that practically all classical commentaries on Hebrews have seen in that book overwhelming evidence that the second apartment of the earthly sanctuary was a symbol of heaven itself where Christ ascended to be our priest?
6. Is it true again that such scholars affirm that the O.T. sanctuary type teaches by way of antithesis as well as similarity? E.g., Christ was not of the tribe of Levi, does not offer sacrifices continually, has "sat down" as King rather than continually working at procuring reconciliation, the atonement was made on earth, not in heaven, etc., etc.
7. Is it true that there is no basis whatever in Heb. 9 for teaching that there was in Paul's day a cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary yet future?

These, it seems to me, are some of the key issues. I await with concern to see whether the brethren will really get to these or whether instead they will dwell on peripheral matters instead. I am sure you also are concerned as to whether the committee has dealt fairly. So far, it seems to me, that most of the writers replying on the first chapter have not--inasmuch as they have left the main issues alone and made much out of little. I trust, under your direction, this trend can be remedied.

With the warmest of good wishes,

Sincerely,

Des

PS I would not wish to be understood as ungrateful for minute corrections in matters typographical or historical. All of these that to me seem accurate will be incorporated in the final draft. The initial chapter was written in three weeks to be sure the typist could complete it in time. (Even then this did not prove possible as GC took a week--after I offered the chapter for typing--to find someone.) It was not intended to represent precisely the final presentation, but an initial foray. If we spend hours trying to check on these matters of minutia in committee (which I can do for myself out of committee) and neglect the real issues listed above, it would be most unfortunate, and confidence-eroding for those who learn of the proceedings.

Typical of the factors that prompted me to write an article on the replies of the committee are the following:

1. From most members I have received no comment at all on my chapter on Hebrews, though replies were scheduled for posting on the 25th. None of the ones received touch in detail on any of the major issues of that paper. Mere assertions suffice.
2. One committee member who has not sent a line on either chapter has made repeated prejudicial statements at LLU, PUC, AU and CUC. Thus, while hundreds can be given the impression that this writer's position is untenable, not a syllable of evidence is given by the critic to the poor brother laboring under so much grievous error.
3. Several on the committee have publicly avowed my position to be that of Ballenger despite my written disclaimers to the contrary, and despite overwhelming evidence that Ballenger was linked by E. G. White with the J. H. Kellogg heresy--a semi-pantheistic teaching threatening the personality of God and the reality of His dwelling-place. Ballenger taught that Christ had ministered in a pre-incarnation sanctuary for 4,000 years. I know nobody teaching such an idea today.
4. But as previously mentioned, the major disconcerting factor is that the majority of reviewers have refused to deal with the central issues

and contented themselves with stylistic or other peripheral matters. Not one reviewer has offered any detailed evidence as to why his personal belief differs from this writer's on the meaning of "within the veil", ta hagia, the dominance of Heb. 9 by the Day of Atonement, and the phenomenon of so many SDA scholars repudiating the old arguments on the I.J.

cc: Elders Wilson, Bradford, Eva, Spangler.

Dear Dr. ---

I trust you are feeling more and more relaxed as the heavy burdens of so many years recede. You have more than earned along and happy retirement. We both hope it will be both restful and yet as with your earlier years--fruitful--for the church.

You would want me to be entirely frank with you and I must confess to an uneasiness because of reports of your talk on the Committee's business given at Auburn Academy campus camp-meeting a week ago. You admonished all of us not to talk on the sanctuary issue till it had been dealt with at Glacier View--yet you have spoken to groups such as one including students at Andrews U, to the whole Washington community through the Sligonian, and now at camp-meeting to a group of ministers. Others on committee have done similarly and I have had reports from Canada, California, and various other places about prejudicial statements made by G.C. men to our people and workers on an issue not yet resolved. This is not only the case with committee men but also other G.C. representatives, whom I could list.

What concerns me most, however, is the attitude you seem to have conveyed at this recent meeting. I hasten to add that I have been personally so often misquoted that I fully realize the same could happen in your instance but the various reports I have received of comments by you amount to the same thing. You have for the most part accurately represented my position but you do not seem to have been as accurate in passing on your own understanding of the true situation. For example, the assessment of one listener was that you had judged that "Dr. Ford has looked at the mistakes of others so much that he has eventually come to the point of not being able to discern truth". (You may have stated this as a general principle but it seemed obvious you were applying it personally in my case.) Also, according to your statement I am guilty of using unfairly a translation that suits my theology such as the NIV of Heb. 9:12. Again, I am supposed to teach that the main meaning of Daniel 8 for us is Antiochus Epiphanes. Now is this fair, Dr. --- ? These statements do not match at all your own frank statements on committee. May I remind you of but a few of these?

1. On committee you have frankly expressed the reality of our sanctuary problems and have told us repeatedly you have known them for twenty years. Yet here is Ford who because he has mentioned the same problems is "unable to discern truth".
2. When I asked you on the committee as to why you believed in the Investigative Judgment your reply was so frank and honest that it devastated some such as Bob Spangler and others. So much so that Bob gently chided you publicly the next day.
3. You have stated that the possibility of the verb in Dan. 8:14 being accurately translated "cleansed" is so slight that it is not even worth discussing. In fact you passed right over that issue in committee till I drew your attention to it. In other words, you frankly have admitted to all of us that there is no linguistic connection between Dan. 8:14 and Lev. 16. Yet when I say the same, you inform our workers that I have looked at the problems so long I am now "unable to discern truth".
4. When reminding us that Dr. Hasel is preparing a statement as to whether sacrificial blood defiles the sanctuary--you affirmed it would be useful, for "when Dr. Hasel had done his best, there is very little evidence for this traditional position".
5. On committee several times you have alluded to the fact that the context of Dan. 8:14 does not support our usual interpretation of that verse.
6. You have also stated that the N.T. does not teach actual apartments in heaven and that Christ certainly went direct into the presence of God at His ascension.

I could list other such concessions made by you which are all on the tape to be preserved in the archives and to be studied by our historians of the future (who, by the way, may give quite a different assessment to the committee's work than by you to the workers at camp-meeting).

Not only are you well aware of the reality of the problems I have raised again, but you also know that the committee men also for the most part are sensitive to these difficulties. You have remarked on the fact that many of the men have been strangely silent in our discussions. They may claim that despite their silence they actually have very strong convictions in these matters--but was not the church delegating them to share those convictions with me and to help me out of my error? You know perfectly that very little help was forthcoming. Most men on the committee said next to nothing on all the crucial issues. (I believe that in one instance there may have been judicial wisdom in that silence--Elder Eva-but I can devise no excuse for the others.) These same men have not even given me the frequently requested critiques of most of the chapters. And even those who have given critiques have been very skimpy, clutching at straws and ignoring my main areas of contention. Were those critiques studied by an impartial scholar outside the denomination--what sort of impression would be given?

Thus you well know the "thinness" of the traditional case even as evidenced by the committee members, but you have conveyed a different impression to the workers just a week ago. This does not seem right, and cannot be pleasing to the God of truth. Should you not have been as frank with these brother ministers as with the committee?

As for the accusation that I am unfair in my use of the NIV you are too much of a N.T. scholar not to know that the NIV on Heb. 9:12 conveys the consensus of most scholarship regarding the meaning of ta hagia. Heb. 9:6-8, 12, 24-25; 10:19 are clear that this particularly holy place is the one entered but once a year through the veil and only by the High Priest. What else could that be but the Most Holy? The NIV is correct. Furthermore, you are aware that I have not based my argument on any version but on the original Greek as understood in its context. In Heb. 9 the theme is the Day of Atonement fulfilled by Christ in the cross event. Please read my introduction to chapter two.

Furthermore I am quite clear in my presentation on Dan. 8 that Antiochus is NOT the main meaning of the little horn prophecy for us today, and that the application to Rome pagan and papal has been the relevant application SINCE ISRAEL'S FAILURE. To see Antiochus as a first application is no more dangerous to our cause than to see in Mt. 24 a prophecy first of A.D. 70.

I could list other such matters but as mentioned my main concern is not the subjective presentation of my case by you, but your conveying of a false impression regarding your own appraisal of the sanctuary problem. You told us that the more you chewed on the problem the bigger it grew in your mind. Why not admit that to the workers rather than give an opposite impression?

Dr. --- --we who are loyal to the church are in danger of violating principle by trying to support some things which cannot be truthfully

supported. I guess my wife's reaction is typical of the way many non-workers and also non-SDA's would react. She tells me that worldly employers have treated their employees with more frankness and openness than often happens in the SDA church. She hears all these reports of committee men publicly giving impressions that are not true and she finds it hard to reconcile to our claims to be following the truth. When she hears, for instance, what I only heard last week that Elder Patzer had given instructions to the switch board that they must not allow me to make any long distance calls--this to her seems a most strange phenomenon--indicating that some men have passed judgment already on an issue not yet discussed. When she also knows that I do not bother to record most of my minor expenses--many dollars of xeroxing at Library of Congress, etc.--and that she herself has no intention of availing herself of your kind offer to reimburse her for her typing hours (which amount to hundreds of dollars)--Elder Patzer's action seems very petty. I have not been in the habit of using the GC phone except in response to those appealing for me to phone them back collect. The use of Elder Larsen's materials by GC is a similar phenomenon.

May I say again that my main concern is not the fact that you spoke on committee business to workers (though you warned us all not do that) but that you conveyed an untrue impression to them regarding your own estimate of the sanctuary problem. If Glacier View committee men behave similarly, what hope has the church for God's blessing?

It seems to me that God cannot bless us individually or as a church unless we practice His golden rule--which includes fairness and honesty. I regard you as a man of God and a thorough Christian, but I must confess to being disappointed in you.

One final point--you have mentioned publicly that the confidential documents of the committee have "leaked" out, and the impression received by some listeners at least is that Des Ford is to blame. Now the fact is that I have refrained from distributing copies to anyone despite repeated requests. Dr. Harder was given a copy--but not by me. It should be an easy matter to ask such recipients as Dr. Harder as to how they came by the materials--then it would be unnecessary to give listeners the impression that I am the guilty party. Should not the facts be sought, before suppositions publicly voiced? Please ask Dr. Harder on this matter. And any others whom you find to have the documents. They did not get them from me.

God bless you richly--I hope you will take the time to read the rewritten MS. God can only be honored by truth and truthfulness. With the warmest regards,

Sincerely,

Des

PS There is yet one more thing that comes to mind. You have publicly mentioned my failure to comply with the EGW statements about not voicing positions contrary to established ones--but Dr.---, you know as well as I do that EGW also has a series of other statements on this matter concerning issues of importance. She says "No one, not even a priest or a ruler, is to say 'You shall not give publicity to your opinions' etc., etc." Furthermore, you also know that my statement was made to a Forum group, in response to a Faculty request, and only AFTER there was in circulation a book among SDA's saying the same things (but without my positive solution), and AFTER Ray Cottrell had said the same things at Andrews University. I have urged G.C. leaders for years to attend to this problem. When Elder Eva visited with us in Australia he mentioned as one reason why I should accept the call to PUC--that I might share the BRI research into the problems connected with the sanctuary. (I understand that Elder Eva has forgotten making this statement now, and it must have been just a casual expression on which we placed more weight than we should--but it did influence us to make the decision to come to U.S.A.)

cc: Elders Wilson, Bradford, Eva, Veltman.

GLACIER VIEW AND DESMOND FORD

On October 27, 1979, Desmond Ford presented his views on the "investigative judgment" to a meeting of the Angwin chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums. The subsequent chain of events culminating with the meeting of church administrators and scholars at Glacier View Camp in August of 1980 to discuss Desmond Ford's written articulation of his position on the investigative judgment is well known. Many observers of this process have been positively impressed by the fact of scholars and administrators working together in a reasonably open atmosphere and attempting to resolve, or at least to face, problems which have long troubled the church. A number of questions remain unanswered, however. If the Glacier View meeting is truly to have healthy results in the case of Ford and constitute a happy precedent for future cases of this nature, the following questions must be answered.

1. Desmond Ford was asked, after his October 27 presentation, to suspend public discussion of the issue and spend six months preparing a written statement of his views. (Interestingly enough, Ford had not publicly discussed his views on the investigative judgment before the Forum meeting nor did he plan to publicly discuss them in the future. He had acceded to the Forum request for a public presentation because he thought the issue was being raised by others in what he believed to be a negative manner with no satisfactory answers to difficult questions.) Why, during the six months of implied moratorium on discussion did the Review publish a continual series of highly polemical articles and editorials on the topic? Why did these articles almost invariably emphasize areas of disagreement between the views expressed by Ford and the traditional SDA position (as interpreted by the editors) rather than pointing out areas of agreement and common affirmation? Why did the most official "voice" of the Adventist Church encourage confrontation rather than unity during a time of study and preparation for the Glacier View meeting? Would the results of the Glacier View meeting have been different if the Review had not pursued this policy?
2. Is it true that at least four of the leading officials in the General Conference (Thompson, Henri, Dower, Olsen) made public statements in the weeks prior to the Glacier View meeting implying that Desmond Ford would not be continued in the Adventist ministry? If so, why were these statements made? Did they represent personal opinions or did they reflect an already existing consensus?
3. There is a general feeling that many Adventist biblical scholars were not so much in disagreement with Ford's positions as they were uncomfortable with his presenting these positions to a forum of "non-scholars." Some of those who attended the meeting at Glacier View made statements prior to the meeting about the need for "imperceptible change" in some of our doctrinal positions and observed that the "investigative judgment doctrine has been gradually dying, why revive it now." How could these scholars have arrived at a consensus which is being characterized in denominational publications as a strong affirmation of the church's historical position on the investigative judgment? How could they have participated in a decision which declares Desmond Ford to be "out of step" with historical Adventism? Have they suddenly changed their cadence and fallen in step themselves?
4. If, as many suspect and the preceding series of questions imply, the problems we face on this issue are more sociological than they are theological, why cannot this fact be faced? Are the very real problems of change within the church best confronted by deception and failure to admit they exist?
5. Raymond Cottrell, former associate editor of the Review and one of the major editors of the SDA commentaries including the section on Daniel, gave two presentations on the investigative judgment at about the same time that Ford gave his lecture. Cottrell concluded, as did Ford, that there was no way to arrive at our historical doctrine of the investigative judgment through any kind of sensible biblical exegesis. He affirmed his belief in the doctrine on the basis that Ellen White, as an inspired writer, had the authority to reinterpret the scriptures as other inspired writers had previously done. Why did Cottrell's analysis (though not his conclusion) seem to have a great deal of support from scholars prior to Glacier View and have so little support now? Was new evidence discovered at Glacier View which showed Cottrell to be in error and demonstrated that our historical position was, in fact, the result of sound biblical exegesis?
6. If Cottrell is, in fact, essentially correct regarding the issue of exegesis, does not the issue come down to how we, as a church, relate to the authority of Ellen White? Is this not the real source of most of the emotion generated by recent events? Is it not ironic that Ford, who is a relative conservative on the issue of EGW, should be the focus of this controversy? In the atmosphere generated by the work of Numbers, Rea, McAdams, Butler, and others is it not appropriate to consider Ford's work as an apologetic for the role of EGW rather than an attack on her authority? Has anyone else presented a more effective defense of her authority while still recognizing the problems which we all must confront?
7. There were only two statements voted by the committee of 120 at Glacier View. One was a short statement regarding the role and authority of Ellen White and the other was a statement entitled "Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary." This latter has been termed the "consensus" statement and has received most of the attention. It has been characterized by several of the scholars present at Glacier View (including some who actually participated in writing it) as representing significant and major changes in the way in which the church articulates the doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary. Many observers who were not present at Glacier View but who have had the opportunity to read the statement rather carefully have concluded that while the statement affirms the doctrine of the investigative judgment it undercuts the traditional exegesis that allowed the church to arrive at such a doctrine and leaves the reader wondering as to the reason for and purpose of an investigative judgment. Some have suggested that the consensus statement contradicts the historical SDA position as found in Great Controversy as often and as sharply as it contradicts Ford's document. The major charge has been that Ford is "out of step" with historical Adventism as regards the investigative judgment and the sanctuary. Who is "in step" with the historical Adventist position? Was the committee of 120 at Glacier View in step?
8. Desmond Ford publicly affirmed, at Glacier View, his belief in and support of the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He publicly indicated his support of the consensus statement on the sanctuary and said that he would sign it if necessary. He publicly stated, both at Glacier View and prior to the meetings, that the investigative judgment was not a "hobby horse" of his and that he had not spoken or written on the topic prior to his Forum presentation and that he had no plans to do so in the future. Why was this not sufficient? Why then was he given ten further points as tests of his orthodoxy when these points did not, in fact, represent a voted consensus of the group? Why then were his credentials called into question and why then was he given what many term an ultimatum containing conditions for his future employment by the church?
9. Why was the disciplinary action involving Ford initiated at Glacier View? Why was it reported in such a way as to leave the impression

that the committee of 120 had judged Ford to be outside the pale, and thus, made administrative action regarding his employment both warranted and necessary? Was this not a heresy trial despite the protestations and/or naivete of some who attended? In the minds of the average Adventists will not the members of the committee of 120 be considered both judge and jury in the case of Desmond Ford?

10. Ford has been accused of intransigence and unwarranted dogmatism because of his failure to "give an inch." Were there specific points on which he was asked to give or is this simply an indictment of a debater's personality? If specific points were involved what were they and did they represent the consensus of the group? Were the "ten points" presented on the last day of the session the issue as far as intransigence was concerned? If so, what evidence is there that the committee of 120 could themselves agree on a clear position regarding any of the ten points? If Ford was expected to move his position, where was he expected to move it to? Did not his willingness to accept the voted consensus statement indicate flexibility on his part?

11. Ford has been characterized as the "challenger" of the church's position on the investigative judgment and on the sanctuary. It has been suggested that the burden of proof and defense of positions rests with the challenger; that the challenger's positions are on trial, not the positions of the church. Is it not true, however, that this doctrine has been repeatedly challenged in Adventist history and that the result, in some cases, has been that no clear scriptural answer has been given and, in other cases, the church has made some changes in its traditional statement of the doctrine? (e.g. Questions on Doctrine) Under these circumstances does not the church have an obligation to provide intellectually satisfying answers to the kinds of real questions raised by Prescott, Cottrell, Ford, and others?

12. It has been suggested by some that Ford is not a scholar and that this embarrassing deficit makes it difficult for the scholars to support him. He is accused of being careless with sources in his eagerness to make his points; of synthesizing and generalizing from too limited a data base; and of passionately believing that his answers make a difference rather than viewing his endeavors from a detached and "objective" perspective. (Interestingly enough, such a limited definition of scholarship rules out many of the great theorizers and synthesizers of the past including such as Descartes, Newton, Freud, and possibly Einstein.) In any case, Hans LaRondelle, one of the seminary scholars in attendance at Glacier View, stated in a public meeting held after the Colorado gathering that Ford was "one of the great scholars in the Adventist Church." Another scholar from the same institution, James Cox, said publicly that Ford had raised questions that must be considered by the church and that while some of Ford's solutions to the problems were good, others were not as satisfactory. Cox acknowledged, nevertheless, that no one had devised satisfactory solutions to some of the questions which Ford raised. Still another scholar from the seminary, William Johnsson, also speaking after the Glacier View meeting praised Ford's contributions to the church's understanding of the Book of Hebrews. Furthermore, many of those who attended have indicated that their minds have been stretched by reading Ford's document and that the time was too limited for them to fully digest it. In fact, a committee of scholars is being set up to give further study to the document. If the consensus statement moves in the direction of Ford's positions; if no clear refutation of Ford's positions has yet been agreed upon and published; if Ford is, in fact, raising questions that are truly troubling to many of our leading theologians; then what sense does it make to say that Ford is not a scholar? Is his alleged lack of scholarship a reason for some to abandon him or is it a way to justify the fact that they have already abandoned him?

13. Why the unseemly haste on the part of many to put distance between themselves and Desmond Ford as a person? Why the failure in some of the public meetings reporting on the Glacier View proceedings to acknowledge contributions Ford may have made? Why the remarks, both public and private, about Ford's intransigence, faulty methodology, and weak sense of community? Is the issue Desmond Ford's theological positions or is the issue his provocatively dogmatic and charismatic personality?

14. Ford has been accused of a "lack of pastoral concern" because of his willingness to accept the Adventist Forum's invitation to speak on the topic of the investigative judgment. It has been suggested by many individuals at numerous times that he could have gone on believing as he did with no unhappy consequences if only he had been wise enough not to have disturbed the flock. Is it not true, however, that these issues were already being widely discussed? It has been stated that the Review series on the Ballenger case which appeared in December of 1979 was not intended to be a provocative reply to Ford's October Forum presentation because these articles were "in the pipeline long before October." If this is the case, why were they in the "pipeline?" Were they not a response to a discussion that existed before Ford's presentation? Was not Ford's discussion "pastoral" in nature because it did offer solutions rather than simply raising questions? Is it not this very pastoral emphasis that makes Ford vulnerable to the accusation of being unscholarly? Is it "pastoral" for scholars and administrators to leave questions unanswered for decades? Is it "pastoral" for scholars and administrators to make little effort to prepare the laity for the difficult questions which the church will "inevitably encounter?"

15. Finally, who is giving those of us not in attendance at Glacier View a true picture of what happened there? Which picture is correct: the one given at the Pacific Union College church on Sabbath, August 23 or the one given at Andrews University on the same day? The Pacific Union Recorder headlined, "Historical Sanctuary Theology is Reaffirmed." Where do we find the reaffirmation? In the consensus statement which has already been characterized as a major departure from our historical position? The Review tells us that, "Ford Document Studied; Varient Views Rejected." Were Ford's views rejected? Or was he?

(This article by a professor in one of our American colleges has been circulated in many quarters and also published by Evangelica. It represents the reaction of many Adventist teachers and preachers around the world.)

September 10, 1980

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT WILSON FROM CONCERNED PASTORS AND SCHOLARS AT ANDREWS UNIVERSITY
SEMINARY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dear Elder Wilson:

We are pastors and scholars at Andrews Theological Seminary who are deeply concerned for the unity of the church. As Seventh-day Adventists committed to the church and its pursuit of truth we wish to express our appreciation to you for convening the Glacier View Conference. We have not envied you your difficult task. Nevertheless, because of our love for this church we deplore the rending asunder of Christ's body by what we consider to be the unjust recommendation that Dr. Desmond Ford not be employed in denominational service. This was improper for these reasons:

1. The two consensus statements unanimously voted at Glacier View by his peers were accepted by Dr. Ford. He was therefore in harmony with his brethren.
2. These consensus documents actually affirm Dr. Ford's major biblical concerns. For instance they concede:
 - a) The book of Hebrews pictures Christ going "within the veil," i.e., into the Most Holy Place (not the holy place) at His ascension to be our intercessor. The book of Hebrews does not teach a two-apartment or two-phase ministry.
 - b) The defilement of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 is not caused by our sins but by the desecrating work of the little horn. In other words, the term "cleansing the sanctuary" in Daniel 8 does not refer to an investigation of our sins but to God's victory over antichrist on our behalf.
 - c) The year-day principle is not explicitly identified as a scriptural rule for interpreting time prophecies.
 - d) Under inspiration, the New Testament writers looked for the second coming of Christ in their day. They did not expect to wait 1900 years.
 - e) Our acquittal in the judgment is based solely on the continued decision we make with respect to Jesus. To have accepted His death on our behalf is to have passed already from condemnation to salvation.
3. Church administration has apparently rejected Dr. Ford's willingness to cooperate in restoring church unity. We understand you would not accept his assurance to teach only that which was approved at Glacier View. Instead the impossible demand has been laid upon him to repudiate his conscientious convictions. We find this particularly difficult to accept in view of the fact that no explicit scriptural proof has been offered to negate his views.
4. A "ten-point statement" has been used in condemning Dr. Ford's ministry both in the Review and in recent administrative actions. However, we question its legitimacy for this purpose:
 - a) It does not represent the consensus of Dr. Ford's brethren in that it was neither discussed nor voted by the full group at Glacier View.
 - b) It in fact, contradicts the spirit and letter of the consensus statement at certain key points.
 - c) The authors of the document intended it to clarify communication at the conference and did not know it would be used to jeopardize Dr. Ford's ministry.

5. You assured the church in writing (Review, July 9) that the Glacier View conference would not be a trial of Dr. Ford. Evidence indicates however that it was primarily a trial and administrative action was begun there that will apparently deprive him of his credentials.

In view of the foregoing facts we must ask, Is it right to allow a minister to be defrocked who is in basic harmony with the theological consensus of his church? Is it right to condemn a man's theology by using a document (the "ten-point statement") that was not even discussed, let alone approved by the body of delegates appointed to judge his arguments? Is it right to ostracize a worker whose major biblical views, while criticized by some, have nevertheless been largely accepted by the body established to evaluate their merit? Is it right to ask anyone to give up his honest convictions (especially when he offers to table them while study continues and when no scriptural proof has shown them to be wrong)?

Because of our desire that justice be done and that reconciliation occur, we earnestly request that the following actions be taken.

1. The Review should frankly acknowledge and explain Dr. Ford's contributions to Adventist sanctuary theology as accepted at Glacier View in the consensus statement, and rectify its prejudicial reporting of denominational issues.
2. A committee should be formed that includes a wide representation of Dr. Ford's fellow pastors and scholars to review administrative actions regarding his employment as a pastor in the denomination.
3. The General Conference should encourage church administrators to not regard with suspicion the workers and lay persons who share scriptural concerns in common with Dr. Ford.
4. The administration should seek to be reconciled with those Adventists who feel that excessive concern for denominational tradition is eclipsing the rightful place of Christ and the Bible.

As you know, some congregations have already withdrawn from conference affiliation, others are splitting internally, and large numbers of denominational workers are fearful that their present connection with the organization is in jeopardy. We believe that decisive action on your part to redress what seems to be injustice can still avert a major fragmentation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "The fruit of righteousness will be peace; The effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever" (Isa. 32:17).

Yours for both unity and truth,

THIS LETTER WAS FORWARDED TO ELDER WILSON WITH 39 SIGNATURES. IT WAS FORMULATED DURING THE

SUMMER BREAK AT ANDREWS WHEN THE GREATER PART OF THE STUDENT BODY WAS ON VACATION. IT THEREFORE REPRESENTS ONLY A PORTION OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES. THE LETTER WAS PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH SEMINARY FACULTY.

Reprinted from PRISM, December 1980
(The Newbold College newspaper in England)

THIS FORD NO LONGER RUNS

The later 1970's were a most interesting period in the history of Adventism. One day they may be looked upon as the most important, too. What has happened in the last few years may perhaps be described as the bursting open of the long-closed denominational cupboards with a consequent clattering out of several skeletons, to lie, bony and grinning, on that very lumpy carpet, under which so much has for so long been swept. Less macabrely, it could be said that the denomination has been undergoing a crisis of authority which might have changed it fundamentally, but against which its strongly rebuilt conservatism seems likely to prevail.

The people who precipitated this crisis make strange colleagues: an Australian Anglican clergyman, two women workers at the Pacific Press, the most brilliant scholar in the church, and an obscure pastor in California. The first, Geoffrey Paxton, may be thought to have begun the process with his book, The Shaking of Adventism. Near the end of that book Paxton described what he called the "triumphalist nature of authority" in the Adventist church. That authority was challenged in the courts by Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler. In defending the suits they brought, the administration resorted to even stronger assertion of authority in the plea that the church is "hierarchical". The basis of the authority of the church (whether hierarchical or not) rests squarely upon the writings of Mrs. White, whose claim to Divine inspiration was next challenged by Walter Rea. Desmond Ford has no time for the plodding research of Rea, but it is highly likely that if Rea had not already been heard from when Ford delivered his now-famous lecture at Pacific Union College on October 27, 1979, Ford would have his credentials still.

It is one thing to challenge the church's understanding of righteousness by faith (we have, after all, changed our minds on it more than once) or even to question the accepted view of the sanctuary. (There appears to be others, safely in possession of their credentials, who do that.) It is quite another matter to appear (whatever disclaimers one may make notwithstanding) to question the authority of the prophet, for in so doing one questions the sole basis of that form of ecclesial government described by Paxton and defended in the Pacific Press cases. That authority then must be sustained even though the Walter Reas of this world should prove to their satisfaction that every comma and every colon has been borrowed from elsewhere. It is this angle which connects the Ford and Rea affairs--so apparently unrelated except in timing--and makes them so interesting even to a non-theologian.

It was Paxton again who began it. Is it entirely fanciful to imagine that the reaction of the then President of the General Conference, when he saw a section of Paxton's book headed "The Ford-Brinsmead Matship" might have been similar to that of Henry II vis-a-vis Becket "Who will free me from this turbulent priest?" (Four knights were sufficient to precipitate Becket into sainthood; one hundred and fourteen were assembled to martyr Ford. A coup de grace could not, however, be administered solely on the evidence of a non-Adventist scholar. An overt act was required and this Ford obligingly provided in his P.U.C. lecture. Another historical analogy comes to mind. When Cromwell saw the Scots army leave its excellent defensive position at Dunbar in 1651, he is said to have exclaimed, "The Lord hath delivered them into my hands". When the noise of the hammer nailing Ford's thesis to the chapel door at Angwin was heard (on tape) in Takoma Park, the reaction may well have been similar.

In the meantime, however, a new king had ascended the throne. (I merely continue my Henry II parallel and do not refer to any strictures upon so-called kingly power in the writings of Mrs. White.) Summary execution would consort ill with the new leader's reputation for liberality and tolerance. There must therefore be a thorough investigation (not a "trial" as the President himself declared in the Review) by competent authorities, or, as some less diplomatic have expressed it, Ford must be given enough rope with which to hang himself, a facility of which he availed himself mightily. The 'rope' consisted of six months' leave of absence, secretarial help, access to certain denominational records and the assistance of a 'guidance committee'. No condemned man was ever given the means of making a heartier breakfast.

The result of this was 691 pages of double-spaced typescript (with copious quotations single-spaced) plus 300 pages of appendices, all under the title of Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment.

In considering this work, one untruth should be nailed at the outset, namely that the book is 'unscholarly'. This writer deals in his daily work with written scholarship in several disciplines, and if this is not scholarly, he does not know what is. This canard may have got into circulation because Ford's work is intelligible scholarship, and is only rarely cluttered with theological jargon when presumably the authority could not resist the temptation briefly to display his vast learning. That is a minor sin for probably the greatest scholar Adventism has produced. (The contrast with many of those appointed to 'try' or not to 'try' him, is striking.) Scholarship that is intelligible to the laity, who do not live every day with concepts such as the apotelesmatic principle, cannot in the minds of some Adventists be scholarship at all. On page 586 Ford makes the comment, "Any administrative body that attempts to behave as though now is the nineteenth century or the Middle Ages cannot hope to retain the confidence of an educated laity". Well said, but what on earth makes him think that the administration of this church wants to retain that confidence, or even believes in the existence, of such a laity?

Apart from the odd instance of parade of learning, the main fault of the work is repetition. Doubtless this is intended to drive the points home, but it is counterproductive in that the reader tends to 'switch off', or skip, and is therefore in danger of missing some of the close-knit argument. Repetition is particularly marked in the middle chapters, which, in any case, are the hardest-going for the non-theologian. These deal with the sanctuary in Hebrews and the Day of Atonement in Daniel and Revelation. Then a whole chapter (five) is given to 'Rehearsal' of the problem, although to be fair, it is here that 'Resolution' is offered, too.

What Ford sets out to do in these chapters is now pretty well known. His aim is to show the unbiblical nature of the 'unique' Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment, or to put it positively as he does, the purpose of the work is to attempt to answer the question of what should be preached in explaining Daniel 8:14 in a way "which will be intellectually responsible, biblically defensible, and yet sustain our eschatological understanding of the Day of Atonement as a work of pre-advent judgment". (p. 33) To do this he demonstrates that Hebrews knows nothing of a first-apartment ministry in the heavenly sanctuary until 1844, but, rather, teaches that Christ went into the Holy of Holies at His ascension and that cleansing (if that be the correct term) of the sanctuary and indeed the whole Day of Atonement imagery in Hebrews relate to what happened at Calvary, not in 1844. As he says, (p. 41), "Either our basic sanctuary doctrine is found in the New Testament chapter (Heb. 9) which alone deals with that theme, or it is not found in scripture at all".

He then proceeds to the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel, arguing that the year-day principle does not apply, that the New Testament writers expected Christ to return in their day and that, therefore, the Daniel prophecy could not have applied to a date 1800 years later. One of the weaknesses of Ford's presentation here seems to this writer to be in his answer to the question "Why did Christ not come back in the first century?" He says (p. 105) that was because the first-century church was not faithful in taking the gospel to the world; but since it was nearer that goal than the church has ever been since, that seems an odd conclusion. Ford might have been on stronger ground had he argued the Divine irrelevance of time itself in the post-cross period on the basis of 2 Peter 3. The Day of Atonement imagery in Daniel, according to Ford, applies to the cross and the end of the world, but not to any intermediate period, such as that beginning in 1844.

Chapter four does much the same for Revelation as chapter three did for Daniel. In chapter five Ford offers his solutions for the problems he has posed--the apotelesmatic principle and inaugurated and consummated eschatology "Whereby events to be materially fulfilled in connection with the end of the world had a prior legal application at the cross".

Framing these theological chapters are chapters one and six, respectively, the most interesting and the most important in the book. The former deals with the history of disquiet about the 'sanctuary truth' in the Adventist church down the years and the melancholy procession of 'heretics' who have gone to the metaphorical stake in Washington, D.C., which company of martyrs Ford must even then have known that he was soon to join. That chapter is the most readable in the work and two statements alone (both on p. 145) would make it worth the price. "Is stress on celestial geography really that important for a generation dying through ignorance of the gospel?"--a question which all our theologians--Ford included--might do well to ponder, and a statement about the "strangulation-hold on research and true progress" in the church, brought about by the resistance always encountered by any view which seems to run counter to "what has gone before, especially as expressed by Ellen G. White".

In those last words we come to the heart of Ford's difficulty. He may spend months of research and hundreds of typewritten pages demonstrating that the concept of the investigative judgment beginning in 1844 is unscriptural, but at every turn he is confronted by a brick wall on which are inscribed the words, "But it is endorsed by the Spirit of Prophecy".

To surmount that obstacle Ford has to attempt a difficult task. He has to knock out certain bricks while preventing the whole wall from tumbling down. This attempt he makes in chapter six, and fascinating reading it is. Fascinating yes, but when one closes the book and the dazzlement of Ford's brilliance fades, the reader is left asking whether he has not simply been saying that Ellen White is inspired when she agrees with Des Ford and not when she doesn't. One slowly realises too, that in some respects, he is simply wrong. For instance, she did claim to have ascertained by vision things which she could easily have found out by mundane ways. A good example is found in the papers put out by the White Estate on the Fannie Bolton affair. A vision of surpassing glory involving the Lord Himself gave her the message "Fanny Bolton is your adversary" when there was a man in the same house who was about to impart to her that very information.

Nevertheless this reviewer believes that there may be here the basis for a more realistic appraisal of Ellen White's role than the 'Ellenolatry' which has hitherto held the field. Such an appraisal will not, I fear, be made. On page 159, Ford quotes Andreasen on an earlier crisis, "As soon as the immediate crisis was past, we did little or no further official study, though sharp differences and divergent views had been revealed that should have called for 'exhaustive investigation on the subject'." The same situation will doubtless prevail now that the latest 'troubler of Israel' has been cast out.

Indeed, even in this very chapter there is a certain amount of special pleading dictated by its author's immediate situation. This comes in the interesting section entitled "The Bottom Line" beginning on page 628. This consists of two sets of questions, one set "for those who wish to give Ellen G. White greater authority than Scripture" and one for "those who wish to reject Ellen G. White". Significantly there are six times as many questions in the second set as in the first. (They are different in style, too, but that is another matter.) It is as if Ford, with his head on the block, is saying to his executioners, "You see I am almost 100% orthodox and I can do you good service against the Rea-ite tribe. Please do not chop my head off". But, logically from their point of view, his executioners answer, "Almost is not enough", and down comes the axe.

What do we hear him utter with his dying breath? In a closing statement obviously modelled upon that of another lone reformer (but a more successful one) before the Diet of Worms (incidentally, in line with Ford's own implied joke about Edson's 'vision' having been in a cornfield, one might flippantly remark that, whereas Luther had a 'Diet' to address, we have only a 'can' to contemplate), he says, "Believing in the priesthood of all believers" (voices: "damnable heresy!") "as well as Sola Scriptura" (cries from several Adventist theologians: "That includes Ellen White!"), "I will remember that 'The doctrine that God has committed to the church, the right to control the conscience, and to define and punish heresy is one of the most deeply rooted of papal errors' (GC 293), and that no ecclesiastical creedal statement" (voices of various administrators: "We have no creed; only a statement of fundamental beliefs adopted at Dallas,") "shall move me one whit if obviously contrary to the plain testimony of the Word of God. We can do no other." (Voices: "Away with him. He is not fit to live!").*

In the old silent movies it was, I believe, an inflexible rule that one must not kill off the hero or the villain in the first reel. Neither must we. There is still a little more to be said as we glance briefly at what happened in the period between the completion of Ford's magnum opus and the descent of the antipodean axe in September 1980. The sequence of these events is now fairly well-known but one or two points are worth making.

One is that Ford received no "trial". The President of the General Conference had declared in the Review that the meeting of the one hundred and fourteen scholars and administrators at Glacier View was not to be a trial. No one has yet produced any evidence that any 'trial' was held between the close of that meeting and the removal of Ford's credentials, so presumably that act took place without the convening of any assembly at which he was tried.

Another significant point is that not one of all that large body of people assembled at Glacier View was a non-denominationally employed person. Perhaps then, it was as well, that it was not a trial, otherwise the prosecution could justly have been charged with not merely packing, but also providing the jury, a jury of persons who could hardly have been expected to incline towards the accused.

The meetings went as planned, although some anxious moments must have been caused by the well-meaning efforts of such as Dr. Provonsha to mediate. Fortunately Ford was obdurate. The scholars departed, having delivered their expected verdict. The administrators remained behind with what Ford himself described as a "harsh" demand for recantation. He refused, went away to think about it, and then, belatedly realizing that politics, not theology, was the name of the game, played what could have been a master stroke, by offering not to

publicize his views. Mercifully it was a loquacious corpse and in the length of Ford's letter of August 26, there was opportunity to finish him off once and for all. What, in effect, the undertakers did was to tell the world (see The Ministry, Oct. 1980, pp. 12-14) that the corpse could not be trusted to lie low and keep quiet.

Once Ford's alleged untrustworthiness on that point was asserted, the administration was back in the driving seat, and, accompanied by "beautiful prayers," "the presence of the Holy Spirit," and even appreciation to Dr. Ford for making us think, (no mean feat!) the drama drew to its preordained conclusion and the most brilliant scholar in contemporary Adventism was told that there was no longer a place for him in the work.

One down and one to go. Ironically, it may happen that the obscure pastor (although a 'credentialectomy' has now been performed on him, too,) may yet triumph where the outstanding academic has failed. Recondite theological differences do not make headlines in the Los Angeles Times, The Chicago Tribune, or The Guardian, but prophets with alleged 'feet of clay' or, Paxton again, 'noses of wax') do.

Two massive barricades separate Seventh-day Adventism from evangelical Protestantism, with, which in this godless age, it should be standing shoulder-to-shoulder. Ford has failed to demolish one. Rea may succeed in pulling down the other. The inspired prophet may yet become the inspired anthologist. A more biblically-orientated basis for authority in the church may yet be developed. The time may come when Adventist scholars no longer have to write, as A. W. Spalding did to H. Camden Lacey in 1947, "I have the intellectual task of rearranging my concepts to harmonize with Sister White's pronouncements". If those things happen and Seventh-day Adventism ceases to be a nineteenth-century American sect and becomes a sixteenth-century evangelical protestant church, Ford's name may yet head the roster of martyrs whose blood was its seed.

D. S. Porter

Note: Dennis Porter is assistant Keeper of Western Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, England, He is also president of the Newbold College Alumni Association.

*This paragraph was omitted from the article as published in PRISM, the Newbold College newspaper in England.

October 6, 1980

Elder J. R. Spangler Editor

Ministry

6840 Eastern Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20012

Dear Elder Spangler:

For many years I have regarded Ministry as the premier Adventist publication. It has maintained a consistently high standard. Its theology has been balanced and Protestant, when other publications have tended to be perfectionistic and legalistic in the Roman sense. However, I was appalled by your treatment of Des in the post-Glacier View issue. What happened to your fair, even-handed policies? I simply cannot understand it.

I assume from your loving and informative editorial that you substantially agree with Des on the primacy of Justification. It seems clear that you vigorously disagree with him on the Sanctuary. I'm sure no one would think less of you for that, but to stoop to the level you did in the overall production will alienate those of us who have looked to you for spiritual food and justice when the rest of the Adventist press has swamped us in harvest perfectionism. Let me be specific.

1. To call Hasel, Shea and Dederen to Washington to work on it seems to be a misguided step. Their antagonism toward Des is common knowledge here at the Seminary. They may have been his most clear opponents at Glacier View but they could not be expected to write a balanced reply to Des' work. That was what was needed if you wanted to appeal to the moderates among us.
2. To publish that uncharitable, even insensitive critique of Des' letter did not win any support for the Administration's attitudes toward Des. (Did W. R. Leshar write it?)
3. To fail to offer Cottrell's, Jorgensen's, and particularly Haloviak's papers (all requested by the G.C. I understand) along with the others was hardly fair.
4. Warren Johns and Gerard Demsteegt did a poor job of marshalling the evidence to refute Des. In fact they have produced arguments which will almost certainly be refuted in time to come. The section on ta hagia for example is in contradiction of nearly all the New Testament scholars present at Glacier View. Many pastors might buy it but the thought leaders and non-Adventist scholars will not.
5. The segment on Ellen White has several good points, but basically fails to present a balanced picture of Des' view of Ellen White. The questions you answered there were often just as Des would have answered them. They did not follow from the quotations above them. Besides, the quotations were taken out of their context which tended to parody Des' position.

You failed to give him credit for making a valiant attempt to integrate Ellen White's position with Hebrews 9. It was as if you believed there was no tension to resolve. You failed to give him any credit for his lengthy polemic against those who would reject Ellen White's prophetic ministry. In fact, most people would be shocked to learn (they certainly couldn't have gleaned it from Ministry) that Des is a relative conservative on Ellen White compared to many scholars who approach her with liberal presuppositions.

6. Most seriously of all, you have destroyed a Christian brother's credibility with his peers. You have given such a biased, one-sided view of him that he could never recover credibility with the majority of the church in the unlikely situation where he is re-hired. You have destroyed the man's potential for a comeback. That is a terrible abuse of the power of the press. What forum of reply does Des have? You know as well as I do that his byline will never again appear in an Adventist magazine. Review could not even bring itself to publish a picture of him in their Glacier View edition. He has "died" to the orthodox Adventist mind.

It seems to me you attempted to present such a negative impression of Des' manuscript that people would be scared to read it. In so doing, you have played into the hands of those who oppose the gospel. Those of us who preach the Justifying Righteousness of Christ, who may not agree with Des' sanctuary beliefs, will now find our path made much more difficult. We will suffer from an unjust guilt by association.

For this reason, I would not be surprised if Ministry contributes to schism in the church. There is already opposition to the gospel from many, and apathy from many others. For you to treat Des so insensitively has discouraged me more than I can tell you.

There will be a new magazine coming off the press here at Andrews in the next couple of weeks. It will be called Evangelica. It is the product of young people who are very sad. They are now disillusioned with the capacity of the Adventist press to be fair and even-handed with Des. Des made the difference for many of them between their leaving Adventism for the world and a life of joy and victory in Christ. I have talked with many of them. I think your Ministry article was for them the last straw which forced them to go to press.

Can they expect sympathetic treatment? Will the church lose some of its brightest potential gospel soul-winners? If so, will the rift be magnified?

My brother, I don't envy you your job. I believe you acted from a motive of loyalty to the church, and honestly felt you were doing the right thing. I will pray for you as you continue your Ministry to us. I thank God that you are the editor. However, I do not believe you acted to heal and forgive and strengthen your brother at his time of greatest need. We will all lose because of it.

Your brother in Christ,

You could undo some of the damage in a creative, healing way by publishing a healthy gospel article by Des. That would strengthen the hand of gospel preachers and inject some forgiveness and grace into the present nasty climate.

(Note by author of this book. It should be observed that the above letter from an observer at Andrews University is clear on the writer's high regard for the editor of the Ministry. I wish to stress that I share that regard. Elder Spangler is a dedicated Christian who not only knows the gospel but has done considerably more than most in the church to promulgate it. Undoubtedly it was his loyalty to the church which led to the perceivable "squin" in the issue of the Ministry under question.)

Suggested Key to the Adventist Doctrinal Dilemma

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INAUGURATED ESCHATOLOGY (FIRST ADVENT) AND CONSUMMATED ESCHATOLOGY (SECOND ADVENT)

(Note that the first in each pair uses "eschatological" concepts for events of the first century A.D., but the same events--second in the pair--apply to the real end of the world.)

The coming of the Kingdom -Matt. 12:28

The coming of the Kingdom -Matt. 6:10

The last days -Heb. 1: 2

The last days -Dan. 8:17

Making an end of sin -Dan. 9:24

Making an end of sin -Rev. 19 & 20

Bring in everlasting righteousness -Dan. 9:24

Bring in everlasting righteousness -Rev. 21 & 22

Destroying Satan -Heb. 2:14

Destroying Satan -Rev. 20:10

Abolishing death -2 Tim. 1:10

Abolishing death -Rev. 21:4

Everlasting life -John 5:24

Everlasting life -Rev. 21:4

Translating believers -Col. 1:13

Translating believers -1 Thess. 4:17

Gift of Spirit -Eph. 1:13

Gift of Spirit -Rom. 8:23

New creation -2 Cor. 5:17

New creation -Rev. 21: 5

Judgment -John 12:31

Judgment -Rev. 20

Justification -Rom. 5:1

Justification -Gal. 5:5; Rom. 5:19;

Passover -John 12:1

Passover -Luke 22:16

Pentecost -Acts 2

Pentecost -Joel 2:28

Jubilee -Luke 4:17-19

Jubilee -Rev. 21 & 22

Day of Atonement -Heb. 9:8; Heb. 12, 25

Day of Atonement -Rev. 8:1-4; Rev. 11: 19; Rev. 14:6, 7; Rev. 20:1

Within the Veil -Heb. 6:19; Heb. 10:19-20

Within the Veil -Rev. 11: 19

Cleansing of Sanctuary -Heb. 9:23

Cleansing of Sanctuary -Dan. 8:14; Rev. 20-22

(Appendix IV of Glacier View volume)

The controversial Forum presentation at PUC in Oct. 1979 affirmed that the apotelesmatic principle could resolve the present Adventist doctrinal dilemma. The above is one illustration of how that principle works. It is regrettable that almost all who have listened to the Forum lecture have been so stunned by the first half as not to understand the second which offered the above solution.

A STATEMENT ON GLACIER VIEW

(Chapter 3)

by Gillian Ford

* * * *

The first step of apostasy is to get up a creed, telling us what we shall believe. The second is to make that creed a test of fellowship. The third is to try members by that creed. The fourth is to denounce as heretics those who do not believe that creed. And fifth, to commence persecution against such.

- J.N. Loughborough, Review and Herald, 10-8-1861

Making a creed is setting the stakes, and barring up the way to all future advancement. God put the gifts into the church for a good and great object; but men who have got up their churches have shut up the way or have marked out a course for the Almighty. They say virtually that the Lord must not do anything further than what has been marked out in the creed. A creed and the gifts thus stand in direct opposition to each other. Now what is our position as a people? The Bible is our creed. We reject everything in the form of a human creed. We take the Bible and the gifts of the Spirit, embracing the faith that thus the Lord will teach us from time to time. And in this we take a position again formation of a creed.

- James White, Review and Herald, 10-8-1861

No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.

- E.G. White

* * * *

This is being written almost eighteen months after the event. However, have worked on the notes I took at Glacier View from time to time, and I think my memory on the procedure is quite good. Apart from some interview tapes made with my husband after Glacier View, we have never made a detailed statement of our view of what happened. Some have urged us to do so.

This is not written in a hostile spirit. We accept the fact that most of the delegates at Glacier View believed Des to be wrong in his views, and thus they saw the event as reported by the Adventist media. We saw some things differently, and hope that others will respect our viewpoint, as we respect theirs.

For many Adventists, the toppling of the date 1844 assumes a giant threat to them, and some have said that if our sanctuary doctrine, as traditionally understood, goes, the whole fabric of their faith is ripped to pieces. Thus many at Glacier View were genuine in their concerns, and believed they were following conscience.

My only objection is that I feel they weren't always strictly fair. Sometimes a person's belief that he belongs to the "remnant church," and possesses "the truth" can lead him to act in ways where the end justifies the means. Hence facts are not honestly and openly confronted, and decisions are made in a way which is not completely ethical.

First we should look at what was used as the basis for evaluating Des' orthodoxy--the Dallas Statement of the 27 fundamentals of belief; the ten point statement drawn up by six scholars during Glacier View week; the consensus statement drawn from the daily consensus reports taken that week and put together by two scholars and two administrators.

As to whether these were used fairly, consider the following points. The Dallas Statement was used almost as a creed at Glacier View and has since been used widely to judge the orthodoxy of workers. However, when a vote was called on this statement at Dallas, the impression was given that this was not a final document, but one on which the church was working. The introductory wording also supports this.

The ten point statement was written as a list of differences between Des' position and the traditional view, but not as evidence that he was wrong. At least some of the six members of the committee that penned this statement were told that it was merely a statement of differences between Des and the traditional positions. It would be a platform from which later in-depth discussion could proceed, point by point.

It did not represent the doctrinal position of all who wrote it, since they had been asked to state the differences only between Des and the traditional position. Some at least did not know how it was planned to be used when Des and Prexad plus the Australasian Division officers¹ met--i.e. that it would be the main evidence that the scholars almost totally disagreed with Des' positions.

While in the Friday morning meeting three prepared statements were read out to the assembled audience, the third one (the ten point statement) was dealt with very differently than the other two. The first two were the consensus statements, which gathered together the combined wisdom of the group there at Glacier View on the various topics studied day by day. The first consensus statement was on the church's biblical positions, and the second on the church's stand on Ellen White.

Des and I were present for the reading and voting of these two statements, though we were not permitted to vote. These statements had been duplicated and were passed out and placed in all the delegates' hands (and ours). They were read out from the front page by page. Suggestions were made from the floor where delegates wished to have changes made, emendations were made, and then finally all was voted on.

Des and I were asked to leave while the third statement (the ten point statement) was discussed. It was treated differently to the others, which fact we only found out much later. For instance, the ten point statement was not duplicated (probably due to lack of time) and put in the delegates' hands, but only read out from the front. At least two men stood up and made the comment that it did not represent the views

of all there. It was not voted on. The reason later given for this was that the men wished to discuss it with Des first. Note also that some of the men had left the previous night, and that morning, and did not hear the statement.

When Des read the first consensus statement, he was quite elated and told me that he could live with that statement. He said it was a great improvement on our past positions and was going in the right direction. He believed it included some of the views of his Glacier View manuscript, though these views were not original with him.

Let us now look at how the ten point statement was used in the Friday afternoon meeting, when Prexad met with Des (Elder Parmenter and Elder Duffy from the Australasian Division were also present). The statement was used to show that the scholars almost en masse disagreed with Des. Said Elder Wilson, maybe one or two agree with you, but that is all. Examples were cited of those who disagreed. Dr. Heppenstall was said to have arrived supporting Des, but left upset with him, and saying that Des did not have doctrinal, but psychological problems. Elder Parmenter quoted Dr. Hans LaRondelle as stating that he differed with Des, and so on.

In connection with the ten point statement, Elder Parmenter had written a letter with four points which Des must affirm to remain in employ. We felt these four affirmations were more strongly expressed than the copy of the letter which was later typed and given to us (and published in official papers). Two of the points had to do with public statements Des must make if he wished to remain in the work. One was in connection with Bob Brinsmead. Des was required to publically denounce him. The other required that Des not only state in the Review that he (Des) was in error, but that he must change his mind and teach traditional views. An Australian administrator who talked to Elder Parmenter at length about this on his return to Australia assured us that this was what was required. Des must change his mind.

Des' reaction to the ten point statement was that it contained no evidence. In response to this Elder Bob Spangler said that this was true, but that the Ministry was going to put out a whole edition which would give the required evidence. Des responded, "Well, I hope I see it before publication." We were told that he would. The facts are that we did not see it prior to publication, and received a copy a week after other friends of ours did (not a prepublication copy, but the Ministry itself). By that time, Des had officially been ousted from his position. The action had already gone through Prexad and the Australasian Division.

We know Elder Spangler well enough to know that this was an oversight and not intentional, but it was most unfortunate, and perhaps the most unfair event at Glacier View. This is why I made the statement at the beginning about not being strictly fair. These men thought they were right, and Des was wrong. But if the evidence was so overwhelming they could have appeared to be fair in their handling of it.

As to the letter written by Pastor Parmenter, Des said that to change his mind and say he was in error without sufficient evidence would be to go against his conscience. Were they asking this? The answer was, "No, we do not expect you to go against your conscience, but if you cannot affirm these four points, I should not have to ask you for your credentials--you should be handing them to me." (Elder Parmenter). Note that he also said this in a plenary session the day before in an interchange with Dr. Jack Provonsha. Elder Parmenter said that if a man could not affirm the Dallas Statement, he should hand in his credentials.

We were told not to rush into a decision and were given two weeks to think about it. Because Des made a sudden decision, that was considered unyielding and rash. Some said we didn't even pray about it. But we did pray before the meeting that the Lord would make it crystal clear as to what we should do. We expected to have to make a decision about employment but Des did not wish to wrench himself out of the ministry.

However, the terms which Elder Parmenter gave were to our minds so unequivocal that Des felt were he given decades, he could not just change his mind and say he was in error.

You have to understand that such men as Bob Spangler felt that Des had been given a great deal of evidence in the meeting prior to Glacier View. A smaller committee had met on six different occasions before Glacier View after the first writing of the document, to "help" Des by offering suggestions to him and criticisms of his presentations. These men met for a total of about fifty hours on the six occasions (one meeting per chapter), and were supposed to write reports on each chapter.

Thus Elder Spangler felt that Des had been given a lot of help, that he had hardly changed the second rewrite of the manuscript from the first as a consequence of these meetings, and that he had stubbornly resisted counsel.

From Des' viewpoint, out of the fifty hours in which the committee met, most people spoke for 3-8 minutes in total, some not at all, and only a few people spoke on repeated occasions and at length. These included Dr. Hasel and Dr. Damsteegt, and of course, Dr. Hammill, the chairman of the committee who had made a large contribution. Des feels that the tapes of these six meetings will eventually (when they are released) exonerate him with testimony that not much compelling evidence was given. As for the written reports, some wrote only one report, others were brief, and others almost wholly negative. Most of them did not deal with the major issues. Dr. Bill Johnson was a shining exception. Where he disagreed, he was fair.

Going on to another subject, we should consider how large a factor Robert Brinsmead was at Glacier View. He and his views were not mentioned in the committee at large, but he was in the Friday afternoon meeting. Elder Wilson and the men from the Australasian Division could not understand why Des had allowed Bob Brinsmead to send out thousands of the October 1979 tape, nor why Des would not publically disassociate himself from Bob.

Des felt that public disassociation from Bob was a political maneuver, one which would dishonor the gospel, which he and Bob agreed on. Concerning the sending out of tapes, Des was not ashamed of what he had said on Oct. 27th, and has never tried to stop anyone sending out any of his tapes. He did not instigate the sending out of the tapes, neither was he asked permission to do so.

Though Des has been repeatedly charged with being in league with Bob, it is completely false that they have ever plotted to destroy the church. I have been present several times at their mutual discussions and it is almost wholly theological combat. Many times Des and Bob have disagreed in the past, and they don't agree on everything now, as the Sabbath controversy has shown. But they have treated each other as Christian gentlemen and shown a mutual respect which the church might well emulate.

Though Bob was not mentioned a great deal at Glacier View, I couldn't help thinking that Robert Brinsmead and fear of him were to some degree responsible for the pressure the Australasian Division apparently put on G.C. to relieve Des of his job.

On the next day, I was rebuked for spreading the rumor that Des had been fired. I did not use the word "fired" as it is a rather harsh term, and I believe presented what happened fairly and without bitterness. Here is why I thought Des was relieved of his job (maybe not

technically since it had to go through various committees, but surely enough).

In the first place, when Elder Parmenter said that if Des could not affirm the four points in his letter, he (Parmenter) should not have to ask for his (Des') credentials--Des should hand them in, Des stated that he could not so affirm. At that point he was asked to resign, but refused to do so.

In the Prexad meeting, Elder Parmenter told us that he had already spoken to Lance Butler, the General Conference Treasurer, and that we need not fear. Our bread and water would be sure, our way paid back to Australia, and we would be given some months' wages. Elder Parmenter explained later to others that he wished merely to assure Des of financial support whatever his decision, but I think you can understand why we interpreted it the way we did.

In private, after the meeting, Elder Parmenter asked Des what he would do now. Des said he did not know. Elder Parmenter said, "I would offer you a job in the S.H.F. (the Australasian Food Factory), but I know it would not suit you." This was spoken very sympathetically. Elder Parmenter said that this was the worst week of his life, and I believe him.

Note also, that the report in the Review implied that Des had been terminated at that Friday afternoon meeting. And while it is true that the Friday committee could not make the decision to take away Des' credentials, the after history seems to bear up our impressions.

I have been accused of being over-emotional, exaggerating, phoning out to Australia, and relaying information to Bob Brinsmead. It is true that I was upset on the Friday afternoon and later. I cried during the Friday afternoon meeting. So did some of the men. I felt they didn't understand what Des was trying to say. I felt he had been very loyal and what they had done was unfair. But I did not slander them in any way, and I tried to be very fair. I don't think I exaggerated.

The news was relayed to Australia on the Wednesday of that week that Des had been fired. I rang nobody that day (equivalent Tuesday in U.S.) After the interaction between Elder Wilson and Des on the Tuesday, many felt it was all over--but I did not relay that idea to anybody. I never rang Australia. On Friday evening I called five people--one at General Conference, an Australian in Oregon, and three friends in California.

I did not have any contact with Bob Brinsmead at Glacier View or for ages before or afterwards. While it was rumored that was the one who collaborated with Bob, there is no truth in this. I have had less to do with Bob than Des has. On the other hand, I have always abhorred the attitude of many in the church towards Bob. Of course, I now know what it is like to be hated as Bob is.

Looking at the question of when the basic decision was made about Des' future, it seems to us that it was decided before any of us arrived at Glacier View. The decision to stick to the Dallas Statement had been made and Des' only option was to conform or he was out. Several leading men at G.C. stated this prior to Glacier View. Elder Dower was reported on three occasions to state that Des would have to go. He told Dr. Heppenstall this at Soquel Camp-meeting a week before Glacier View. He also told a group of ministers there. He spoke similarly to a worker in Puerto Rico. Elder Bob Olson said the same in Europe according to relatives in U.S. and Australia of believers there. Elder Delafield told a taxi-driver driving him from Denver airport to Glacier View that Des was to be fired (the taxi-driver, while not an S.D.A., was a Verdict reader, and signed an affidavit that this conversation was valid). C. D. Brooks in Australia said the same thing in a South Australian workers meeting. There were other incidents, but I forget the names and places.

While the administrators seemed aware of what was about to take place, a group of scholars at Loma Linda had been told by Elder Wilson that Des Ford would not be on trial and that he wished to save him. I believe that it was true he wished to save him, but on his own terms.

I felt the writing was on the wall even in the opening meeting. In my memory, and in summary, Elder Wilson stated his support for the Review against the charges they had received of biased reporting. He said that they had done what he had expected of them. The Review was not to be expected to print divergent views (implying that Des' views were apostate from the start of Glacier View). He also said that a decision over the issues must be made by the end of the week, that it must be unanimous, not 50-50, and that it must accord with the Dallas Statement. To me, that implied that there was only one direction things could go.

Elder Wilson also made clear in the opening meeting that Des was not to be part of the committee. His contribution was in his manuscript. His role was to clarify his position when misquoted, answer questions, and to correct misconceptions of his views where necessary. This was news to us, but we thought it would turn out for good, because other scholars would be forced to speak up. A good number of delegates did not read the whole manuscript. Some refused to. One conference president said, "Why should I read it when I know it is heresy?" Dr. Fred Veltman says it was never opened in his discussion group, nor brought to the meetings. We believe that was true in all the groups.

What was done at Glacier View was to come to a consensus of what the church believed at that time, state briefly (in the ten point statement) where Des differed with traditional Adventism, and on the basis of that judge Des' views. Des' views were never actually studied at Glacier View.

The decision for Des not to speak was reversed when Dr. Heppenstall went to Elder Wilson and told him that he had come to Glacier View to hear Des and that he wanted him up front. Elder Wilson acceded to this request and allowed Des to answer questions up front for an hour each night--on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week.

On the Tuesday night there was a severe confrontation between Des and Elder Wilson. Elder Heppenstall had been on his feet to ask Des the first question. He asked Des if he could not see 1844 in Dan. 7, a question which he had asked Des the previous night, and had received an answer in the negative. Afterwards, Elder Heppenstall said that he had wanted Des to affirm a pre-advent judgment, which Des could have done. He told a friend that Des had affirmed this the night before. So I can only presume that we misunderstood his question. Des replied that no, he couldn't see 1844 in Dan. 7, to which Elder Heppenstall reacted quite emotionally, saying that Des was throwing everything out. (Des and Elder Heppenstall have great regard for each other, but do not agree on some major points in prophecy, for instance on the year-day principle, which Elder Heppenstall believes is biblical, and Des does not.)

After some other interchange apart from Heppenstall, Elder Wilson interjected and accused Des of never listening. Here was one of our finest theologians making an impassioned plea, and Des would not budge-- he never listened, etc., etc. This developed into a severe altercation, which finished that night unresolved. Several men ended up in tears and others didn't sleep all night. Some, even of our friends, felt Des was stubborn and unyielding. On the other hand, our son Luke's comment was that Elder Wilson rough-rode his dad, and he was

nearly in tears himself (Luke). I felt he was unnecessarily severe too. Des disagreed courteously with Dr. Heppenstall and Elder Wilson.

As far as the criticism of Des that he was stubborn and unyielding, it was true he was defensive. He didn't budge a great deal, but there are some things to be said on his side. He went to Glacier View to defend a position. I know that Des is extremely open to evidence. In his opinion, the evidence was not there for him to make a radical change. While Des is a debater and was defensive, I also know him to be fair, and I have seen him change very rapidly when shown his error. He is more open to change than most people, but it has to be a logical process.

He was also in an unenviable position. He didn't sleep much any night at Glacier View--on Tuesday night none at all. He was taken for walks by many people who told him all his faults and pled with his soul--Being up the front, often answering questions laced with hostility, was no sine cure. Many of the scholars thought he was remote, not mingling with them. However, for them the retreat was a vacation, a time to get together. For Des it was too much interaction, too much having to field people's questions.

Some have questioned the media's reporting of Glacier View. However, I think they reported it as they saw it. But it was not the only view. There were two distinct threads running through Glacier View. The administration appeared to come with their minds made up to stamp out heresy with a firm hand. The scholars (a generalization) reflected the view of Ray Cottrell in Spectrum. Both groups represented what happened from their own points of view, which colored the results.

On the one hand, there was the heavy administrative hand which appeared from time to time (the opening meeting, the Tuesday night altercation, the Thursday afternoon meeting with its reading of Pastor Pierson's letter² and several consequent negative testimonies from such people as Elder Walter Blehm). On the other hand, there was the growing euphoria up until Thursday, with the openness and growth which appeared to be taking place in the discussions, to the great pleasure of the scholars.

Some of the scholars disagreed with Des' theology, for example Dr. Hasel and Dr. Shea. Others disagreed with his methodology, for example, Dr. Arthur Ferch. But a large proportion of the scholars privately stated their essential agreement with the problems Des had raised. He did not discover them. However, none publically stated that they agreed that 1844 and the Investigative Judgment were not biblical data.

Des himself felt the problems he had raised were genuine problems. His answers were tentative. They were actually an attempt to help with the problems. We felt administration never grasped the essential difference. When Des said he was absolutely convinced, it was on the problems, not the answers. Some seemed to think he was fixed on both problems and answers and that he would not change on any of them.

The scholars did not agree with all his answers, though some did. But many of them recognize the problems. And that was all that Des expected to be acknowledged. Dr. Jack Provonsha stated on the Thursday afternoon that he agreed with Des on 1844, but not forensic justification. He believed our 1844 doctrine had to be reinterpreted. His statement fell on deaf ears.

The feeling among the scholars in general (those that recognized the problems) was that the church was not ready for such a big step. Change, they felt, comes very slowly, and it would take a generation for that change to come. They felt there was definite growth and that they were really getting somewhere until the Thursday. Said one man, "We thought that the administrators were learning a great deal in the morning meetings, but now realize that they didn't learn a thing." Some have since said, "Why did Des stir this thing up when we were getting rid of the Investigative Judgment by never talking about it"? Des' answer to that is that he didn't bring it up publically until Bob Brinsmead did, and Des was continually answering questions at his weekend meetings because of Bob's raising the issues.

There are a lot of scholars who are less conservative than is Des, but they are not saying what they think. Some are now putting on a traditional face which almost seems like compromise to those of us who know where they stand. However, as I will explain in the next few pages, their motives are often good.

First of all, let me recount some of the private responses we had from scholars at Glacier View (without names). One scholar said, "Des, your manuscript came as a shock, but it was shock therapy. I have been over thirty years in the ministry and did not know the problems in Hebrews, but I believe you are right. I feel angry that I have never been told. I do not know if I agree with you on Antiochus Epiphanes, but I am going to study it." Another said, "There are several of us who are soon going to be put in positions of greater responsibility. If we come out and say what we believe now, we will be put out and replaced by perfectionists and the seminary will be put back 50 years." I thought he was right at the time--now I think some have got to the stage of compromise, but that may be unfair. Many love the church and do not wish to see it torn by strife and they act from that motive. Others feel that if they wrench themselves out of the church, they lose the opportunity to be a part of the healing process.

One man said he had recently been at Andrews for four years as a student, and studied under all but two lecturers. Most never used Ellen White, one used her regularly, and another took one class on her per quarter and then did not use her. By contrast, he said, Des used her all the time. He continued, that during his stay at Andrews, the Investigative Judgment was not mentioned. Neither was 1844. If either were in the syllabus, they were left to the end and never reached. He said, "Tell your husband to hang on. Many people here agree with him essentially, but feel it is not the right time. The church cannot yet handle it. But within a couple of years the change will come." He said he could no longer teach the traditional view on Ellen White or the sanctuary. He would teach both views, and when asked, tell people to study both views for themselves. But on the Thursday, he came to me and said, "It's hopeless."

Another man came ready to pullout if Des went. He had told his wife to expect it. He told Elder Wilson he agreed with Des. However, because of the confusion at the end, when the scholars were told after Friday afternoon that we had misunderstood and exaggerated the situation, and because there appeared to be an attempt to save Des by sending him to the New Gallery in London, this scholar was not very happy with Des. Later when he read Elder Parmenter's letter with its four requirements, he wrote and apologized to Des, and also wrote to General Conference, saying he felt he had been duped.

Another prominent man told Des he could not accept Des' being put out of the work--that his work had the marks of the Cross. He said he stood almost where Des did. This man did feel Des was too unbending at Glacier View, and that Des should not have sought a separate ministry in Good News Unlimited afterwards.

There were two scholars who were friends who spoke to me one day, saying they were not well up on prophecy, but could see that Des was essentially right. They said that Des was more conservative than they were. They also said they had been speaking out at their small

groups, but felt that the group leader didn't even comprehend what they were saying.

I have not mentioned those who openly stated agreement, for instance Dr. Ray Cottrell and Dr. Jack Provonsha, whom I mentioned previously. There were others who were not at all traditional at Glacier View, who did not speak to us about the situation.

On the other side, there were those who obviously and strongly disagreed. Several took Des for walks and "told him off" either for his views or his attitude to the administration. Some said he was too argumentative. One said Des seriously misquoted him. Des doesn't think he did, but there was a typist's error which was not caught because of the speed in which the final draft was done. Another person asked Des if he had a stone for a heart since he didn't respond emotionally to various appeals.

Now let's consider the administration. I think on the whole the administration acted in a manner which seemed to them fair. There was no maliciousness expressed at Glacier View. I don't think all that was done was fair, but that is just one point of view. I maintain the right of the church to employ and dismiss whomsoever they wish if that person is creating waves. The administration believed that Des' forum tape of Oct. 27, 1979 went too far. One can understand their concern. But I think it would have been better to have just released him from employment. Glacier View was just an expensive charade, a cover-up for a predetermined verdict. Glacier View could have been just as easily discussed on Prexad, and considerable expense saved.

There has been considerable work done in Australia on whether the procedure of firing Des was according to natural justice, and the conclusions, which will eventually be published, were that the firing was not legal. Especially the procedure in the committee in Australia which finalized the decision is in question. Des should have been present. His peers at Avondale College should have been present. The opinion is that Des could have sued the church had he wished at an earlier time.

We don't wish. We are Adventists who believe that prophecy has to be reinterpreted now we are 140 years down the line from 1844. We don't believe that Adventism loses anything substantial by doing this. The heart of the Adventist message is its emphasis on law related to gospel, the Sabbath in connection with Creation, the second coming, and the sanctuary reinterpreted. We feel all should be glad that as light streams from the Cross of Calvary, some of our old ideas have to be discarded.

Glacier View leaves us with no bitterness. It was an opportunity for growth, and will in the end bring much good. The search for truth is never easy, but it is a worthwhile pursuit.

* * * *

Because we have been personally involved in the Glacier View scene, we have written on that rather than on what has happened to Elder Walter Rae, Elder Smuts Van Rooyen of Andrews University. Francis Campbell (the President of the South African Union) and many others. Walter Rae is a much-loved pastor whose congregations have always been loyal and supportive. He warned the denomination regarding the Davenport scandal long before it was publically exposed. Though a prestigious denominationally appointed committee agreed substantially with him in the Glendale meetings he has now been expelled from the Ministry. Smuts Van Rooyen has possibly done more on the American scene to make the gospel plain than any other man. He did not publically attack the doctrinal positions of the church, yet he was forced to resign bringing untold trauma on himself and his family. Similarly Francis Campbell, another whose ministry of many years has been attended with honor and fruitfulness, has been compelled to leave his union-wide pastorate. At this point of time Pacific Union College has narrowly escaped a purge after attacks on its administration and religion department unparalleled in its history, but Southern Missionary College has been less fortunate according to current reports losing men whose only crime has been to fail to please the perfectionists of the community. Around the world men of dedication and high caliber are training on the side for other work that they might be ready should expulsion come. Well over one hundred ministers have taken up alternative employment since Glacier View. One has gloomily forecast that if the present trend continues soon only the ignorant or the dishonest will be left in church employment. Enrollments for ministerial training in key centres have decreased in both quality and quantity. Should not all this weigh heavily on the conscience of the church?

--D.F.--

Footnotes for Chapter Three

1. Those present at the Friday afternoon meeting at Glacier View were:-

Pastor Keith Parmenter

Pastor Arthur Duffy

Elder R. Spangler

Elder D. Eva

Elder C. Bradford

Elder N. Wilson

Elder F. Wernick

Elder R. Thompson

Dr.C. Hirsch

Dr. Desmond Ford

Mrs. Gillian Ford

2. On the Thursday afternoon at Glacier View, a letter was read out to the assembled group. In it, Elder Pierson stated several views which Des was supposed to hold. Among these were that he believed in Calvinist predestination, and once saved always saved. Elder Pierson said Des did not believe in the new birth, E.G.W., sanctification, and so on. There was no time for Des to answer these accusations, which were not true. The Ministry magazine (issue on Glacier View) stated that some had said that Elder Pierson was there and that he was not. But the letter probably had more impact than if he had actually been there.

Another letter had been written by Elder Harry Lowe, one time head of the biblical research committee, who had been in that position when the Daniel committee was held in the 60's. This letter addressed to Elder Hammill stated that Des had brought up nothing that had not been previously discussed in the Daniel committee. The letter was favorable.

Both Elder Pierson and Elder Lowe could not attend Glacier View because of their age and heart conditions. Only Elder Pierson's letter was read out.

WHY WAR WITH TRADITION?

(Chapter 4)

When we discuss the traditional Adventist teaching on the sanctuary and the investigative judgment -- if we are seeing only places and dates we might as well not look. These have never saved a single soul. There is only one reason why any should disturb the peace of the Church by raising questions with reference to such matters. That reason is that the traditional view as usually presented has robbed Adventists of the precious gospel truth that Christ stands for us in the Judgment as certainly as He stands for us now, and that we can never perish so long as we trust in His imputed merits.

Some will dispute this challenge. I can only say that where the gospel has gone in the last decade people have been saying : " I have been in the Church all my life --I have been through its educational system from elementary school up (in some cases even through an Adventist university) yet never before have I seen the simplicity and joyousness of acceptance." Polls show that the vast majority of our people have no assurance of salvation, and this is certainly the main reason for a halting Christian witness. Why share one's uncertainty?

Others will tell me that I am misrepresenting the Adventist teaching on the investigative judgment. Let me therefore quote an erstwhile General Conference president regarding the matter:

A Christian who through faith in Jesus Christ has faithfully kept the law's requirements will be acquitted; there is no condemnation, for the law finds no fault in him.... If it is found that one has broken even a single precept, and this transgression is unconfessed, he will be dealt with just as if he had broken all ten.

These comments are not found in some hastily written Review article but in the well-circulated Drama of the Ages (page 351). Here there is no recognition of the depths of the law, that it requires a perfect nature as well as a perfect life, and demands perfect motives and feelings as well as choices. Salvation becomes dependent upon a thick spiritual skin and a perfect memory and yet, in contrast, also an exact perception of good and evil. What a far cry from the " good, glad, and merry tidings, that makes a man's heart to sing, and his feet to dance."

Rejoice! Rejoice! Those who are justified by faith alone have already the verdict of the last judgment --it is theirs for as long as they truly believe. Already they have everlasting life and need fear no condemnation now or ever --not even in that last great Day. Their works in the Judgment will not match the perfect law ---not even for a single moment of their existence -- yet the tenor of those works will testify to genuine saving faith in the Redeemer. See Jn 5:24; Rom 8:33-34; 1 Jn 4:17; Ja 2:18; Mt 25:31-46. Erring, faulty, frail believers are seen as "clean", as having kept God's Word, because they are in Christ. Jn 13:10; 17:6; Col 2:10; 1 Cor 1:30; Eph 1:6.

Furthermore, to teach two phases of heavenly ministry prior to probation's close cancels out the New Testament emphasis that Christ has already finished the great work of reconciliation. See Heb 1:3; 7:27; 9:12, 25-26; 10:11-14; 2 Cor 5:14-21. His ministry now is not one of investigating the sins of believers but rather representing them before the Father as complete in Himself. 1 Jn 2:1-2, Eph 2:6.

Adventism has done well in pointing men to the, heavenly sanctuary and our great high priest there. Too often other groups have forgotten the heavenly ministry. But we have sadly muted the good tidings of the finished atonement by dwelling more upon the imperfect type (which was not the real image of the reality -- Heb 10:1) than the glorious antitype. Only because the honor of Christ and the joy of His people are threatened by the present stereotypes are we justified in questioning the latter.

When the gospel of grace is understood then that truth coordinates all other truths including such apparently esoteric matters as prophecy and the human nature of our Lord. Heresies such as perfectionism (which usually grows out of the error that Christ inherited our sinful nature and overcame it by way of example for us drop away, and victory over sin comes, not as a means of acceptance, but as a result of the prior divine welcome. Rom 6:14.

Our sins were crucified with Christ and nailed to His Cross. The law has no more right to condemn us who believe than it has to condemn the Savior. If we do not recognize our complete death in Him then sin will reign in us. It is ever true that no sin can be crucified in heart or life unless it is first seen as forgiven. Strength from Christ to crucify sin only comes to those who have exercised forgiveness-appropriating faith. Until sin is subdued as regards its guilt it cannot be subdued as to its power. But when Christ is gratefully recognized as our righteousness, our all in all, then self loses its importance, its pride and its willful assertiveness. Mt 6:31; Rom 6:1-23.

For these reasons we proceed now to discuss the sanctuary and salvation. Thereby we point to the theological heart of the present Adventist crisis of spiritual identity.

ADVENTISM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY

(Chapter 5)

Today, biblical scholarship almost completely rejects the adoption of the historicist package of prophetic interpretation of apocalyptic. But the distinctive and special emphases of Adventism, 1844 in particular, spring from the whole-hearted acceptance of the interpretive positions that almost all other scholars reject. Historicism teaches that the prophecies are being progressively fulfilled during the history of the Christian era. For example, Revelation 11 is believed to have no meaning for the early church, or for the church of the last days, but applies only to the events of the French Revolution. In particular, historicism sees the papacy as the fulfillment of the antichrist prophecies and has not recognized that other fulfillments also apply.

Elsewhere I have pointed out that it is just as wrong to reject historicism as a whole as to accept it root and branch. Its stress on the Protestant affirmation of righteousness by faith, its insistence that prophecy was relevant through all ages, are too valuable to be lightly dismissed. On the other hand, classical expositions on apocalyptic usually point out that historicism errs (1) by forgetting that the prophecies had immediate meaning for the people who first received them, e.g. the Christians of the first century had a fair idea as to what John the Revelator was saying, (2) by ignoring the fact that prophetic symbols are purposely sufficiently amorphous to have recurring application to similar situations, (3) by failing to see that the Apocalypse does not claim to be setting forth a blueprint for 2,000 years of history, but that on the contrary, all foretold could speedily have been fulfilled to the generation which first read its pages had the gospel been then taken to the world, and (4) most important of all, historicists have too often erred by failing to recognize that all prophecy is a testimony to Jesus and His gospel. The prophetic word is not intended as a minute history written in advance, but as a symbolic portrayal of what Christ has already done and its relevance for continuing time. Even the future events to overtake the Church are seen through the spectrum of the Cross. We quote a few typical criticisms of historicism:

The greatest work based on this theory is the four-volume study by Elliott (E. B. Elliott, *Horae Apocalypticae*), which may be taken as an illustration of this scheme. He says that the trumpet judgments cover the period from A.D. 395-1453, that the first trumpet refers to the invasion of the Goths, the third to the Huns under Attila, the fifth to the hordes of Moslems pouring into the West in the sixth and seventh centuries, etc. To take another illustration, Mede, in his famous work, says that the sixth seal predicts the overthrow of paganism under Constantine, that the second vial refers to Luther, the third to events in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, etc. Many of those who belong to this school insist that the earthquake in 11:19 refers to the French Revolution; others find Napoleon Bonaparte in the book of Revelation, etc., etc.

Now, apart from all other objections to this scheme, it is admitted on every hand that it offers no fundamental principle or criterion of judgment by which we are able to determine exactly what historical events are referred to in a given passage. And this has led to a vast morass of confusion and contradiction among those who hold this view.¹

Historicist views also labour under the serious disadvantage of failing to agree. If the main points of subsequent history are in fact foreshadowed it should be possible to identify them with tolerable certainty, otherwise what is the point of it? But there are many historicist views, and no real agreement.²

There are several objections to an interpretation of Revelation by a complete historicist view. First, the exact identification of the events of history with successive symbols has never been finally achieved, even after the events occurred. It is reasonable to suppose that during the lapse of 1900 years at least a portion of the predictions would have been fulfilled. If they were to be of value to the reader of Revelation as an indication of where he belonged in the total historical process, they should be identifiable with certainty. Such, however, seems not to be the case. The points of interpretation on which the majority of the doctrinal interpreters agree can be interpreted as trends quite as intelligibly as events. Since trends may be evident in any period of history, such prophecies do not point to any one era.

Second, historical interpreters have not satisfactorily explained why a general prophecy should be confined to the fortunes of the western Roman empire. The historical interpretation stresses chiefly the development of the church in western Europe; it takes little cognizance of the East. Yet in the first few centuries of the Christian era the church increased tremendously in the East, and spread as far as India and China, though it did not gain a permanent foothold in all sections of those countries. If a continual-historical method is to be followed, it must have a broader scope.

Third, if the continuous-historical method is valid, its predictions would have been sufficiently plain at the outset to give the reader some inkling of what they meant. If the fire and hail of the first trumpet (8:7) really did refer to the Gothic invasions, it is hard to see how any first-century Christian could have understood the prediction in such a way as to give it any value for his thinking.³

Point 4, stressed in the second paragraph of this chapter, is the most important of the criticisms of historicism and it is by applying this that the Achilles heel of typical historicist interpretation can be speedily recognized. Let us take, for example, Revelation 13:3. The verse reads: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

The well-known Adventist interpretation of this verse is that it applies to the years 1798 when the French General Berthier took the pope captive and the papacy was temporarily suspended. So much for the deadly wound. The healing of the deadly wound is said to apply to the future or some have applied it as beginning decades ago when the Vatican became a political state.

But such an exegesis is not exegesis at all. The wounding of the Beast's head is well-known Biblical symbolism originating first in Genesis 3:15, but referred to also in other passages such as Romans 16:20, and finds its explanation in Hebrews 2:14, Colossians 2:14, and Revelation 12:7-10. (See also Ps. 74:14.) As one scholar has written:

The smiting of the head is not simply an historical allusion... it rests on Scripture. Because the serpent has attacked the woman, he's flung down groveling on the earth, to carry on a feud with the woman, which is continued between his seed and the woman's

seed: the serpent... shall have his head ambushed, the woman's seed, his heel (Genesis 3:13-15). We have witnessed the fulfillment of this oracle point by point; and now that the serpent takes up the feud with 'the rest of the woman's seed' through the instrumentality of his own 'seed', the beast, we are not to be surprised that the head of the serpent's 'seed' is smitten.⁴

The word translated "wound" in Revelation 13 is everywhere else translated "plague". The wound is here in this passage, as elsewhere, the symbol of divine punishment. As Paul Minear says:

The wound was a God-inflicted plague which simultaneously destroyed the authority of the head, the beast, and the dragon. It was a wound from which the beast would recover only by using deception, by succeeding in that deception, and by making absolute his blasphemous claims to ultimate power over human destiny.⁵

Minear points out that the atonement was the infliction of the deadly wound and that this interpretation is in harmony with other New Testament descriptions of the war between the servants of God, and the principalities and powers of evil. See Luke 10:17-24; 11:14-22; Colossians 2:15. This interpretation is sound as demonstrated by the system of parody throughout Revelation. The dragon, beast, and false prophet are a parody of the true Trinity. The dragon gives the beast his authority, as the Father does the Son. The two-horned beast points to the other beast, as the Spirit points to the Son. And as Christ is symbolized by a lamb that was slain (5:6), so antichrist has one of his heads wounded unto death (13:3). As Christ taught for 1260 days in His ministry, so antichrist makes war for 1,260 days according to Revelation 11, 12 and 13. As Christ was raised from the dead, so antichrist has his mortal wound healed and rises again. See Revelation 13:3; 17:8, 11; 20:1-3, 7.

Any interpretation which fails to see in Revelation 13:3 an allusion to Christ's victory over Satan at the Cross has missed the mark entirely and is reading chapter 13 without studying the context of the preceding chapter where the defeat of Satan by the Cross is given. 1798 meant nothing whatever to the first Christians of John's day, and means little to us in our time, but the Cross is forever relevant.

Similarly, the antichrist symbol of Scripture is limited by historicism in an unbiblical manner. Undoubtedly, the papacy of the Middle Ages with its blasphemous claims and its persecuting tendencies was a fulfillment of the antichrist prophecies, but it is just as certainly not the only fulfillment. John could say in his day, "even now there are many antichrists". 1 John 2:18. To quote Adventism's best writer:

Antichrist, meaning all who exalt themselves against the will and work of God, will at the appointed time feel the wrath of Him who gave Himself that they might not perish but have eternal life.⁶

In Great Controversy, Ellen White has traced the Adventist development of prophetic interpretation which was based on historicism. She has recorded this development, warts and all. No doubt it was her own belief also, for prophets are not God, and the gift of prophecy is not the gift of omniscience. However, as the last quotation indicated, Ellen White's insights often transcended those of her contemporaries, and we have given detailed proof of this in the Glacier View manuscript, the sixth chapter.

The result of the limited interpretation of the antichrist symbol by Adventism is seen in every denominational exposition of the antichrist, whether it be on Daniel 7, 8, 9, 11 or Revelation 13, 14, 17, 18, etc. Of necessity at one place (Daniel 8), it is admitted by Adventism that the same symbol applies to more than one system of antichrist. The little horn of Daniel 8 is acknowledged as representing pagan Rome as well as papal Rome. But the further, prior application to Antiochus Epiphanes is without adequate reason rejected, and the yet future fulfillment of the symbol as indicated by 2 Thess. 2 is also ignored.

As Adventism has failed to incorporate into its prophetic system the valid elements of Preterism, so it has dealt with Futurism. Because the latter contains many unscriptural elements as popularly applied, our church has rejected it completely. But this is to ignore the element of truth that does exist in Futurism, namely that the prophecies have their full flowering in connection with the last eschatological crisis. Climactic passages in Revelation are applied by Adventist expositors to events centuries before the end, though the prophetic intent is obviously eschatological in the biblical passages themselves. Revelation 10 and 11 point to the final proclamation of the gospel (as does Revelation 14:6-12 and 18:1-4)--when the little book of the gospel is opened, and its message proclaimed over land and sea to the whole world polarizing earth's inhabitants, and bringing persecution on the church (the two witnesses). "When they shall have finished their testimony" of Revelation 11:7 parallels Matthew 24:14 and points to the close of the gospel proclamation. Similarly, the sounding of the eleventh trump in 11:15 cannot possibly apply to 1840 (as suggested in all Adventist literature) but like every seventh stage in the chains of Revelation, is eschatological, pointing to the end of time. Compare the language of the seventh trump with that of the seventh plague, and see also the picture of the second advent in the sixth seal of Revelation 6:12-17.

Another example is Daniel 8:14. Adventism did well to reject the current interpretation of many that the passage pointed only to the times of the Maccabees. But in applying Dan. 8:14 to 1844 and onwards, the parallel between it and the climax of the other prophetic chains was missed. The cleansing of the sanctuary parallels the falling of the stone of chapter 2, the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of Days in chapter 7, the standing up of Michael in chapter 12--all of which, like the seventh trump, signify the ushering in of eternity--not the mid-nineteenth century. The whole system of Adventist prophetic interpretation is defective because it's based on a very restricted view of prophecy which will not stand up to biblical investigation. This does not mean that it is without truth, but it does mean that in many instances it has neglected much of the biblical reality and perverted some of the rest.

Historicism has played a valuable role in warning the Church against antichrist's perversion of the gospel and denial of the priesthood of all believers. It has helped many to see that prophecy has continuing relevance. Nevertheless, historicists have been exegetically myopic and today among scholars the tribe is almost extinct. This is well-known to Adventist scholars in general, and for them has brought a crisis in recent decades anticipating the present crisis for the laity as well. One need only read the excellent works of Dr. Kenneth Strand of Andrews University to see the difference between the more recent views of Adventist scholars of apocalyptic, and that which is traditional and still upheld by the church administration. In this embarrassment, as in all others, the only way out is that of honesty. It should not be too humiliating to confess that we, as with others, have not been possessors of the whole gamut of truth, that we also are still learning. Is it not promised that at the time of the end "knowledge shall be increased"? Daniel 12:4.

References for Chapter Five

1. Wilbur Smith, "Revelation," The New Testament and Wycliffe Bible Commentary (hereinafter referred to as "Revelation"), pp. 1053-54.
2. Leon Morris, Revelation, p. 17.
3. M. C. Tenney, Revelation, pp. 138-39.
4. Austin Farrer, Revelation, p. 153.
5. I Saw A New Earth, pp. 253-54.
6. Selected Messages, Vol. 3, p. 402 (emphasis ours).

THE SANCTUARY AND THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

(Chapter 6)

The sole distinctive of Seventh-day Adventism is its claim to be the fulfillment of Daniel 8:14--a special message raised up in fulfillment of Bible prophecy to give a warning to those whose fate is being decided by an investigative judgment in heaven that began at the very same hour as the birth of Adventism itself.

Now it has long been known to the chief scholars of Adventism that such a claim is not biblically defensible. The Daniel Committee which met fruitlessly for four years in the decade of the 1960's could come to no satisfactory conclusions, and the General Conference president decided not to report its activities to the church. For years its activities were buried in such obscurity that even the present General Conference president, Elder Wilson, knew nothing about it until the revival of the issues in 1979. The Daniel Committee of the 1960's was the result of a questionnaire sent to the church's leading scholars at the end of the 1950's. Says Raymond Cottrell (since F. D. Nichol, Cottrell can be characterized as the dean of editor-scholars in Adventism):

While editing Bible Readings, and in counsel with Elder Nichol as chief editor of the revision, I wrote to 27 leading Adventist Bible scholars for their response to a series of 6 carefully formulated questions designed to bring the best contemporary Adventist Biblical scholarship to bear on the question. All 27 responded, many at considerable length. A careful analysis and synthesis of their replies provided no additional help with respect to the problems arising from our interpretation of Daniel 8:14. It made evident that we had no satisfactory answer to the criticisms being directed against our interpretation of this key Adventist passage.... Not one of the 27 believe that there is a linguistic or contextual basis for applying Daniel 8:14 to the heavenly sanctuary, and an antitypical Day of Atonement, or 1844.

Cottrell continues in his Spectrum article by saying:

The issue of Daniel 8:14 is still with us because we have been unwilling, thus far, to face up the fact that very real exegetical problems exist. That issue will not go away so long as we keep pretending that there is no problem, so long as we insist on holding our heads, individually and collectively, in the sand of our preconceived opinions. It won't go away until we face up to it and accord it the respect and attention it deserves. It won't go away so long as our search for truth consists primarily in looking for proof of what we think we already believe. It won't go away until we learn to listen attentively with humble hearts to what the divine Spirit is saying through the words of Holy Writ, and until we do this, we will continue--unnecessarily--to alienate the respected confidence of thinking, Biblically literate Adventists and non-Adventists alike. Spectrum, March 1980, pgs. 18-25.

What then are the chief exegetical problems in the traditional position of Adventism on Daniel 8:14? In answer, we have placed in an appendix extracts from the Glacier View manuscript. For further details, the manuscript itself (now in print under the title, Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement and the Investigative Judgment, available from Desmond Ford Publications) should be studied. But in essence, the traditional answer to the many problems of Daniel 8:14 is inadequate contextually, linguistically, and exegetically. For example, verse 14 is a reply to the question of Daniel 8:13. Yet the question itself is usually ignored. It is not even quoted in Great Controversy.

Daniel 8:14 is a reply to a plea for judgment on the wicked little horn. Our traditional exegesis makes verse 14 apply to a judgment on the oppressed saints. Secondly, the word translated "cleansed" should be translated "vindicated" or "restored". It has nothing to do with the word for "cleanse" found in Lev. 16, and there is therefore, no immediate linguistic connection with that chapter. Thirdly, Daniel 8:14 does not mention "days" at all. It does refer to 2,300 evening-mornings. Whether this means evening and morning burnt offerings and therefore the whole period should be counted just as 1,150 days as some translations give, or whether the situation is similar to Gen. 1 and applies to 2,300 full days, is very much debated. But there certainly is no evidence here of the year-day principle being at work, and therefore no basis for the year 1844. This conviction is reinforced when we find that Chapter 9 is separated from Chapter 8 by at least 12 years and contains nothing that would link the 70 weeks of years as being the first part of a long period of over 2,000 years. The word translated "determined" as can be seen by reading other versions actually means "decreed" or "fixed" or "appointed". The root meaning of "cut-off" does not occur in any Hebrew writing during the days of the Old Testament canon. Furthermore, the date 457 B.C. was not a date for the beginning of the restoration of the city of Jerusalem. It was Cyrus who began that work many years prior. See Isaiah 44:28; 45:13; Ezra 1:1-4. There is nothing in Ezra 7 about the rebuilding of the city and the decree of Artaxerxes is included in Ezra 6:14's list of temple decrees.

The typical traditional Adventist exposition of Daniel 8:14 is based on many assumptions. These are listed in the following quotation from our Glacier View volume, pp. 174-176.

TRADITIONAL PROPHETIC DATING AND THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

The great saving truths of the Christian faith never depend upon inferential reasoning from a single text. That God is our Creator, that Christ died for our sins that we might be forgiven, that salvation is through faith, that faith always bears fruit in obedience, that Christ will return to earth, that now He intercedes for us on high--all such truths rest on substantial immovable foundations of Holy Writ. Should certain texts on any of these topics be ambiguous, it matters not, for there are plenty of others which are not ambiguous. Pillars of the faith are firmly established, they do not rest on fluid, uncertain, equivocal interpretations.

When, however, we come to our traditional sanctuary interpretation of 1844 and the investigative judgment, such is by no means the case. It is dependent, not upon plain didactic statements from Scripture, but upon a prolonged series of assumptions and inferences --most of which are highly debatable. We set forth dogmatic conclusions where honesty should compel us to confess that the evidence is either ambiguous or contrary to our claims.

For example, consider our perilous dependence upon the following assumptions, many of which are interlocking in such a way that if one falls, so do the others.

1. That Dan. 8:14 speaks of 2300 days. (While Dan. 12 repeatedly uses the Hebrew word for days, it is not to be found in 8: 14. Instead we

have the ambiguous "evening-morning" which most apply to the evening and morning burnt offerings. Thus instead of 2300 days, if these exegetes are correct, only 1150 days are in view.)

2. That these 2300 "days" equal 2300 years. (Though it is quite impossible to prove that the year-day principle is a Biblical datum, and even if we could, days are not mentioned in either 8:14 or 9:24, so there is no basis to apply the principle in these instances.)

3. That these 2300 years begin centuries before the "little horn" began his attack on the sanctuary. (Though in the context, the 2300 has been understood by many as applying to the length of time the little horn is trampling the sanctuary underfoot and suspending its daily offerings.)

4. That the 2300 years begin at the same time as the seventy weeks. (Though there is no scripture to say so. The Hebrew chathak means "cut" or "decree," and there is no way of proving that the cutting off of the 490 from 2300 is intended.)

5. That it is possible to be certain of the exact year that the seventy weeks begin. (Though exegetes have never agreed on this point. Is the decree like that of 9:23, a heavenly one from God, or one from an earthly king?)

6. That the decree of Artaxerxes recorded in Ezra 7 has to do with the restoring and building of Jerusalem. (Though there is nothing in Ezra 7 that says this. The context says that this decree, like those of Cyrus and Darius, had to do with the temple. The magistrates were to enforce the temple laws. See Ezra 6:14 which places this decree among the temple decrees.)

7. That the decree of Ezra 7 "went forth" in 457 BC when Ezra had arrived in Jerusalem and set to work. (Though Ezra never says this, and the decree had been announced at least six months earlier. There is nothing in Daniel to say that this decree should be dated from the time of its implementation rather than its enunciation.)

8. That we can show 408 to be the time when the restoration of the city was completed. (Admitted even by Adventist scholars to be an impossible task.)

9. That we can show that AD 27 was the date of Christ's baptism. (A similarly difficult feat.)

10. That AD 31 was the date of the crucifixion. (Almost all scholars hold to other years, not this one. Evidence from Grace Amadon's researches, often used by SDA's is based on doubtful assumptions, as admitted by our own commentary.)

11. That AD 34 was the date of the gospel going to the Gentiles. (Though there is no way of proving that AD 34 was the time of the stoning of Stephen, and Acts 13:46 presents the turning to the Gentiles at a much later date.)

12. That the 2300 days end with the beginning of the antitypical Day of Atonement. (Though the Day of Atonement revolved around the sacrifice for sin, an event we believe took place about eighteen centuries earlier. The divesting of his glorious robes by the high priest prefigured the incarnation of Christ which did not take place in 1844. The book of Hebrews clearly applies the Day of Atonement in antitype to Christ's priestly offering of Himself on Calvary, though the Christian era is included as we wait for our High Priest to come out.)

13. That until this date was reached, Christ was doing that work prefigured by the first apartment outside the veil. (Though Hebrews tells us that the work of that apartment symbolized the ineffectual offerings of the Levitical era when men had restricted access to God, and experienced outward ceremonial cleansing rather than perfection of the conscience.)

14. That the work symbolized by the second apartment of the sanctuary was not to begin till over 1800 years after the cross. (Though Heb. 9:8, 12, 24, 25; 10:19, 20; 6:19, 20 says Christ entered "within the veil" at His ascension.) The sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat took place immediately after its shedding.

15. That the sanctuary of Dan. 8: 14 means the sanctuary in heaven. (Though the context is about the sanctuary on earth.)

16. That "cleansed" is an accurate translation in Dan. 8:14. (Though this is certainly not the case.)

17. That the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement was cleansed from defilement occasioned by the confession of sin and ministrations of blood. (Though Nu. 19:13, etc., indicate that the sanctuary was defiled when a person sinned, regardless of whether confession was made. In most cases, blood never went into the sanctuary.)

18. That the cleansing of the sanctuary in 8:14 has to do with a defilement accomplished by Antichrist, not the host of God's people who are suffering, not sinning, in the context.)

19. That this cleansing of 8:14 is also found in Dan. 7 in its judgment scene, and that the latter also has to do with investigation of the sins of the saints. (Though again in Dan. 7, as in 8, it is a wicked power which is the focus of the judgment.)

20. That Rev. 14:7 has to do with the same investigative judgment of the sins of the saints. (Though John never uses the word krisis other than in a negative sense--for unbelievers, and though the very next verse tells us that it is Babylon which endures the judgment, as the later chapters of Revelation also testify.)

21. That verses like Acts 3:19 point to the investigative judgment. (None of such verses studied in context yield any such conclusion.)

22. That much depends upon Oct. 22, 1844, as the beginning of the antitypical Day of Atonement. (Though Oct. 22, 1844 was not the day observed by contemporary Jews, even the majority of Karaites.) Neither is there evidence that the baptism of Christ, or the stoning of Stephen took place on the Day of Atonement, which would have been necessary if the 49 years, the 434, 490, and 2300 years are each precise in terminus. In contrast, observe that Ellen G. White could write: "I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time in 1843... Ministers were convinced of the correctness of the positions taken on the prophetic periods" (SG 232). Observe she is talking about the 1843 terminus, not Oct. 22, 1844. Furthermore she is speaking of periods ending then, not just one period. Miller had over a dozen, including the 6000 years, the seven times, the 1335 days, etc.)

In contrast to this traditional precision and convoluted series of assumptions, the chapter in our own SDA Bible Commentary, "Interpretation of Daniel," shows that such precision is contrary to the whole history of prophetic exegesis of the prophetic periods of Daniel. Furthermore, when our own Bible Dictionary refers to Dan. 8:14 in its articles on Antichrist and the little horn, it makes no reference to an investigative judgment, but speaks of Dan. 8:14 as pointing to judgment upon the little horn and restoration of true worship.

Consider the following from the Whedon commentary on Dan. 9:

No prophecy of Scripture is more difficult to explain than this. Anyone who thinks it easy proves thereby that he does not understand it. The more confident the explanation the less likely is it to be of any value. Like all apocalyptic calculations, these have doubtless been left enigmatical on purpose--if not, the aim of the writer has been sadly defeated, for scarcely two scholars of the old school or of the new school can agree as to the meaning of these mathematical combinations. (Daniel, 290).

It should also be pointed out that some other long-cherished dates of supposed prophetic fulfillment have proved erroneous--those used for Rev. 11:9; 9:15; Dan. 12:11, 12. Others, such as 538 and 1798, were questioned by leaders amongst us long ago, such as W. W. Prescott. (See SDABC note at close of commentary on Dan. 7.)

Should it be concluded from all this that Adventism is a delusion, a cheat and a fraud? By no means! God has had a purpose in every movement of sincere believers and the evidence is overwhelming that the Adventist Church has had a special part to play in the work of God for the world. See our chapter on 1844 for a delineation of Adventism's relevance and contribution. This writer would agree with Dr. Jack Provonsha's statement in a recent Spectrum article that Adventism may indeed be used to precipitate the last crisis for the world and to bring out thereby the final remnant of faithful people from every group.

Our main problem has its roots in the superstitious and perfectionistic belief that God can use only what is perfect. The whole of the Christian gospel denies this claim! Everything that involves humanity is imperfect. Wherever sin exists, error is inevitable, and even true believers have depraved natures. Consequently, in all ages, believers have only a defective grasp of truth. There has never been a religious movement untainted by error! But God in His great mercy deals with and through His erring children. Adventists can be both proud and humble, proud that God has echoed through them many pertinent truths for this age, and humble because He has condescended to use them despite the Church's errors and failings.

(See appendix for extracts from the Glacier View manuscript on this topic.)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 1844

(Chapter 7)

The year 1517 is very important indeed as marking the rise of the Protestant Reformation. But the date is not a biblical datum. Similarly, 1844 is significant, not because it can be found in Scripture, but because it marked the rise of a religious movement in response to the movings and purposes of God.

It was in that year that God called a people who believed in the nearness of Christ's coming and the last judgment to consider those elements of the everlasting gospel symbolized by the ark and mercy seat of the Most Holy Place. As Ellen White said in the nineteenth century: "The law and the mercy of God combined can break almost any heart". Only a knowledge of the gospel could prepare people for the coming of Christ, and this gospel was symbolized by the blood and incense used in the holy of holies on the typical day of atonement. To these symbols the attention of the early Adventist pioneers was directed.

In many respects, the modern era may be dated from the mid-nineteenth century. Several key ideologies which dominate our times came to the fore in that period. Evolution, Communism, radical biblical criticism, Existentialism, Spiritism burgeoned in the years following 1844. For all of these, Seventh-day Adventism has offered a heaven-sponsored challenge: the creation-sabbath challenged the evolution hypothesis; the emphasis on law and gospel challenged athiestic amoral Communism; the hope of Christ's return countered the pessimism of Existentialism and the optimism of the cherished philosophical concept of the necessity of inevitable progress. This latter philosophical assumption was expressed theologically in the theory of post-millennialism--that Christ could not come until after a thousand years of peace and prosperity had enveloped the world. Through such teachings in the early 19th century, the doctrine of the imminence of the second coming was dead until its resurrection by the Advent movement. Adventism's teaching on the nature of man repudiated many of the errors underlying Roman Catholicism, Spiritism, Mormonism, and the heathen religions which teach reincarnation. Similarly, in departing from the platonic view which dominated medieval times and led to Christians' neglect of the body and the world, Adventism gave a foundation for a correct view of man, nature and culture.

It was in the realm of eschatology that Adventism by its emphasis on the pre-millennial return of Christ made its special contribution. Eschatology--the doctrine of the last things--has been reserved for our own era. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term itself found its first literary use in the year 1844. Prior to that time the centuries had witnessed progressive attention to all the other divisions of theology, but not eschatology. After the Christ event, the early church gave itself to the study of the person of Christ, His relation to the Godhead, and finally to the Trinity. Thus, Theology proper (the doctrine of God), Christology (the doctrine of Christ), Pneumatology (the doctrine of the Spirit) occupied Christian attention down to the end of the formation of the classic creeds in the fourth century. Later ages saw transition to the nature of sin, the atonement, justification, regeneration, the church. Thus, Anthropology, Soteriology, and Ecclesiology passed under the scrutiny of the faithful.

The great names of Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley are associated with the broadening understanding of six of the seven areas of theology. But until the nineteenth century, all that had been said of value on Eschatology could (according to the historians of dogma) have been fitted on a postcard. But we have spoken on this elsewhere in this book.

The early nineteenth century in America treated the doctrine of the imminent second advent as a biblical step-child, not an heir of privilege. The vast majority of preachers, in harmony with the philosophical concept that progress was a law as inevitable as gravity, asserted that the great day of the return of Christ was certainly more than a thousand years off. To the Millerite movement we owe the restoration of the New Testament teaching of the imminence of Christ's return--a belief which should ever be characteristic of healthy Christianity in view of life's brevity. A classic work edited by Gaustad entitled, The Rise of Adventism makes the following observations as to the significance of the Millerite movement.

Millenarians were unanimous, for example, in predicting that Christ's return would be inaugurated by his personal reappearance to reign for precisely one-thousand years. They rejected as incorrect and blasphemously derogatory of the authority of the Bible the notion that the prophecies of the Second Advent might be fulfilled symbolically in an extended period of peace and godly rule some time in the future.¹

Optimistic Americans adopted the postmillennial position; the more anxious Christians, the catastrophists, adopted the premillennial. Finney, as the champion of the former, consequently came face-to-face with William Miller, the champion of the latter.

"I have examined Mr. Miller's theory," wrote Finney in 1843, "and am persuaded that what he expects to come after the judgment will come before it. Read the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. The Prophet there speaks of the advancement to be made as the creation of a new heaven and a new earth." Finney and his followers were convinced that Miller had made a mi stake. The world was growing better and better, not worse and worse. Looking around at the rising number of church members, the success of the various reform movements, the new self-confidence of the nation in its defeat of deism and its civilization of the frontier, Finney asked, "Are these evidences of the world's growing worse? The world is not growing worse but better...." That so many Americans chose to believe William Miller indicates that all was not so sublime in America as Finney implied. But the fact that even those who followed Miller were able, after 1844, to retain their faith and hope was evidence that the Second Great Awakening had great confidence to Americans that God would not desert them.²

One of the most significant differences between the revivalists of the pre-Civil War era and those since is that almost all of the latter have adopted Miller's pessimistic, premillennial position--pessimistic, that is, about man's prowess, not God's benevolence. In the current awakening of religious concern apocalypticism is stronger than at any time since Miller's day. One has only to read the literature of the ecology movement or the population control movement or the Bulletin of atomic scientists to realize that today's revival is a revival of premillennialism.³

In August 1840 Himes announced through the Signs of the Times that a general conference was under consideration for the

purpose of edifying and unifying the believers, but not to create a new religious body. Unanimity of opinion on the Second Advent question was not expected, but in order to achieve harmony, anyone who expected to take an active part in the conference had first to declare his faith in the near approach of Christ.⁴

Although not in agreement regarding the exact year of Christ's return, they agreed that it was near. Other ideas were declared false: the temporal millennium, the invisible reign of Christ in the present world, and the world's conversion. Christ would come at the beginning of the millennium to judge the world. The reign of Christ and the saints would then begin, followed by the final condemnation of the wicked at the end of the millennium and the commencement of the eternal age.⁵

From mid-1842 until the Great Disappointment of October 1844 the time question held center stage in the thinking of the Millerites and their opponents. Before the summer of 1842 the question of when Christ would return had taken second place to the declaration of the fact of his return. The nature of the event, what would actually occur, was more ardently stressed than its exact time. On the question of time there was much disagreement. Miller himself expected the end "about 1843," and Josiah Litch agreed with Miller. Henry Dana Ward and Henry Jones were from the beginning opposed to time-setting, and were never won over to it. J. V. Himes remained rather indifferent to the question of the exact time.⁶

At the general conference held in Dover, New Hampshire, in December 1841, it was stated by the chairman that it was necessary only for members to declare their belief in the near advent of Christ, that a belief in a definite time was not necessary.⁷

...not mentioning the year 1843 specifically, the committee recommended that only persons who rejected the doctrines of the temporal millennium, the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and who believed the second advent of Christ to be the next great event in history be invited to enroll their names as members of the conference.⁸

Note well that the fact of the imminent return of Christ, not a precise date, was the heart of the Advent revival.

Turning to the other edge of time--the arrival rather than the dissolution of all things--it is interesting to discover that 1844 was the year in which Darwin wrote his first sketch of The Origin of Species. He tells us this in the introduction to his 1859 publication. Only historians, sociologists, and ethicists realize how colossal Darwin's influence upon the human race has been. Vergilius Ferm asserts that the appearance of Darwin's book "marks a turning point in western thought".⁹ Will Durant makes a similar observation:

It may well be that for posterity, Darwin's name will stand as a turning point in the intellectual development of our western civilization... if he was right, men would have to date from 1859 the beginning of modern thought.¹⁰

e.g., Bewkes says:

There is not a single field of scientific and academic study which has not been greatly modified by the concept of evolution. It has provided a new approach to astronomy, geology, philosophy, ethics, religion, and the history of social institutions.¹¹

Not only sociologists, philosophers, and educators, but historians also have marked the tremendous impact upon society of the evolutionary view of man, for example Gertrude Himmelfarb's Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution includes such chapters as "Darwinism, Religion and Morality," and "Darwinism, Politics and Society". The evidence presented by Himmelfarb goes far towards supporting the views of Durant and Bewkes.

Biography, as well as general history, affords us many illustrations of how clearly many in the past have seen the logical relationship between the Darwinian view of the arrival of man and the type of conduct therefore to be expected from him. Karl Marx was so enthusiastic over the Origin that he wished to dedicate the English translation of his Capital to Darwin.¹² It was four years after Darwin wrote his first sketch on evolution, and eleven years before the published volume, that Marx and Engels in their Manifesto of the Communist Party wrote the well-known dictum that "law, morality, religion are... so many bourgeois interests."

Another giant of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche, declared by Will Durant¹³ to be Darwin's spiritual son, hailed the passing of God and the enthronement of the power-motivated "superman" in His place. Adolf Hitler certainly imbibed much of his personal philosophy from this source.

"Lords of the Earth" is a familiar expression in Mein Kampf. That in the end Hitler considered himself the superman of Nietzsche's prophecy cannot be doubted.¹⁴ "In Hitler's utterances there runs the theme that the supreme leader is above the morals of ordinary man. Hegel and Nietzsche thought so too."¹⁵ In support of this allusion to Nietzsche Shirer refers to the following lines from this philosopher:

The strong men, the masters, regain the pure conscience of a beast of prey; monsters filled with joy, they can return from a fearful succession of murder, arson, rape and torture with the same joy in their hearts, the same contentment in their souls as if they had indulged in some student's rag... When a man is capable of commanding, when he is by nature a "Master," when he is violent to act and gesture, of what importance are treaties to him?... To judge morality properly, it must be replaced by two concepts borrowed from zoology: the taming of a beast and the breeding of a specific species.¹⁶

An illustration from this century of the relationship between the concepts of origins and behavior can be found in Clarence Darrow's skillful defense of two youths in 1924 who had cruelly murdered a fourteen-year-old boy in Chicago. Declared Darrow:

I will guarantee that you can go down to the University of Chicago today--into its big library--and find over a thousand volumes on Nietzsche, and I am sure I speak moderately. If this boy is to blame for this, where did he get it? Is there any blame attached because somebody took Nietzsche's philosophy seriously and fashioned his life on it? And there is no question in this case but what it is true. Then who is to blame? The University would be more to blame than he is. The scholars of the world would be more to blame than he is. The publishers of the world--and Nietzsche's books are published by one of the biggest publishers of the world--are more to blame than he. Your Honour, it is hardly fair to hang a nineteen-year-old boy for the philosophy that was taught him at the University.¹⁷

It should ever be remembered that the philosophy of Nietzsche was the direct outgrowth of his commitment to the theory of organic evolution.

Certainly logic alone is sufficient to show the definite relationship between a belief regarding life's origin and the pattern of behavior followed by the holder of that belief. He who believes that life began by a fortuitous concourse of atoms will not hold that life to be sacred.

Once one accepts the idea that our world was spawned by chance it becomes obvious that chance also will write finish to the play on the human stage. Therefore the foreshortening of the course would not be significant in view of the eternities stretching each side of the human interlude. Amortality, rather than immortality, is the child of a credo of chance. On the other hand, one who still clings to the traditional belief in creation of man by a personal God must also hold to the sacredness of life, and the necessity of responsible stewardship in what is considered to be probationary time prior to the Great Judgment Day.

In Christianity Today at the commencement of last year appeared a thought-provoking article entitled "An Anchor for the Lonely Crowd." The writer declared that "Creation means that God is the true home of man's spirit" and that when the knowledge of this doctrine is lost, man himself becomes lost. "Not knowing of whom he is the son, he knows not who he is." Then appear these apt appraisals of the significance of God's Creatorship and man's awareness or unawareness of this fundamental reality.

By creating the world, God reveals that he is fatherly, an outgoing, self-giving God, who willed that there be another alongside him, with whom he wills to share his divine existence and life, his divine joy and beatitude. Knowing that he was created to participate in the life of God, man regards existence as an expression of the mercy of God. Existence is no longer a curse, the universe unfriendly. The child knowing his origin declares, "This is my Father's world," and sings, "It is good to be here, it is great to be alive, and the best is yet to be!"

Ever since Western man accepted the evolutionistic contention that man has no father save a biological process, or accepted the contention of existentialism that man's only father is a Nothingness which, quite without any ascertainable reason, hurled him into existence, the mood of Western man has changed. He became a stranger to himself, nameless (as Kafka's Mr. K.), without relatives. He has lost God as Father, the universe as something friendly, life as meaningful.¹⁸

The conclusion of this article asserts that "the doctrine of creation is so basic as to be the indispensable foundation for any tolerable, viable, human existence."

The writer of "An Anchor for the Lonely Crowd" has hereby reminded us all that while theologians and expositors have long seen the importance of the doctrine of creation, it is the twentieth century which has vindicated such convictions. The twentieth century with its nihilistic creeds, and its abandonment of long-held ethical standards cries aloud for a renewed emphasis on the Christian world-view which has Christ as Creator, as well as Redeemer, for its foundation.

Recent decades have witnessed a revived stress on eschatological thought. The subject matter of inspired prophecy regarding the second advent and its preceding events has preoccupied many commentators and evangelists. But the emphasis is unbalanced without a corresponding stress on the other extreme of human history--the time of Creation. It is not coincidental that the great eschatological book of the New Testament places stress on the doctrine of origins. In Rev. 14:6, 7 we read:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heavens, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

These verses assure us that--only the man who recognizes God as Creator will so order his conduct as to prepare himself for the Judgment.

Many in our world will not listen to the pronouncements regarding the biblical outline of final events because they have long since discarded the biblical view of beginnings. The first article of the "Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," has been forgotten. Do not these facts constitute a challenge for the man who believes that God has spoken in Genesis as surely as in Revelation? Our Lord Himself when involved in discussion regarding ethics pointed back to creation.¹⁹ His views of right and wrong rested upon His belief in the Mosaic narrative concerning the "first things." At least sixty-six times the Bible writers, following His example, refer to the Divine Creatorship as an incentive for holiness. Should not Christians today follow such examples, and glance afresh at the opening statements of God's Word to man?

Turning to the influence of Communism on our age, the obvious fact is that half of earth's population is under Communist control--2,500 million people. By consigning law, morality and religion to the scrap heap, Communism sowed to the wind and now the world is reaping the whirlwind. What was needed in the 1840's was a new assertion of the importance of the three ridiculed elements of ideology--law, morality, religion. When Seventh-day Adventism stressed the unchanging moral code of Sinai, it was not merely asserting a shibboleth, it rather re-echoed the emphasis of Christ on obedience as the fruit of a right relationship with God. One writer has put this matter very well indeed. While we regret we have lost the source, we do offer the fruit.

Fundamentally there is only one sin--the rebellion of the human will against the will of God. Insofar as my own will is rebellious, it is in tune with every act of murder, rape or oppression committed this day in the world. My private acts of selfishness committed today, trivial though they may seem to me, nevertheless range me at the side of those whose more sensational deeds of cruelty or lust publicly advertise the rebellion of the human will. They bring me into a deep sympathetic alliance with the murderer, the swindler, the debauchee. I too, like them, am in rebellion. I too, like them, am serving the self; a little more cautiously and subtly perhaps, being rather more sensitive than they to the earthly cost of extravagance in such matters--but what heed does God pay to that added touch of worldly caution and subtlety. He looks down upon a human race engaged in obedience or disobedience.

There is no third alternative, no discreet maintaining of silence between the praising minority and the blaspheming throngs. In every act we praise or we blaspheme. Good is not unlike evil in the ramification of its entanglements. If my private acts of rebellion league me with all the perpetrators of human wickedness, and even with all the diabolical powers of darkness, so too my little acts of disobedience league me with the great human movements of the Spirit, and even with the incarnate God Himself.

The dominant sins are lawlessness and disobedience: the headstrong disregard for the divine creation of man, and the divine order of the universe; the careless and arrogant failure to take into account that man's status on earth is that of a dependent creature subject to the will of his heavenly Father; the proud persistence in constructing a man-centered civilization, a man-centered culture and philosophy, defiantly forgetful of man's allegiance to God outside time. Yet, honoring God is just a matter of plain honesty--paying our debts. In view of our age's lawlessness and disobedience, it is not irrational to suggest that today there may be a special divine emphasis upon sheer obedience, shorn of emotional consolations, and perhaps even bereft of rational

corroborations.

Another important revival of biblical truth occurred with the rise of the Advent Movement--namely life only in Christ, or conditional immortality, rather than the traditional tripartite teaching on the nature of man. Scientific exegesis of Holy Writ really only began in the nineteenth century with Winer, DeWette, Meyer, and Lightfoot. It was in 1822 that Winer's Grammar of the Greek Testament was published ushering in what has been called "the golden age of exegesis". Since that time, the majority of exegetes have come to see that the New Testament does not favor the platonic view of man's nature with its immaterial soul. Thus, views of heaven and hell, and purgatory and death, have been severely shaken for those who know the biblical evidence. Nevertheless, as the spirit of revolution in Europe began to pave the way for the world wars of our century, modern Spiritism (beginning in 1848 with the Fox sisters of New York) asserted as its gospel the immortality of the human soul, thus reinforcing the traditional teachings of the Middle Ages. While the teaching brought comfort to millions of grieved parents after the great wars, it has also been responsible for the spread of a hive of heresies including interests in the eastern religions with their stress on reincarnation, and also such teachings as universalism, baptism for the dead (and other Mormon beliefs), Mariolatry, saint worship, prayers for the dead, and the denial of the judgment, the resurrection, and the return of Christ. Worst of all, the teaching of natural immortality denied the gospel, for true life exists only in Christ as surely as righteousness. 1 John 5:11-12. The recovery of the biblical teaching on the nature of man created a hunger for the second coming of Christ and its accompanying resurrection. Thus, the appropriateness of the recovery of the New Testament stress on the imminence of Christ's return coupled with the New Testament emphasis that immortality, like righteousness, is in Christ alone. But the same truth also led logically to the truth that Christians should be concerned with the whole man, and the whole world (culture and all) in the here and now.

Atheism is almost a modern phenomenon. The ancient world knew little of it. But after the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, Deism was followed by atheism, and today in the post-Christian world, large numbers even of those who sit in church pews, do not believe in the existence of a personal God. In most countries of Europe, only about three per cent of the population attend church, and sabbathkeeping (even in the form of first day partial observance) is almost as rare as hen's teeth. Believing that he arrived by chance and that human life will end by chance, modern man mainly lives at a venture. Human life knows little distinction from animal life for many, and traditional Christian values are passé. And the two commandments in the heart of the ten, the only two positive ones, have both been set at naught in the modern world. With the dissolution of sabbath and family obligations, the foundations of morality have been destroyed. Fifty percent or more of marriages in many countries end in divorce and it has become fashionable for many to dispense with both the ceremony and the institution of marriage. If God is dead as Neitzche asserted, then "everything is permitted" as Dostoyevsky pointed out in his Brothers Karamazov. But the death of God means also the death of man, and the death of hope. Furthermore, the death of hope leads to the hope for death. Suicide is becoming pandemic particularly in the most materialistic societies of the world--being more prominent among professional classes than laborers, among whites rather than blacks, among the have's rather than the have not's.

The agony of modern man, as Joseph Wood Krutch so poignantly reflects it, is that he must resign himself to the conviction that he is an ethical animal in a universe which contains no ethical element, so that he cannot escape the predicament of regarding himself as a creature for which his world view makes no room. Thus, in man as its product, nature generates desires which it does not satisfy. The torture of the modern self is its schizophrenic heterodoxy, growing out of the pressures of a naturalistic world view and a non-naturalistic moral demand.... The modern man has out-moded reconciliation to God only to find that man cannot now be reconciled to himself; he cannot make himself feel as he thinks (that rationality is an unforeseen accident of nature), nor make himself think as he feels (that the universe is morally and purposively constituted). The longer the depths of reality are penetrated by eyes peering through lenses of modern premises about nature, the more profound is the sense of lostness and the more gripping the conviction that in such a non-rational environment, man as a rational animal simply does not belong.²⁰

In a world where man has lost both his name and his address, where man knows not where he came from nor whither he goes or who he is, the everlasting gospel which begins with its announcement of Fatherly love in creation and continues with the message of redeeming love at the Cross and the return of the Saviour to end all evil, is pertinent as never before! This message has power to move the world when presented in its purity.

Many may ask, "If Adventism has a message that is so relevant, how come it has done so little with such a message?" In answer, it should be pointed out that the divine intention and ideal purpose has often been temporarily frustrated by the weakness of the creature. Israel was intended as a light-bearer to all the gentile nations of earth, but only after the Babylonian captivity and later the synagogue system which attended the Diaspora was the divine plan fulfilled at least in part. As we consider our individual lives, which one of us has done half of what we might have done--which of us has completely fulfilled God's intention for us? It behooves us to be at least as charitable as regards movements as we are with ourselves.

One thing is certain--Seventh-day Adventism does have at its core teachings as relevant to modern needs as air is to lungs and seed to soil. What is now needed is to follow the hint of our Lord in Matthew 23:23 and refuse to make a world of an atom, or to make an atom of a world. We must not major in minors such as historical dates and heavenly geography. Only the gospel is primary. When we see light in Christ's hierarchy of values and follow His pattern, then the message for these days will encircle the globe right speedily. That gospel message assumes the facts of divine creation in the past, judgment in the future, life and righteousness for now and eternity only in Christ, and the abiding relevance of the law of God.

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A SUMMARY ON THE NATURE OF CHRIST

(Chapter 8)

by Gillian Ford

One of the most crucial areas of difference between traditional Adventism and evangelical Adventism is on the subject of the nature of Christ. It is a generalization to say that all traditional Adventists believe Christ had a sinful nature, but most do. There did appear to be a change in official Adventist belief on this subject in the '50s when Questions on Doctrine appeared. However, that book has fallen into disrepute in some official circles because of what they see as radical changes in doctrine from traditional Adventism. Because of this it has not been republished to date.

The reason both sides see the subject of the nature of Christ as crucial is that one's belief in it usually governs one's belief about perfectionism.

Traditional Adventism reasons like this. Christ was exactly like us in His human nature. He took our weakness and sinfulness and could have sinned. Yet He overcame by the power of the Spirit and did not commit sin. Christ came primarily to show that the law could be kept by sinful man when united to divine power through the Holy Spirit. Thus he was more of an example to us than a substitute. Even his death is considered by some to be more of an example of martyrdom than as substitution. However, they believe Christ died for men's past sins prior to justification. But at conversion, with his past sins forgiven, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, man receives a new nature. This new nature combines divine power with the human will in the same combination as manifested in Jesus, they say. Because of it, man after conversion may cease to sin, and keep God's law perfectly. In this view, perfectionism is the logical conclusion. A time is coming when all men's lives will come into review in the judgment. They must have enough of the Spirit (sanctification) to get them through the time of trouble, a time when the Holy Spirit will be withdrawn and they must live without a mediator.

Justification thus easily becomes "mere" justification, and sanctification supersedes it and is a much superior article. There soon comes a concentration on holiness, which they say is not righteousness by works, since it is the Spirit in us who keeps the law, and not we ourselves.

By contrast, many other Adventists say, no, Christ was not exactly like us in His human nature. If He were, He too would have needed a substitute. The question is not can man as he now is keep the law perfectly, but could he keep it perfectly prior to the Fall. It is not to be denied that a Christian should seek to keep the law, and do the will of God. But can he keep it well enough to enter into judgment with God? Sin is a more pervasive influence on mankind than a merely wrong act. It is like a cancer which envelopes and threatens to choke out life, rather than a superficial skin-blemish. So these Adventists see sin as a state in which man stands, rather than just wrong acts. Though a Christian may outwardly appear blameless as did Saul the Pharisee, he still falls far short of being in perfect tune with God's law.

The covenant made with Adam offered a blessing to those who obeyed and a curse upon those who disobeyed. Romans 5 teaches very clearly that the whole human race lost the blessing and earned the curse because of Adam's failure. Mankind as a race was in a dilemma. How could man get rid of the curse of death, and receive the blessing of life when the covenant was broken and he was clearly guilty.

The answer is that man was helpless to help himself. Only Christ could fulfill the requirements of the covenant, and He did it in two ways. He lived a perfect life to earn the blessing of life, and He died an atoning death to take away the curse of death. And since we have neither to offer God, Christ gives us them by substitution.

If Christ had had a sinful nature, He could not rightfully have given us the blessing from His obedience. He had to be the spotless Lamb of God, the second Adam, taking on humanity's weaknesses, but not their evil propensities. While it is true that He is our example in holy living, without which no man shall see the Lord, He is primarily our substitute.

When it comes to judgment, Christ goes into judgment for the Christian, and pleads His life and His blood on the sinner's behalf. It is only because God looks upon Christ's achievements and not those of man, that any can be saved. While Scripture does speak of a judgment of works, men's works are only reviewed for evidence of saving faith in Christ.

Christ has promised that He will never forsake the Christian, and that He will be with them to the end. The Holy Spirit will be withdrawn from the godless at the end of time, but He will never leave those for whom Christ has died. Christ's merits cover the Christian all the way. There is no need of fear in the judgment, though men should guard against presumption.

Ellen White has been used by both groups to prove each view of the nature of Christ. In RH Dec. 15th, 1986, she says, for instance, "In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Himself our sinful nature." Those who believe in the sinful nature of Christ have used such phrases to prove their point.

On the other hand, in SDABC, V, 1131, she says, "Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam ... He, Jesus, took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned, He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in him an evil propensity." (emphasis ours). Those who believe in the sinless nature of Christ have used such phrases to prove their point.

Recently a member of the White Estate referred to an interesting paper on this point (Poirier, "A Comparison of the Christology of Ellen White and Henry Melvill") at meetings run by the Ellen White Estate. This was the comment made on Poirier's paper. "Melvill's understanding of Christ's human nature may be the key to harmonizing Ellen White's statements on the topic. Melvill taught that fallen human had two characteristics--innocent infirmities and sinful propensities. Before the Fall, Adam suffered from neither of these. Jesus, taking a human nature weakened by two thousand years of sin, assumed the innocent infirmities--he could be tired and in pain--but not the

sinful propensities." (Henry Melvill and Ellen G. White: A Study in Literary and Theological Relationships, put out by the Ellen G. White Estate, Washington D.C., April, 1982).

The point is that such men as Melvill, whom Ellen White used on this topic, used the phrase "sinful nature" to mean one which had taken on innocent infirmities, but not sinful propensities. Melvill did not believe in the sinful nature of Christ as do many traditional Adventists, though he used the words "sinful nature," but with a different definition. We believe this adequately resolves the problem of the ambivalence of some of Ellen White's statements where she also used the phrase "sinful nature," but did not mean by it that Christ had sinful propensities.

Some say, if Christ was not just like us, how can He know what it is to be tempted? The fact is He was tempted in a very superior way compared to us, and His sympathies are very strong. But if I am drowning and going under for the third time, being in the water with someone who has nearly drowned and is going down with me, does not really help. I need someone who can pull me out and put me on safe ground.

Many evangelical Adventists think that the Nature of Christ is pivotal in practical terms. They say that the practice of emulating Christ, even with the power of the Spirit, can only lead to discouragement for those who are strictly honest with themselves--who measure their thoughts and attitudes against the highest of God's ideals and the demands of the law--if they do it to one day achieve such sanctification as will get them through the judgment. For the closer a person comes to Christ, the more he senses his sinfulness and inadequacy. However, when one believes that one has already gone into judgment with Christ at Calvary, this will *give* the impetus to seek to become like Christ--not to earn salvation, but to please God.

ENQUIRY'S PROGRESS

(Chapter 9)

by Gillian Ford

An earnest seeker for truth, Enquiry was his name, was wandering through a certain country, looking for sign-posts along the way. In the midst of a desert, he saw afar off a man seated on a rock with his head in his hands. "Maybe this man can direct me to some more fertile place," thought he to himself and hastened towards him.

"Good-day friend. My name's Enquiry, and I am seeking for the garment which will protect me in the coming earthquake. Can you help me?"

The man seated on the rock, Confused was his name, sighed deeply and wrung his hands.

"I wish I could, sir, but I need help myself. For I too have heard that there's an earthquake coming. They say that it's already rumbling, and folks round here are afraid that the whole town will be destroyed."

Enquiry: "I expect that you must be prepared for earthquakes anytime, for I believe that this is an earthquake area. But surely, if you have a good foundation in your house, you need not fear being shaken."

Confused: "But that's the trouble. I do not know if my foundation will stand the test. I have tried to strengthen the framework, but when ask for directions, one says this and one says that. And I don't know who's right. The foremen don't agree on the basic building techniques. So how's a non-professional like myself supposed to understand the blueprint, if the professionals can't agree?"

Enquiry: "There is only one thing we can do -- we will go through the land ourselves and ask the foremen what they each think the blueprint says, and then check it for ourselves."

So our friends, Enquiry and Confused, gathered up their belongings and set off. As they travelled along the highway, they came to the house of one Apathy, in the town of Laodicea. The house was filled with festivity, for Apathy's daughter Nonchalance had just been married to Sloth. Many neighbors from all over the country had been invited, and it looked as though almost everybody had come.

Apathy: "Come in and join us friends. There's plenty of room and much food, and a 11 the time in the world for you to enjoy yourselves."

Enquiry: "But have you not heard that there's an earthquake coming soon upon these parts?"

Apathy: "Not that false rumor again. They've been saying that for years, and nothing's happened yet. Look at the sky -- it's not earthquake weather. All's well in the world. Forget about the earthquake and come in and enjoy yourselves."

Confused: "Sir, we thank you for your offer, but while I have this conflict in my mind, I do not feel like feasting. So we'll be on our way, if you don't mind."

As they walked off, our friends set to talking.

Confused: "Could he be right, Enquiry? Is this a waste of time? I have known these folks for years, and things have always been the same. Perhaps it's just a rumor."

Enquiry: "The blueprint says that in the days of Noah, it was just the same. They were eating and drinking, and giving in marriage... but the flood came. Do not envy them my friend, for it is better to be confused than apathetic. For, if you do not get discouraged, with a little light, confusion is easily curable. But Apathy will be hard to cure, for he rests content."

So saying, they entered into a dry place where there was no water. Confused told Enquiry that there was much rock there, so that though it rained enough to make the place fertile, the fault was with the ground. For so soon as it rained, the water ran off down into the valley, and left this dry place no better than before.

Here they met a man called Prejudice, who greeted Confused profusely, for he had often done business with him.

Prejudice: "Greetings, friend Confused. I know you though you probably don't recognize me. Who is your friend?"

Enquiry: "My name is Enquiry. I seek for the truth of the blueprint. My friend and I are engaged in searching for anyone who can help us to find the garment which will protect us from the earthquake soon to come."

Prejudice: "I can help you, for in the matter of truth so-called, have more to say than most men realize. I own a chain store corporation, called Grapevine Inc., which has branches throughout the country. With me work several partners--Rumor, Criticism, Morbid Excitement, to name a few -- and we have more work than we can handle. We have fleets of couriers whose main work it is to take disjointed pieces of information from one part of the country to another."

Confused: "What a great privilege you have to take the truth from one place to another."

Prejudice: "Well, it's not so much the truth we're interested in. Truth is often insipid, so we have a few tricks which we use to foster business. Our business is divided into three areas, and the first deals mostly with ideas. In that section we try to pull the ideas around so as to put things in the worst light. We find they sell much better that way. In another section, we deal more with people, for while ideas can be boring, the juicy details of someone's lives are much more interesting. In the third section, we have most success. Here we put together ideas and people. If we can get a perverted idea and link it with the idiosyncrasies of some person, you can be sure that it will sell. If the truth is a little pale, we color it up. You'd hardly recognize it that way, but we find from market research that it's far more acceptable."

Confused was more predisposed to deal with Prejudice, but Enquiry withstood him, saying, "I think that I will be but a poor customer of

yours, for my business is truth, and yours I think is against it."

Prejudice: "Suit yourself. But you will see that to deal with truth without Prejudice is almost impossible -- and you will find almost none who do so prosper. For I have branches everywhere, and centers in such variant communities as the town they call Tradition, and the one on the other side of the bridge, called Antinomia. I can work in almost any milieu, and so efficiently that people hardly know that I am there. Yet often I have the major part in forming their decisions. You do not realize the extent of my influence. There are few people I do not touch. And even if you will not deal with me, if you are seeking the unvarnished truth, you will soon come up against me, for I am stronger than you think."

Enquiry bade him farewell and urged Confused ahead.

Enquiry: "Prejudice is like a thick black wall through which no light can pierce. I think we will be advised to avoid him like the plague."

Confused: "There must be some reliability to what he says, or he would go out of business."

Enquiry: "Not so, my friend. If people sought earnestly for truth and truth alone, this man's business would soon diminish. But while men lean to other men's opinions, he can only flourish."

Enquiry would have turned down into the Lush Lands, but Confused espied a broad path with a signpost "Information." Urging Enquiry to go with him, they left the road and started downhill. Soon they found themselves in difficulty, for the path was very steep, and in no place did it venture upwards. So they found no place to rest, but made much ground by frequent downward slips. The man who owned the place was one Criticism, whom you recall worked for Prejudice. He saw Enquiry and Confused coming swiftly down and went forth to meet them.

Criticism: "Greetings, friends. I may have the information you are seeking."

Enquiry: "We seek for truth, and for the foremen, who will explain to us the blueprint, that we may secure the garment which will protect us in the earthquake to come."

Criticism: "Well, those are fine aims, but far too idealistic. The foremen so I hear, live in isolated castles, separated from the real world, and spend their days breathing platitudes which will not work. And as for those at the Council Offices, the mayor and all his council, they spend their days in committees, with policies, and promotions, and promulgations. They have no time for anti-earthquake techniques. Maybe once the town was all right, but now there's only corruption. Stay with me a while and I will tell you some of the things I've heard."

So Confused stayed and listened as Criticism itemized the faults of each of the foremen, and also the mayor and council. But Enquiry drew aside and spent his time meditating on the blueprint. Finally, when Criticism took Confused inside his house to show him his collection of cupboards, and their indwelling skeletons -- and then into his weaponry filled with sharp stakes and cruel whips, though Confused remained confused, he did not like the spirit of Criticism, and thus was soon willing to leave. The path up to the top was much easier for Enquiry to tackle, for he had not listened much to Criticism and took little account of what he said. But Confused was constantly wavering and slipping back, and many times his feet were caught in snares, which took much undoing. This happened because he had taken counsel with Criticism, and believed some of what he told him.

On the way they passed many skeletons, whose feet had been caught in snares and who had nobody to unloose them. When they had reached the top of the ravine, Enquiry said to Confused, "I see more clearly that we must go and see these men ourselves, and not listen to the hearsay spread by Prejudice and Criticism. For their work comes from the demolition squad."

So saying, they walked into the town of Tradition, and checked in at the local hotel, where they were delighted to meet several of the foremen. A group soon formed, and they fell to discussion.

Enquiry: "We are earnestly seeking truth about the earthquake soon to come and the garment which alone can protect us. We know that you foremen around the country are divided. Will you tell us what you believe."

Perfexia: "There are some people who think that all the emphasis on putting on the garment is new -- and that we do not understand it. But I think I speak for most of the ancestors of this town, and for this present group when I say that we have always known about the garment and the earthquake to come. It is true that for a while there during the last century, we wandered into the suburb of Legalism, but it was only temporarily. When we realized how poor the area was, and that we had been mistaken, we moved out, and never did go back to dwell. Since then I think I can say authoritatively that among those who adhere to my view, there are more people fully reflecting the image of the son of the architect than in any other town. It's the reflecting of the image of the son that will save us in the earthquake. In fact, the son of the architect will not come back until a goodly portion of the townspeople take this seriously, and fully reflect him."

Re-examined: "Perfexia doesn't quite agree with me on this point, though we agree on doctrine -- I say the township ought to make a public apology because there were two apprentices back there who had the right version of putting on the garment ninety years ago, and the town has never come right out and made their ideas the official position."

Confused: "I have heard much about one, Primajust. What do you think of what he's saying"?

Perfexia: "For one thing, Primajust says that the garment is made in heaven with no stitch of man's devising -- as though we didn't believe that already. But I say it's no good to us up in heaven. It's the wearing of it that matters. I've heard say that Primajust doesn't believe in wearing it."

Enquiry: "Why do you think it is more important to wear it?"

Perfexia: "Because we have to get ready for the cut-off point. The son of the architect is going to finish his work in heaven soon, and when he does, we have to live without a mediator. And what's more, the chief helper is going to be withdrawn. And if we don't have a perfect character, and if we haven't ceased to sin knowingly. In short, if we are not overcomers, we'll never make it in the time of trouble."

Confused: "Criticism told me that there were people in this town who believe that one doesn't even need a garment, that one can keep the building rules without a garment."

Perfexia: "I'm often accused of this myself, but I have never believed that one can keep the building rules by oneself. What I believe is that

the son of the architect sent his chief helper to abide in us -and he keeps the building rules within us. Therefore it is not we who do it, but his chief helper within us."

Enquiry: "Was the death of the son of the architect necessary"?

Perfexia: "Oh, yes, of course. It is by this that our past sins are forgiven. And it is by this that the chief helper was enabled to come Of course it was necessary. But we are not at the foot of the cross today -- there are even better things for us who are forgiven. Now that the chief helper is here within us, we can keep our robes perfectly spotless. And when we fully surrender, we cease to sin. This is what we call perfection or maturity."

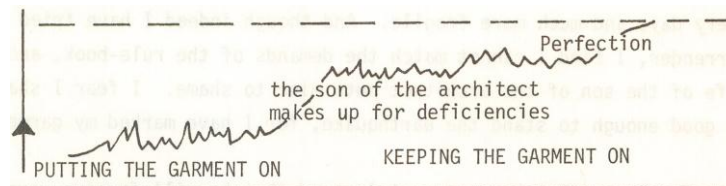
Confused: "Why did the son of the architect come in the first place"?

Model Man: "He came to forgive us for our past sins. But most of all he came to show us how to overcome sin. His nature was just like ours. His foundation was broken so that he would understand what it means to be tempted (and here Re-examined said "Amen"). He was our example in sinlessness, but through the indwelling of the chief helper he never sinned. In this he showed us that if we will use the tools that he used, we too can overcome sin as he did. And by this means we can be perfect. He is waiting for us to vindicate him by our behavior. When a group of the townspeople take this seriously, they will become the nicest people in the world, and then the son of the architect will take them home -- as soon as he can trust them in heaven."

Confused was delighted, and asked, "I want this victory over sin in my life. How can I get it"?

Surrender: "The reason people sin is because they are not fully surrendered. For if they were, and the chief helper were allowed full access in their lives, they would not want to sin, and with his power could overcome. Therefore, Confused, if you would be ready for the cut-off point, your greatest need is to surrender."

Another man raced over with a chart, which he claimed explained the relationship between putting on the garment and keeping it on very satisfactorily, according to his thinking. He was an important man in the area where he came from. This is how the chart looked.



Chartly: "You notice that at conversion, we put the garment on, and then each day we make some upward progress, and the son of the architect makes up whenever our workmanship is inferior. But you will note, that while keeping on the garment, the chart is ever upwards onto victory until finally at the cut-out point, and even beforehand (at this juncture, he waved his pencil excitedly), we reach perfection."

At this point Enquiry turned to Confused, and said they must retire for it had been a full day and both were tired. They thanked the gentlemen for their graciousness, and went outside to stretch their legs. As they walked down the street, they noticed the townspeople thronging the sidewalk. There were some who were rejoicing that they could fully surrender and overcome sin. And these spoke gladly to others of surrendering all to the son of the architect. There were others who came from the general direction of Pharisaism, and these became proud of their surrender, and withdrew into a small group by themselves.

Still others were seeking to surrender, but found themselves unable to achieve perfection. These were sighing and crying for fear they would not be ready for the cut-off point. Enquiry spoke to one of these whose name was Poor in Spirit.

Enquiry: "What's wrong? Have you heard some bad news"?

Poor in Spirit: "Oh, sir, it is not bad news to everyone, for you can see many glad faces here. But I have been trying to surrender that I may be fitted to live through the cut-off point when there will be no more mercy. But I shall never qualify. For though I keep those rules my very best for love of the architect, I find they grow ever deeper every day, and much more fragile. And though indeed I have tried to surrender, I find I cannot match the demands of the rule-book, and the life of the son of the architect puts mine to shame. I fear I shall not be good enough to stand the earthquake, for I have marked my garment."

Enquiry: "But have you not learned that he will forgive your sins"?

Poor in Spirit: "I know I am forgiven for past sins, and the chart you saw shows that the architect's son will make up for what I lack. But I haven't heard them talk much about what happens when you don't surrender very well and make mistakes. For the day is coming when I won't be allowed to make any more mistakes, and I cannot see that I will ever be ready for the cut-off point. . . ."

And here she began to weep with great sobs. Enquiry sought to comfort her and encouraged her to come along with them, for he said, there are other points of view, and maybe you will learn something that will help you overcome. So they determined to set off early in the morning. With this in mind, Enquiry and Confused returned to their hotel and she to her home where they soon slept soundly.

As soon as the first cock crew, our friends were up and dressed, and after eating breakfast went out into the street where Poor in Spirit was waiting patiently for them. Quickly they set off out of the main township and soon came to a pleasant place which led into fields filled with waving corn. But to their left there was a thick wall and a swamp which was surrounded by thick woods.

A little way ahead was a signpost, which pointed on the right to Primajust, but on the left over the wall to Antinomia. Confused shivered as he considered all that Criticism had told him about Primajust, for as you know, when mud is thrown, it sticks. He would have urged Enquiry on, but at that point he slipped over, and as Enquiry picked him up, Primajust saw them and called them from an open window.

Primajust: "Come this way. Be sure you do not go over to the left, for though we seem so closely situated, the nature of the ground is very different on each side of that wall. The architect put that wall there, so that unsuspecting apprentices could not slip unawares into the swamp, but must take pains to climb over if they wish to go there."

Enquiry: "We are seeking the garment to protect us from the earthquake to come when all that can be shaken will be shaken. We have just visited Tradition, and spoke to Perfexia, Surrender, Re-Examined, and Model-Man, to get an idea of what they believe. And now we wish

to hear you out. For we hear that many of the foremen disagree about the basic facts of building and decided that we must hear them all, and then study the blueprint for ourselves."

Primajust: "An excellent idea. I wish more people would do likewise."

Confused was suspicious and so he tackled Primajust straightaway.

Confused: "I hear say that you are actually a part of Antinomia, and that you believe that the garment is up in heaven, and we don't need to put it on." (For this is what Criticism had told him.)

Primajust: "I see that Criticism and Prejudice are still at work. They make good use of the fact that I dwell near to Antinomia. But see (and here he took all three through the house to the back window, where in the distance we could see a row of houses)... we are not so far from Tradition either, for the road to here winds around somewhat. The truth is that all three are not so far apart, and many travellers have veered off the main road and lost their way. However, it is always true that I am more connected with Antinomia." With this he unrolled his copy of the blueprint and showed us where even the son of the architect had been thus accused, and others too.

Confused: "Well, what do you believe about putting the garment on"?

Primajust: "My name is Primajust, not Solajust. For I have always taught that one must wear the garment. I am also accused of not believing in the indwelling of the chief helper, but neither is this true. For I believe that the putting on of the garment occurs simultaneously with the coming of the chief helper. And the coming of the chief helper is the beginning of the wearing of the garment, so you can see that I believe in all three. However, though I believe that we must wear the garment, it is the garment itself that has value, and not the fact that we are wearing it."

At this, Poor in Spirit handed Primajust the chart, which she had brought from Tradition, and asked him what he thought of it.

Primajust: "I cannot agree that the putting on of the garment (justification) is for past sins only. For we need justification continually for the constant commission of sin. And in the judgment, however holy the life, even when the chief helper comes to dwell within, it is not sufficient to match the requirements of the rule book. Only the imputed life will do, not the imparted. The wearing of the garment (sanctification) is necessary as evidence of saving faith, but does not in itself save us. And though our sanctified acts are necessary in this way, they are but as filthy rags as compared to the character of the architect. Neither do I agree with this chart concerning the upward line that proceeds on to perfection, as though, as we proceed, we need less and less of the imputed merits of the son, for we have more and more of the imparted.

"I say that we are only ever seen as perfect in the son, that is, claiming his merits, and not our own. It is easily summarized. The son's work for us saves, and his works in us are the result. As I say, these sanctified works are necessary as evidence and therefore we cannot be saved without them, but are not saved by them. But others say that both his work for us and in us saves."

Enquiry: "Well, tell us, Primajust, just what are you saying about the putting on of the garment. Why do you see it as so important, for Perfexia says that he has known it all along"?

Primajust: "Firstly, I will pose you these rhetorical questions under headings A and B. The ones under A are these -- if you died tonight, would you be saved in the Test Day? (Poor in Spirit trembled, for she thought she wouldn't.) And, if your answer is yes, on what basis would you be saved? My question under heading B is this -- is there evidence in your life that you are right with God, not just for the test day, but now, that by your witness you may win others to the son of the architect? Here is my point, that both sets of questions are important. But I say, in our town set B have assumed more importance, while in my thinking the questions under heading A are paramount, for this is primary and little understood by the townspeople. Also, the question under B can only be fully answered after question A has been dealt with.

"On being ready for the Test Day, I say that this is how we must prepare. The blueprint -- book of Romans, ch. 3 (NEB) says that 'no human being can be justified in the sight of God for having kept the law.' (v. 20). If you read chapter 7, you will find that the law applies not just to our behavior, but to our thoughts and motives. For St. Paul thought that his behavior was all right until he came to 'Thou shalt not covet,' and there he was undone (v. 7). Thus God has chosen another way apart from law (Ro. 3:21), for all have sinned and come short of his glory (v. 23).

"If you read on into vv. 24-26, you will see that we are justified by God's act of liberation in His Son. In Him has come the judgment of the world. Through the sacrifice of the Son, our sins are paid for. We receive it by faith. And so, today, tomorrow, and even in the judgment, we are not saved by what is done in us, but whether we are in the Son or not.

"Then look at Ro. 5: 12-18. For here we have a picture of the salvation of the world. There are two representatives of the race, one our father Adam, the other, Christ. Through Adam, we are told, sin entered the world. All men are born alienated from God, all lost in Adam. But here comes our other representative, Adam the second, our Lord Jesus Christ, and this passage tells us that just as we were all lost in our first representative, so we were all reconciled to God by our second representative. The work is finished, and we are beseeched to be reconciled to God, for he is reconciled to us (2 Cor. 5:14, 18-20). All that was necessary for our salvation was accomplished there. Remember only those who take hold of that salvation by faith and respond in obedience will be judged as in the Son."

And here he smiled at Poor in Spirit. "Thus it is, that if you are trusting in the Son today, in His finished work, then you are ready for the cut-off point now, ready for death, ready for the Test Day."

Poor in Spirit: "It sounds too good to be true, and is the best of news."

Confused: "Criticism told me that many of the foremen are angry because you say that the works of the chief helper are but filthy rags."

Primajust: "As concerns the book of rules, the works that we do even wearing the garment are never good enough so that we may stand in the Test Day as fully keeping the rules. Yet at the same time it pleases the architect when his apprentices put their whole hearts into obeying him. Their willing spirit is pleasing to God. But in the final reckoning even the best they did will not be good enough."

As he said this, there came a knock at the door, and Primajust excused himself, for he had many callers. So Enquiry and Confused bade him farewell, but Poor in Spirit said that she would stay awhile to learn some more. For it was new to her. As they walked down the path

from the house, Confused said, "I can see why some say that he is liable to lead folk to Antinomia, because he speaks much of continuing to sin."

Enquiry: "But he did speak about obedience, and note that Poor in Spirit did not take him that way. Remember that you came influenced by what you heard from Prejudice and Criticism."

As he spoke these words they came level with the signpost. Nearby, just over the wall near Antinomia, they saw a woman with painted lips and nails, bending over, sowing seeds in the swamp. She made a wink at Confused which caused him to blush, but Enquiry pretended he hadn't noticed.

Enquiry: "Good morning, what are you planting there"?

Licencia: "I'm sowing wild oats. It's so much fun, although I'm told the harvest's not much good. But I sow hoping there won't be a harvest!"

Confused: "We have just been talking to Primajust. What do you think of what he's saying"?

Licencia: "Oh, we like it. My friend Hardheart and I went along and heard him once recently. Of course, we don't go along with him on everything, but what I do is just listen to the bits I like. Well, I'm afraid I don't have time to spend in serious conversation, so I'll be getting back to sowing my wild oats. Come and join me."

At this, Confused bolted off, and Enquiry followed quickly. Not far away they came to Holy Mountain and here they saw a church and many cars.

Enquiry: "There must be a service going on. Let's go and see."

And so they hastened on, entered the church and sat quietly at the back. The minister, Relationship was his name, was of benevolent demeanor, and seeing him, they loved him. His sermon began like this:

Relationship: "Dear friends, I have been so appreciative of Primajust, whose stress on the finished work of the architect's son has meant a great deal to me. And I am trying to say more about this myself. But there we part company somewhat. For I disagree on how we keep the garment on. This is what I mean...."

"He went on to speak at some length, and the crux of what he said was this -- when the building first collapsed (the Fall), back at the beginning of things, it was the relationship between the first apprentice and the architect that was sundered. The son of the architect came to forgive us our sins and thus to restore the broken relationship. Once we are converted it is by meditation on the blueprint, and communion through the chief helper that the relationship is kept going. This relationship of faith is the means by which we continue to accept His justifying grace. If we will commune with God every day, by prayer and blueprint study, our lives will be entirely changed. And here he held up a small book called 'Steps to the Architect's Son.' "It's all on page 47," he said. And he continued that while the relationship is maintained, and so long as we are controlled by the architect, sin will be hateful to us and obedience will be natural.

He also said that he didn't believe in 'slugging it out with the devil' at the point of temptation, and that the only conflict we have with sin is outside of surrender. Once surrendered, the only battle we fight is to continue the relationship. Through habitual relationship, the architect will give us the gift of ultimate abiding (absolute surrender), where our feelings, etc., will be totally in line with those of the architect all of the time.

As he finished, Enquiry and Confused sought an audience with him and found him most courteous and benign of disposition.

Enquiry: "We seek the garment, which will protect us in the earthquake to come. Not two hours past we spoke to Primajust. I think that much of what you said he would endorse. Pray tell me more of where you depart from him."

Relationship: "I cannot accept that our performance will be "rotten" until the master comes back. And neither do I think that all the good we do with the chief helper indwelling us is as filthy rags. In fact, only the works that come from surrender are acceptable to the architect. Any others done from forcing oneself are not acceptable. I also think that keeping on the robe (sanctification) is by faith alone, and here we disagree, for Primajust maintains there is co-operation which involves our effort though it is inspired by faith. Furthermore, he sees as of more importance the element of justification in the phrase 'righteousness by faith,' whereas I see as more important the element of faith -- for faith, abide, trust, surrender -- these are all the precious keys by which we maintain the relationship."

And then he grinned, and said, "He sure can talk fast, can't he"?

They shook hands and Enquiry and Confused walked out of church where they met one Gainsay, who entered into spirited discussion as soon as he heard their errand.

Gainsay: "You mark my words, these ideas of Primajust can only lead to anarchy. People around here are unbelievably confused. And he's got it all wrong. He says that putting on the garment (justification) means only to 'declare righteous.' But I say (and here he got out his blueprint), that it means more than that. For if the architect declared somebody as righteous, when he really wasn't so, then you can see that the architect would be a liar. I see justification as the architect's declaration of something which he has made so. He has given his righteousness to the believer by the chief helper. Primajust denies that justification is the new birth, and that the imputation of righteousness is an impartation. Then, Primajust says we cannot keep the law. And that (and here he raised a militant finger) was the first lie that the devil made in the beginning. I agree with Surrender and Perfexia that at the cut-off point, though we will still have a sinful nature, we will not be sinning. For we must live without a mediator. "

At this, he promised to send them some material. So they left and headed south towards the coast, for Relationship had suggested they visit his sagacious professor who agreed with him that the wearing of the garment (sanctification) was by faith alone. They spent a whole afternoon with the professor, who agreed wholeheartedly with Primajust on the putting on of the garment, but did not agree with him on the wearing of the garment.

Professor: "I also disagree that all the good we do with the aid of the chief helper is filthy rags. I would rather call sanctification the holding of treasure in earthen vessels. How could that treasure be classified as filthy rags when it is the work of God"?

As they left Enquiry said to Confused, "Maybe there is a misunderstanding here. For Primajust believes that sanctification is good and holy, and necessary. But he says that in the judgment, however good the works of faith are, they will not be sufficient to match the law. There is no question but that the Spirit's work in us is perfect, but because it emanates through men who are corrupt channels, those works, begun by the Spirit, but coming through us are so defiled that they are not acceptable without the merits of the son."

As they trudged south, they came to a place called Pretty Hill, and seeing a light, thought to ask for rest that night. They approached timidly, fearing that they might be turned away, but were warmly greeted from afar off by two figures on the porch who greeted them most cordially, and welcomed them like brothers.

Tender-heart: "Our names are Love-a lone and Tender-heart. There are no words used in this house such as blood, or wrath, or penalty, or punish, or propitiate. We teach that the architect can be trusted."

Enquiry and Confused found the hosts most congenial, the stay most comfortable, the beds soft and the food easy to digest. And as they talked together, Confused especially felt at ease, for he had often been told that the architect was a stern judge, ready to throw a ton of bricks at all who displeased him. Thus he had grown up afraid of him. But Enquiry grew very quiet and thoughtful, and caused Confused to ask if all was well.

Enquiry: "It seems to me that I could not really trust a God who took evil lightly and did not punish those who murdered, stole and dealt unjustly. The blueprint speaks with those words of which you do not approve."

Love-alone: "But those words are mere figures of speech. For though the blueprint speaks of judgment --such judgment men bring on themselves. They reap what they sow. The architect himself does not act out in judgment, because he is love and cannot act against himself. As for wrath -- it is merely that the architect gives up on men, when after much patient coaxing, he cannot win them. And blood and penalty! Did the son of the architect have to die to 'pay for our sins'? We say not. It was to show that he loved us so much that he would die to prove it. Such words as propitiation we abhor. For such language reminds us of the heathen gods, who sacrifice to placate an angry deity. Our architect is not like that."

Enquiry: "I think that one would have to explain away too much of the blueprint to go along with this. And though you would not intend it, it seems to me that if you so stressed love (good as it is, and we all need to learn that the architect is trustworthy) -- that it must eventuate that the sacredness of the book of rules must be lowered. And as for propitiation, I have always understood that it is not meaning that we must placate the architect to appease his wrath -- but rather that he himself has placated his own wrath. This wrath is not the anger of a pagan deity, petty and small, but the recoil of a holy being against sin. No, I fear I cannot go along with this, for though it says some very good things, I do not agree with it when it tries to explain away some concepts which to me are vital."

Confused stared at him with astonishment, for this was the first time that Enquiry had come out and spoken his mind strongly. Before he had been contented just to listen. In such a mind, they went to bed --Confused to sound sleep, but Enquiry tossed and turned all night. They left the house early next morning, embraced warmly by the masters of the house, for they were good and honest men, and lived the love they taught. Before too many hours had gone, they entered into a large populace called Middletown, and found that several people had heard of their coming and wished to speak with them. Said one called Antipax:

Antipax: "We hear your names are Enquiry and Confused. Unless you take my advice, Confused you shall remain (here he nodded to Confused), and Devastated you shall become (to Enquiry). I wish to warn you before you go much further that there are false prophets on the loose. No doubt you know the name of Brimstone, a man who once before caused much division in our land. We hear he's changed his tune, but not his tactics. And I don't intend to forget what happened in the past. For as I often put it, 'Can anything good come out of Brimstone'? And if you didn't know it, there's another man called Pax who is his cohort. A pox on Pax! He has the audacity to try to tell us where we're wrong -- he's not even from our community mind you. How I ask you can he understand what it's really like in this country when he's never even lived here. But worse than that, there is a traitor in the land." (Here his eyelids narrowed, and he paused the more to make his point). Primajust! (He hissed the name.) It's a plot. Anyone can see it -- all the same nationality. What I say is, 'away with such fellows from the earth! For they ought not to live....'"

Enquiry here could take no more, and asked what Antipax specifically had against Pax and Primajust (he dare not ask about Brimstone for this seemed like the unpardonable sin).

Antipax: "Well, Pax has got his history all wrong, and doesn't say anything about sanctification. As for Primajust, I hear say that he doesn't believe in sanctification either. They also say headquarters are going to take away his building-permit [written long before it happened!]"

Enquiry: "Sir, perceive that you are well acquainted with Prejudice. For from speaking with Primajust himself just recently, and knowing well how Criticism has borne him much false witness, I know that what you say is wrong. I beg you to desist. Such character assassination speaks ill of you, and does not help the truth."

Another man came forward, Fairplay was his name, and backed Enquiry up.

Fairplay: "As builder's apprentices, belonging to the guild, we are said to have certain principles to maintain. I think particularly of the Golden Rule. Let all be done in love. One thing I want to know is this. If we have the truth about the architect, what are we afraid of? Will it not stand up to examination...."?

But this speech caused no small stir among some rabble in the crowd, and they dragged Fairplay from the scene and dealt with him most brutally. Many of the inhabitants were ashamed to see such loutish behavior from some who professed to follow the architect, and spoke kindly to Enquiry and Confused. One drew them both aside.

Balance: "There are a lot of folk in this part of the country who feel as I do. I've known Primajust for many years, and he's a good friend, and I trust him. In many ways I go along with what he's saying. But I wish he would stress sanctification a bit more. His harp seems to only have one string, and there are lots more. (He looked both ways and when he could see that no-one was in range, he lowered his voice and carried on.) "We don't all agree with those who live in Tradition you know. For instance, we don't think that the son of the architect had the same broken foundations we do. And we don't agree about the cut-off point as they see it. And some of us (he looked around nervously again) even get Brimstone's magazine, and agree with it. But it doesn't do to get connected with somebody as notorious as that, even if he might be saying the right things. You know, you can't fight Prejudice, and if you come out too openly, you get a bad name, and nobody will

listen to you."

Confused: "But Primajust never mentioned Brimstone when we were there."

Balance: "I know him well enough to know that he has very little contact with either of them in fact. But he does say that Brimstone's changed his tune, and won't come out and oppose him. The mayor and council would like him to come straight out and blast the man. Because he hasn't done it, it does him a lot of harm."

Enquiry: "Antipax was saying that Pax doesn't believe in keeping on the garment. Is that really so"?

Balance: "What most say that oppose him, and they say this of Primajust also is that they make too much separation between justification and sanctification."

Enquiry: "Well, thank you for coming up and speaking to us, Balance. I will keep in mind what you have told me, and if I meet Primajust again, or anyone who knows him well, I will ask about this separation."

And so they left the townsquare and headed towards a playhouse located nearby.

Confused: "I just wish that somebody would do me a favor and sit me down and explain what it's really all about, and why it matters. There must be something because it really stirs people up."

As they drew near to the playhouse, Enquiry noticed that the title of the programme was "The Importance of Being Earnest," and not being interested in frittering his time away would have gone straight by. But just then the manager came out and invited them in.

Manager: "It's not what you think," he said. "It's all about righteousness by faith, and the importance of being earnest about it. Come in and see, because the play is just about to begin." So our erstwhile friends went in, and on the way they read the programme. And this is what it said:

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST (ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH)

The play is in the form of the Greek Tragedies, and consists of dialogue between two characters, who assume various masks. These masks represent the views of different foremen. A narrator whose name is Summary will make the commentary, and clarify their points of difference.

Soon they were seated in the auditorium, the lights were dimmed, and spotlights played upon a stage. The narrator, called Summary, who looked remarkably like Fairplay, and must have been his brother, was seated in the center, and on each side there was a player. Besides them both were tables on which could be seen varied masks, and as the programme began, and the masks were fitted over their faces, it could be seen that different names were written on them.

Summary: "Before we begin tonight, folks, I would like to say this. We have been told that if we cling to the merits of the architect's son, we can never, never be lost. And surely that is simple enough for the smallest and weakest apprentice. Though you will hear varied opinions as the play progresses, remember that this discussion is not meant to break down, such as Criticism would, but rather to lead us all back to the blueprint to see which things are so."

There was a hearty Amen from the audience.

Summary: "And I must insist that you take the blueprint first, and not the red books that we have been given to explain them, for such is the correct order. If you reverse it, you will see that all can prove their case by using some, and neglecting other parts."

This brought forth another Amen. Confused nudged Enquiry and said, "This sounds as though it will be profitable."

Summary: "Very well, we will begin. Now players, take up the masks of Perfexia on the one side and Primajust on the other."

Then Summary began to read a list of topics, for instance original sin, and the nature of the architect's son, the nature of sin, and so on. As he did so, each player spoke through his mask.

Summary: "Original sin."

Perfexia: "I do not believe in original sin. For that has never been a part of the teaching of our towns-people. I believe that when the chief helper comes to indwell at regeneration, we come back to the stage of Adam the first, not physically, but spiritually."

Primajust: "I do believe in original sin, for in the book of Romans chapter 5, we are told that our first father Adam sinned and by that sin made all men sinners. Thus we are born with a bent to evil, and even when the chief helper comes to indwell us, that nature remains. And thus we have to battle with it until the consummation of all things. Though I believe that we can overcome temptation, I do not believe that we come to a stage where we no longer sin, in the sense of coming short of the glory of God, until the end of all things when he will change our body. "

Summary: "Sin."

Perfexia: "Sin is transgression of the law, and relates to our behavior, but that does not exclude our thoughts."

Primajust: I see sin as a state that has resulted from the disobedience of the First Adam. Thus we are separated from the father. It includes our acts, but is not acts alone. I believe the blueprint divides sin into several categories. The first I have mentioned. The second is presumptuous sin, or that done with a high-hand. This will take us out of grace. The third is sin of weakness, which consists of those acts which the Christian does unwillingly, but through the weakness of the flesh, or through lack of knowledge."

Summary: "The requirement of the law in the judgment."

Perfexia: "The law requires correct behavior motivated by the chief helper's indwelling. Thus it requires a righteousness for sins of the past and this is provided by justification. For present sin, a work of blotting out is being done in the sanctuary of the heart. Through the presence of the chief helper we may cease to sin if we will only surrender. This is sanctification. If our robes are stained in any way, we will not be fit for the judgment. And therefore, all must seek to make their garments white, before the cut-off point when we must live with only our imparted righteousness."

Primajust: "I say that the law requires more than just behavior. It requires a sinless nature. And this is why I see as important the nature of the son of the architect. For if he had a sinful nature, by which I mean, if he had a bent to evil like we do, the sacrifice would not have done. And thus the only way that we poor mortals can ever face the judgment is by the substitution of the life of the son of the architect being accounted in place of our own. Only his perfect nature and character will pass the strict requirement of the judgment day. And though it is true when we come to Christ the Holy Spirit begins a work of holiness within us, and right behavior should result, in itself this change of behavior is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the judgment. Only the imputed merits will do."

Summary: "The work of regeneration by the chief helper."

Gainsay: "Let me say again that I believe that the work of the Holy Spirit is perfect, and not filthy rags. For justification means to make perfectly righteous, and not just to declare us so."

And here, there was a rapid changing of masks, as various ones, including Devotions and his professor, though not all agreeing with Gainsay on his definition of justification, rallied around the banner in support of the perfect work of the Holy Spirit within us. And some rude fellows in the audience made the most of it by expressing their disapproval of Primajust by throwing rotten tomatoes.

The player let it slide off his back, and waited for silence before he spoke.

Primajust: "I read in the blueprint in Zech 3 that all go into the judgment in filthy garments, and note that even David in the Psalms rejoiced in salvation and in the same breath said that his sins were as numerous as the hairs on his head. But I concede that we need go no further in debate for this is where the center of our differences lies. For I believe that once one sees these three points, which I will outline, the case for the primacy of justification is won.

"First, the nature of sin -- that it involves not just behavior, but thoughts and motives, and indeed one's very state. And connected with this is an understanding of the seriousness of what our first father did. For this area I believe is not understood by Perfexia, Surrender, Relationship, nor by Love-Alone, and Tenderheart. To me it is a great weakness of their case, and if they fully understood it, then they would see the necessity of stressing the imputed righteousness of Christ.

"Second, the nature of law and its requirements in the judgment. That it requires a sinless nature, not just sinless behavior. So that in that case, imparted righteousness, however good and necessary, can in no wise have a part in our salvation, except as evidence of our faith (which is important, mind you).

"Third, the necessity not just for death (which though Tenderheart and Love-Alone contend is not a necessity, I say it is), but also for a sinless life to be substituted in the place of the sinner's life. For it seems to me that these others have seen the significance to some extent of the death of Christ but not of the substitution of his perfect character.

"These, I believe, are the areas which we should be studying, and believe that if light is seen here, the necessity for the imputed righteousness of Christ becomes obvious, for nothing else will do. And this will not lead to licence if fully comprehended. For when we see that He has given us all that we need for salvation, and that there is nothing that we can add by our perfection, the fruit of such a realization will be holiness or nothing. For I maintain that there are only two positions and one is either in or out of Christ. One either will respond to Christ with obedience, or rejection. And thus these evidences of our faith, these sanctified works, will show our status in or out of Christ. But we are not saved, nor lost by good or bad works, but rather by a relationship which will be manifest in the fruits of the spirit, or those of the evil one."

Summary requested Primajust to speak about the difference between justification and sanctification, and he replied.

Primajust: "This is another area where there is much misunderstanding for I have never separated these. But what I say is they must be distinguished. For though they come together, and both proceed like parallel railway lines, there are significant differences, and these must be acknowledged. Justification is a finished work, and is our status -complete in Christ. While sanctification is not finished until Christ himself administers the finishing touches when He comes. And thus for Christ's glory and for sweet assurance's sake, we distinguish between the complete and the incomplete. For we can know that our surety is in Him, and not in this unstable shell -- speaking of the body. Thus in experience the two are inseparable, but when one speaks of the basis of assurance, we distinguish them."

Summary: "The cut-off point."

Model Man: "The son has left his work of mediation, and the chief helper is withdrawn from the earth. So all the saints live by their imparted righteousness, for sin now committed can no longer be forgiven."

Primajust: "The chief helper has not been withdrawn from the saints, but only from the wicked. At this time, the Test Day is over, and the saints no longer are in probationary time. The sabbath test is past, and they have proven by their loyalty that they would rather die than knowingly commit sin. But they are still sinners by nature, and will be so until the transformation of the second coming. However, at the same time, they are overcomers. As far as overcoming known sin, this should be the Christian's aim at all times, even prior to the cut-off point."

Summary: "Why the son of the architect waits to come."

Model Man: "He waits for a people who are fully reflecting him in character, who by their lives have proven that he can trust them with heaven. When there is a people who have reached this stage, then he will come back."

Primajust: "While not denying the importance of the character of those living in the last days, it is the preaching of the pure gospel which will cause the Loud Cry to go forth. It is the gospel of a garment in which there is no stitch of human devising. It is the gospel in the light of the judgment of the saints -- for this we understand, but other communities do not. It is good news that we come into judgment before the son comes as king and judge, at which time mercy no longer reigns. Rather our judgment takes place while probation still extends and Christ is priest. And then, the righteousness which we received at conversion -- the imputed merits of the son -- is ratified to our account. That is -- justification full and complete. The one requirement for the judgment is a right status before the father through the instrument of faith, whose fruit is unto holiness."

The play continued on, and many had their say, but most of the large issues we have already dealt with. Thus, when it ended, Enquiry and Confused left the auditorium and fell into conversation with the manager, whose name was Tolerance.

Tolerance: "Did you find that helpful sirs"?

Confused: "Most certainly, and now I have an idea where to start in studying for myself."

Tolerance: "I am glad that we have been of service to you. I assure you we did seek to be fair. And if you find our understanding was incomplete, we beg your pardon. We endeavor in all our work to avoid working with Prejudice as far as possible, but this is never easy."

Enquiry: "Do people respond well to your play"?

Tolerance: "Some do, some don't. But you can see the gravity of the situation. For these subjects are very precious to each heart, and many of the ideas have been cherished and nourished for many years. None lightly yield convictions of that sort. Our only hope is, that if they cannot agree they will nevertheless tolerate each other. It's that or war, I fear."

Enquiry: "Do you think they will"?

Tolerance: "In human eyes it seems impossible, but with God all things are possible. However, history is very much against it. For so soon as much attention is given to the son, the anti-architect brings out his demolition squad, and persecution soon results. And he incites not only the world, but especially the church."

At that instant, a great noise could be heard from outside. Our friends hastened to the entrance, and saw that an excited mob was lining both sides of the street. Further up the road, advancing swiftly towards them came a procession with a double column. Each column had at its head a man who held a banner.

The first one was boldly emblazoned with these words:

IN THE JUDGMENT
IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS
NECESSARY AND ADEQUATE

And the second read this way:

IN THE JUDGMENT
IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS
NECESSARY, BUT NOT ADEQUATE

As the procession proceeded, and the bystanders read the placards, it caused much agitation. Scuffles broke out everywhere. Suddenly, Confused opened his eyes in realization, and clicked his fingers together.

Confused: "My eyes are opened. I see the very center of the issues."

From that time on, he ceased to be Confused, and became known as Enlightened.

Soon, as it advanced, they could recognize in the procession, the different foremen. Why, there was Perfexia, with his friends Surrender, Model Man, and Re-examined. Close by was Gainsay. Then there was Primajust who was still in dialogue with Relationship. Love-Alone and Tenderheart were in a little group somewhat apart from all the rest. Then Enquiry nudged Enlightened and said, "Look over there on the left. It's Criticism and Prejudice."

At that split second, Prejudice (whose hands were over his eyes, lest he should see the message on the banners, for it would not do well for his business) handed Criticism a large stone. This he promptly threw at Primajust, but it was a poor aim and only bruised his foot.

At this there was much cheering, and it seemed a signal for action. For many picked up stones and threw them at the procession. One rude fellow called Potshot aimed at Relationship and hit him a glancing blow. It then became a free-for-all, and many were wounded.

Then Tolerance turned to Enquiry and Enlightened and said, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." (Mt. 24:9)

Filled with fury, Persecution caught sight of the trio in the playhouse entrance. He screamed an accusation, pointed his finger in their direction and caused the mob to surge up the steps. But as they attempted to pull Enquiry into the street, the building began to vibrate. Gently at first, but rapidly becoming violent, it caused the crowd to stop in confusion, as roads, sidewalks, buildings, all began to convulse around them. The earthquake had begun.

And here, friends, we leave the scene. For what happened in the earthquake and how each foreman and the townspeople survived is quite another story.

THE SABBATH, 'THE HOLY OF THE LORD, HONORABLE'

(Chapter 10)

In 1981, Robert Brinsmead published a Verdict issue affirming the seventh-day Sabbath was Jewish and not binding upon Christians. This was followed by continued discussion in later Verdicts. This precipitated for many a serious reexamination of their position on the fourth commandment.

Later in the same year, Desmond Ford put forth his The Forgotten Day, affirming the binding obligation of the institution which was inaugurated in Eden and kept by Christ in life and death. This book affirmed that the seventh-day Sabbath, though often legalistically observed, was intended as a joyous festival, mirroring the rest of heart and conscience experienced by all who believe in the finished work of Christ.

After Spectrum published interchanges between the two writers on the Sabbath, Robert Brinsmead wrote a critique of Ford's Sabbath book, and we now include in the present volume, a friendly rejoinder to that review. But first we give my Spectrum articles referred to, and we would urge the reader to see the book The Forgotten Day for a detailed presentation on the Sabbath (available from Desmond Ford Publications).

It is tragically easy to be lost in the "trees" of argument over such a topic as this and not see the "wood" of truth. But those who meditate on the pivotal passages such as Gen 2:1-3; Ex 20:8-11; Mt 12:1-14; Lu 23:56 which actually refer to the hallowed seventh day, and the Pauline passages emphasizing that the commandments though impotent as a method yet remain as a standard (Rom 7:7-14, 22, 25; 8:4, 7; 13:9; 1 Cor 7:19; Eph 6:1-3) need not be in perplexity. Nevertheless, if the Sabbath is not only the rest day, and the blessed day, but also a test day (Ex 16:4; 31:17; Jer 17:20-27; Isa 58:13, 14; 56:4) it is appropriate that the light regarding it should be adequate rather than blinding. It is even so with the truth of God's existence, and the divinity of His Word. Jn 7:17 provides a key for all bewildered but honest souls.

However, may we say again what The Forgotten Day has emphasized--the holy day is the memorial not only of creation but of re-creation, the redemption concerning which Jesus proclaimed from the cross on the sixth day "It is finished". Therefore it is not to be used as an occasion for legalistic peccadillos but as a sacred trysting time with the Savior. Thus it will afford us the weekly renewal our natures demand, energizing us spiritually by its images of Paradise lost and Paradise to come -- mirroring the gospel peace which overcomes the world.

The Sabbath: Brinsmead's Polemic

reviewed by Desmond Ford

R. D. Brinsmead, "Sabbatarianism Re-examined," *Verdict*, vol. 4, no. 4, June 1981.

Robert Brinsmead has placed the whole Adventist world in his debt by his emphasis on righteousness by faith. Perhaps more than any other figure, he has been responsible for challenging accepted legalistic concepts of salvation in our community. His recent book, *Judged by the Gospel*, though marked by unnecessary asperity, should nonetheless cause gratitude because of its exposure of doctrinal aberrations in traditional Adventism. One does not have to agree with all his conclusions (as this reviewer does) to acknowledge the necessity of his critique.

Now the issue of *Verdict* containing his book-length article "Sabbatarianism Reexamined" with its rejection of the Seventh-day Sabbath as a Christian obligation. First, we should say that as a people we have been guilty of treating the Sabbath as we have the gospel - we have turned it into an instrument of legalism too often, and this failing Robert Brinsmead criticizes. When he affirms that we have frequently mistaken the form for the substance, he is correct.

There are other excellent features in the article. It rightly reminds us that the New Testament does not so much issue rules as point to Christ, affirming faith and love in the Savior as the chief motivation for conduct. Furthermore, it correctly asserts that a literalistic reading of the Ten Commandments can be a very poor guide for Christian behavior.

Besides areas of agreement, I must also indicate areas where I disagree with "Sabbatarianism Re-Examined." Because of space limitation, the following will of necessity seem staccato and laconic. The reader may refer to my recently published book, *The Forgotten Day*, for further details.

Robert Brinsmead's polemic against the fourth commandment makes many assumptions not only beyond the evidence but often contrary to it. Following are examples only.

1. *The Epistles, not the Gospels, always have the last theological word. (p. 6)*

This is a half-truth. Some esoteric references in the gospels are subject to clearer explanations in the letters, and the great truth of the atonement finds its fullest explanation in the writings of Paul. On the other hand, it should be remembered that for the most part the gospels were written later than the epistles and are just as theological, as every scholar knows. Furthermore, it is *Jesus*, not Paul (and Brinsmead by the epistles really means those of Paul), who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus is the light of the World. The great commission is to teach believers all that Jesus commanded, not Paul. The blood of the covenant at Calvary ratified the teachings of Jesus, not those of Paul (Gal. 3:15).

Paul acknowledged this priority of the words of Jesus (I Cor. 3:11; 7:10). One chapter in eight in the gospels refers to the Sabbath and always positively, and this *after* the circulation of the supposed texts which declare the commandment abolished!

Brinsmead quotes John 16:12, 13 - the Spirit will, Jesus says, teaching more than he has been able to tell - perhaps momentarily forgetting that this promise began to be fulfilled at Pentecost, at least thirty years before the first gospel was written. The gospels are the product of the Spirit of Pentecost. And the one written particularly for the cosmopolitan gentile world (Luke) has the most references to the Sabbath - with never a syllable against it.

2. *Sabbath-keeping in the first century was subsumed under circumcision, and the rejection of circumcision (Acts 15) automatically embraced release from the fourth commandment also (p. 12).*

Abundant historical evidence exists that large numbers of Gentiles in the first century kept the Sabbath but were never circumcised. (See Acts 13:42, 44; 15:21; F. F. Bruce, *Acts*, pp. 216, 301, 64; and the well-known comments to this effect by Philo and Josephus.) Even in Old Testament times Gentiles could keep the Sabbath without circumcision, but not offer sacrifices in the regular way, or keep the Passover, etc. (See Ex. 20:8-11; Isa. 56:1-7, and compare Ex. 12:44, 48.)

3. *Silence in the Epistles on Sabbath-keeping signifies Sabbath was not kept by Gentiles (p. 12).*

Often silence means something is taken for granted and not a subject of dispute. Thus for at least six hundred years after the entrance into Canaan, we do not have a single reference to the Sabbath, and in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon not even an allusion except as a heading for one psalm - and this despite the frequent lists of sins in both Proverbs and Psalms. Nor do we find anywhere in John's gospel a command to baptize or keep the Lord's supper. Nor any warning against making graven images.

4. *We have a fairly accurate account as to why Christians were persecuted in the Roman world (p. 13). Sabbath-keeping is not among them.*

This is just not true. We have practically nothing from the first century as to the reasons involved. Cannibalism is the one fantastic charge that has come down to us.

5. *Slaves would not have been able to keep the Sabbath (p. 13).*

In my book *The Forgotten Day* I have pointed out that while slaves of unbelievers did become Christians, there are no grounds for thinking that this was a large group. Many slaves worshipped as did their masters, and many had Christian masters. Other slaves were granted freedom of religion, particularly if in a position of trust.

6. *The "days" mentioned in Gal. 4: 10 really mean the Sabbath Day (p. 18ff).*

The word "sabbath" was a common one. Why did Paul not use it here if he intended it? The context speaks of observances reminiscent of previous pagan bondage to superstitions. Nowhere does Scripture refer to true Sabbath-observances in this way. A recent commentator, John Bligh, says the reason the Sabbath is not here mentioned is that Paul had no wish to condemn a current practice in this regard. It is

quite wrong to parallel this list of times with the Jewish yearly, monthly, weekly holy times. The text is referring to various days, months (not just the new moon day), seasons and years - all in the plural. There is no evidence that the sabbatical or jubilee years were kept in the first century in Galatia. Undoubtedly a perverted Judaism was a large part of the trouble in Galatia, but to conclude that this alone can be the basis for an exegesis of Galatians 4:9-10 is to err.

7. *Romans 14:5, 6, says that all days are of equal value (p. 30ff).*

The commandments of God are certainly not in view in this passage. It is the *adiaphora* (matters indifferent) which Paul discusses. Verses 1-6, 21 indicate that some were abstaining from certain types of food and drink on specific days. But Judaism used the Sabbath as a feast day, not a time of fasting. Nothing in the Pentateuch prohibited the use of wine. The expression "every day" in Exodus 16:4 is used for the week days with the Sabbath excluded.

8. *Colossians 2: 14-15 obviously excludes all necessity for keeping the Sabbath (p. 25. ff).*

Observe that this book never uses the word for "law," though it appears over 70 times in Romans. Neither does it use "commandment," with reference to anything from Sinai. What it does speak about is "philosophy," "angel-worship," and "ordinances" made by cultic heretics forbidding the use of food and drink on holy days (see verses 8, 14, 18, 21, 22). The heretics claimed all these precepts of theirs about food and drink on holy days were "shadows" of a great reality, but Paul refuses to grant their right to judge men by such superstitious human inventions. Contrary to Brinsmead's view, the "eating and drinking" of Colossians 2:16 has nothing to do with the Jewish offerings linked with holy times in Ezekiel 45:17. The Greek form prohibits any such interpretation as does the context. And as certainly as Paul's dictum does not rule out all eating and drinking, neither does it rule out all Sabbathkeeping. (See the commentaries by Lohse, H. C. G. Moule, Francis, R. Martin and all recent discussions on the incipient Gnosticism at Colosse). As this is the only negative Sabbath text out of approximately 150 references in the entire Bible, one should remember that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

9. *Because the Jewish Torah no longer is the guardian of believers, the commandments are not binding (p. 19).*

Barth, Bultman, Conzelmann, Ridderbos, Ladd, Schrenk, etc., all agree that the New Testament regards the Decalogue as still binding. This has been the position of the evangelical Christian church in all ages. (See Carl Henry's *Christian Personal Ethics*, pp. 269, 272ff, 315, 336ff.)

10. *The historical elements in the Decalogue show it was never intended for Christians (p. 40f).*

The same principle would wipe out the Sermon on the Mount (there are no pagan Roman soldiers around for whom we should go the second mile), the epistles (written to ancient local communities), and indeed the whole New Testament, including its Great Commission which was given to a group of Jews. But see Ephesians 6:1-3, and also observe how Jesus could apply to Himself what was said to the people of the Exodus one-and-a-half millenniums ago (see Matt. 4:4) The Jews were only "stewards" of God's revelation (Rom. 9:3, 3:2).

11. *The fact that the Sabbath points to rest of spirit through faith in Christ means the ordinance is not necessary (p. 57).*

One might as well say that if one is feeding on the merits of Christ's broken body and spilled blood, there is no necessity to keep the Lord's supper, or that if by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ the believer has become one with Christ, there is no need to be baptized. The fourth commandment shows that man is to follow the example of Christ who worked and then rested. Work and rest are both implicit in the commandment, and it is nonsense to say that they are no longer necessary. Hebrews 4:9 says the fulfillment of the Sabbath awaits the world to come.

12. *Love, not law, should guide the Christian (p.64).*

This erroneous assumption is hoary with age but not venerable. Even when man was made with love inscribed on his heart, he needed the guidance of the specific commandments found in Genesis 1 and 2. Law tests so-called love, for the latter offers motivation rather than content for action. The New Testament invokes particular precepts to guide believers (see Rom. 12 and 13). The vast majority of Christian scholars in all centuries have summarily rejected this false thesis. (See C. Henry's *Christian Personal Ethics*.)

13. *The Decalogue is not distinguished from the rest of the Mosaic code, but moral and ceremonial laws are ever intertwined (p. 42f).*

This is another half-truth. In places the eternal and the temporary are joined, but not in their original revelation or in the teachings of Jesus or Paul. The old covenant was ratified over the moral law. Then came the directions for building the tabernacle and the sacrificial system was given. Jesus foretold the fall of the Temple and the passing away of the significance of holy places (Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, John 4:21). Since sacrifice could only be offered at the Temple, His words foretell the abolition of the whole system. But the same Christ spoke of "the commandment of God" with the utmost reverence in every reference thereto. (See Mark 7:8, 9; Matt. 19:9, 17-19; Matt. 5:17-45; Matt. 12:12; and compare 1 Cor. 7:19; Rom. 13:9; James 2:10-12; 1 John 5:2, 3.)

The Commandments only name the obvious violation of the principle at stake in each, but include all lesser violations as made clear in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus also taught that every negative implies a positive and vice versa (see Luke 6:9). The first commandment of the Decalogue includes all the rest, and it will guide the Christian in giving God His true place in all matters.

Having listed the chief assumptions of the book which to some are unacceptable, may I offer a few final comments?

1. The case fails to deal adequately with the main sections of the New Testament which discuss the Sabbath. (See Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; 23:56; John 5:1-19.) Christ worked seven miracles on the Sabbath in His attempt to reform the burdensome observance of the Pharisees. Moreover, His polemic on behalf of the Sabbath embraces more phases of argument from more sources than He ever invoked in any other area. Not one syllable He uttered downgraded the fourth commandment or suggested its coming demise. He affirms the Sabbath to have been made at the beginning as God's gift to mankind, and claims to be its interpreter and protector (see Mark 2:27, 28).

In a more recent statement Brinsmead has attempted to deal with this neglected area, but his case is no better than his original one. He completely misses the point that the summation of our Lord's case is that both He and His disciples were "guiltless" about the Sabbath, and that as the holy institution was intended for man's benefit, all acts of mercy, necessity, or piety are in harmony with the fourth commandment (see Matt. 12:7, 12). Neither has Brinsmead considered the fact that the massive Sabbath content of the four gospels implies

that towards the end of the first century the apostles considered such instruction vital for Christians They wrote it up in such a way as to show that Christ's Sabbath reformation was partly responsible for His crucifixion (see Mark 3:6).

2. The evidence of Scripture is that the fourth commandment has been used by God as a test of His professed people from the very beginning. Note that the first use of the term "Sabbath" is linked with God's use of the day as a test. (See Ex. 16:4, 23, 28 and cf. Jer. 17:23-27, Eze. 20:12, 13, 16, 20, 21,24; Isa. 56:1-7; 58:13, 14; Neh. 13:15-22 and the references from the gospels named above which deems :he Sabbath issue as a chief precipitant of the cross.)

3. Church history shows that the church dies proportionately to its neglect of the fourth commandment. This is the verdict of Calvin, Ryle, Schaff, Fairbairn and others.

4. Despite whatever arguments casuistry may invent from the New Testament against the fourth commandment, literally scores of historical statements from the first five centuries testify to the widespread observance of the Sabbath (as well as Sunday from the second century) for many generations. The church knew nothing about its abolition.

5. All mystical statements about Christ's fulfilling the Sabbath for us, thereby making observance of the day unnecessary, are as fulsome as the thought that His refraining from adultery makes our abstinence outmoded. Christ worked, rested, and worshipped in harmony with the sabbatical cycle. Should we also do so? So long as these are necessities, the seventh-day Sabbath is obligatory.

Ford Responds

To the Editors: I appreciate greatly your request to make some brief comments on Robert Brinsmead's letter. For brevity's sake, I will itemize these:

Have I misrepresented my friend's teaching? Readers of the previous SPECTRUM will see I have given the Brinsmead references alongside each position. Let all read for themselves. For example, Brinsmead *did* and *does* teach that the *Ten Commandments* are replaced by the new law of love, and that the form of the *Sabbath* (which is the issue under discussion) is unnecessary. This does *not* mean that Brinsmead thinks a Christian can violate laws of common morality and has no need for a time of worship.

Brinsmead says my "most serious representation" is to accuse him of a polemic against the fourth commandment. Pray, what is the significance of the last three entire issues of *Verdict*, if not that? Why have scores of Sabbathkeepers, upon reading these issues, given up the Sabbath? Have all misunderstood him? Of course, Bob is not saying that Sabbathkeepers will be lost, but he comes perilously close to proclaiming that all who insist on the binding obligation of the Sabbath commandment are no longer Christian. Again, as regards this "most serious misrepresentation," let all read *Verdict* for themselves and conclude as to its central thrust.

I agree that the New Testament gospel "means the end of a sectarian spirit which invents religious tests that alienate Christian from Christian." But the key words here are "invent" and "alienate." God does call the Sabbath His test (Ex. 16:4) and our Lord who went to the cross for our sins, from a human standpoint was crucified because of His reforms on the Decalogue (particularly the Sabbath) and His opposition to religious traditions (see Mark 3:6; Luke 6:7, 11; Matt. 12:14; John 5:18; Matk 7:9). As for the alienation charge, see pp. ix, 180 of my book, *The Forgotten Day*. Regarding the cited scholars and the Ten Commandments: In no place have I suggested that the former believed that the latter should be applied "according to their literal Palestinian letter." For example, Christians today do not hold slaves, but the word for "servant" in the fourth commandment also means slave. My comments on Ridderbos, etc., was to the effect that they acknowledge that the New Testament still maintains the Ten Commandments as a moral norm (see I Cor. 7:19; Eph. 6:1-3; Rom. 13:9; James 2:8-12).

Bob again uses Romans 14 and links it to the fourth commandment. But there is not a syllable in Romans 14 about the Decalogue. It is only saying that those who wish to fast on certain days should not be judged by those who do not. Similarly, Colossians 2:16 is not discussing specific foods but fasting (see Col. 2:20-23).

I am puzzled by Bob's comment that he was "excluded from Dr. Ford's Gospel Congress because [he] flunked his 'final test.' *Evangelica* originally called a congress and invited Brinsmead and myself to participate. Brinsmead gave no assurance that he could be there. When his material against the Sabbath began to circulate, I wrote him that *for pastoral reasons* I was withdrawing from the congress. At that stage *Evangelica* pulled out from the project, and Good News Unlimited called its own congress. A congress fighting over the secondary issue of the Sabbath would not have been a gospel congress!

In the next to the last paragraph of his letter, Brinsmead again asserts that the gospel gives "freedom" "not to keep it [the Sabbath]." Why then these protests against misrepresentation? I am contending that the gospel no more gives freedom to break the fourth commandment than the seventh, or eight, or indeed any of the others.

John Calvin was not a Sabbathkeeper. This fact makes the following comments of great significance: "... if it (the rest day) were abolished, the Church would be in imminent danger of immediate convulsion and ruin" (John Calvin, *institutes* 11: viii). Only the gospel is primary, but other matters such as purity, honesty, truthfulness, and worship in God's appointed way are not therefore unnecessary.

I salute Robert Brinsmead as a great preacher of "the everlasting gospel," but I suggest that that gospel will only be enduring if the depths of the divine law as represented by the Decalogue are ever recognized and proclaimed alongside the good news of grace. That which is no longer a *method of righteousness*, forever remains its standard.

May I conclude by correcting an unfortunate typographical error in my review of Brinsmead's article (SPECTRUM, vol. 12, no. 1, p. 66). The first paragraph of the review has me saying that I agree with all of Brinsmead's conclusions in his valuable work, *Judged by the Gospel*. The little word "not" was accidentally omitted after the words "as this reviewer does." Although I agree with Brinsmead that the Investigative Judgment and 1844 are not biblical datums, and that Ellen White was dependent upon the many sources that Walter Rea has indicated, I do not believe that this means that the Adventist awakening was a tissue of errors from start to finish as some might conclude from *Judged by the Gospel*. Every human system of thought is inevitably streaked with error, but God works through imperfect individuals and movements nonetheless. The unfolding of truth is always like the coming in of the tide - progress on the whole, not the miraculous delivery of a complete package from heaven.

Glacier View Report

To the Editors: An expression of appreciation is overdue for the superb reporting of the Glacier View Sanctuary Review Committee by Ray Cottrell. As one who also was a member of Study Group 2 and who was quoted several times, I read this report with critical interest. Naturally, my ego would have been stroked had I been quoted fully each time within the total context, but this was a report of a four-day conference, not a chronicle of any particular individual's participation in it.

Ray Cottrell's many years of experience as a minister, teacher, writer, editor, Bible scholar, and student of the book of Daniel, combined with his exacting integrity to qualify him uniquely for this demanding assignment. If one scrutinizes the report to discover the theological positions of attendees at the conference, he will be disappointed. However, for a fair overview of the meeting - its organization, issues addressed, the prevailing spirit, etc. - Cottrell's account is without an equal. He and SPECTRUM are to be congratulated for providing what must be regarded as the normative description of that unprecedented and historic session for the Seventh-day Adventist church.

F. E. J. Harder College Place, Washington

A FRIENDLY REJOINDER TO R. D. BRINSMEAD'S REPLY

Desmond Ford

* * * *

"The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him."

Proverbs 18: 17 NIV

* * * *

Desmond Ford Publications

April, 1982

PART I

While on the Australian congress tour I was shown R.D. Brinsmead's A Reply to Desmond Ford's Sabbatarian Arguments. We returned home yesterday and despite a mountain of mail and further impending itineraries I wish to comment on my friend's criticisms. The best reply is afforded by the reading of the book criticized, but because some may read Robert's comments alone, I offer a brief rejoinder. Later, if it is necessary, I will write a more complete work.

MISREPRESENTATIONS?

It seems to me that Robert read my book very hurriedly for he has unwittingly misrepresented me, and that at length. The following are typical examples.

Reply p.25 (the opening page," for Reply is the third in a series of three studies) "...the author has often been irresponsible in his use of sources." Here we find that Robert's opening criticism is that among "numerous quotations from various scholars" I have "often" misrepresented them. A serious charge indeed! As evidence Robert offers two specific cases, and a third generalized comment. Let us consider these.

(a) On this opening page I am accused of misrepresenting Calvin for I have affirmed that he saw the necessity of a rest day for worship purposes. See both p. 246 and p. 88 of my volume. Robert says that Calvin believed the Sabbath of the fourth commandment had been abrogated. Now let us observe my preliminary words to the comment criticized. We need only go back six lines. "While denying that the seventh day or the first is binding upon Christian conscience, the Reformers none the less asserted the necessity of regular Sabbath worship. Like some who today assert that the fourth commandment no longer has significance, they nonetheless did keep one day of the week separate from the rest for purposes of rest and worship." (p. 245). Now, wherein have I misrepresented Calvin? I, like Robert, have affirmed Calvin believed in the abrogation of the specific seventh day but nevertheless foresaw the absolute necessity of a time for the church to assemble and hear the Word. By reading my comment in context, the careful student will observe that I say exactly what he also says.

(b) The second specific case where I am said to have been irresponsible occurs in Robert's Reply p. 26. "On p. 132 The Forgotten Day uses Herman Ridderbos, along with other witnesses, to support its position on the continuing validity of the Law in the New Testament.... An examination of p. 132 in The Forgotten Day will reveal an ellipsis in its citation from Ridderbos. The following vital portion was excised." Robert then quotes Ridderbos's comment to the effect that Col 2:16 showed that the law now, as regards its content, comes under a new norm of judgment and that failure to appreciate this is to deny Christ.

The impression is given that I have badly and dishonestly misrepresented Ridderbos. Have I really? First observe that the words of Ridderbos unused were the first part of a complete section left out by me. Let us now include what neither Robert nor I quoted:

In regard to (b). however great the significance of all this is for correct insight into the continuing requirement of the law, one cannot say that with Christ another law has come or that for Paul "the law of Christ" or simply "the law," may be said to mean the eternal and abiding law of God and that he spoke of it in conscious contrast with or distinction from the law of Moses. Some, to be sure, are of the opinion that one must not translate Rom 13:8 by "he who loves the other has fulfilled the law," but by "he who loves has fulfilled the other law," whereby the law of Christ as "the other law" would have been set in the place of or alongside the law of Moses. But this translation is a labored evasion of the obvious, and the unmistakable intention of the text, viewed in the light of Gal 5:14, is otherwise. (Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of His Theology, tr. John Richard De Witt, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975, pp. 284-285)

Now let us inquire, what was my intent in omitting this section? And does it not cast light on the earlier omission (clearly indicated in my text)? Observe that here Ridderbos takes a very different position to that of Robert who sees the whole law as taken away and only the eternal moral mores now having significance along with Christ's new words. Observe secondly that this second part of my omission explains the first. By "law" Ridderbos means the entire "law of Moses" including (to quote Ridderbos again in his lines immediately preceding the omitted part Robert mentions) "the ceremonial, particularistic parts of the law." These parts, according to Ridderbos, Paul distinguished as a premise from the moral though not by explicit statement. My omitted lines were an explanation of these words from Ridderbos--an elaboration of the ceremonial parts of the law which do not share the permanent nature of the moral. These "dietary regulations" and shadowy feasts, new moons and sabbath days were part of the temporary ceremonial of Israel and not the moral. Thus Ridderbos continued as I have quoted him: "So far as the law of Moses is concerned, when Paul gives expression to the continuing demand of the law, he cites the decalogue specifically." (Ibid, p. 285)

Now, who has misquoted Ridderbos, I or Robert? The section I mischievously omitted (according to Robert) is a continuing discussion of the ceremonial aspects of the Torah in contrast to the abiding decalogue. And even Robert has not explained why I also omitted a strong comment from Ridderbos which denies his own position. The fact is I included only what was most germane to the topic on which I was writing--the abiding nature of the decalogue.

There then are the two worst examples Robert can find of my supposedly irresponsible use of sources. The question remains, who has actually been irresponsible?

(c) The third instance of irresponsible use of sources is cited on p. 26. "In its treatment of the vital Col 2:16 passage, p. 110 of The Forgotten Day refers to a number of 'first class exegetes' for support. It conveys the impression that virtually all reputable scholars support its interpretation."

Here we have a generalized criticism rather than a supposed misuse of sources. Apparently Robert ran out of specific instances quite quickly and quickly turned to broad generalization. My actual comment on p. 110 is that "first-class exegetes" agreed with the interpretation I was supporting and I give my authorities. It certainly does not say that every good exegete agreed with me. I have a carefully qualified comment in the same paragraph, "A number of commentators have seen this." Now "a number" does not claim everybody in the field as Robert asserts I am misleading readers by saying. Furthermore, on the very next page I speak of "typical expressions" of an "alternative view". Surely I should be granted the privilege of being read in context.

Contrary to the representation given by Robert, however, at this place, the Christian church from its earliest years has affirmed the binding obligation of the decalogue. Most church creeds say so distinctly and most preachers and exegetes over the long centuries likewise.

Simultaneously this majority believed that the fourth commandment applied to Sunday (a position not taken by Robert) and that passages like Col 2:16 while not abolishing the word from Sinai nevertheless revoked the seventh day portion. Chapters 8 and 13 of my book discuss evidence relevant for such traditional positions. Robert implies here on p. 26 that "the Christian church over the centuries has generally taught" that the fourth commandment is no longer binding. That is far from the truth.

We have now exhausted the charge of my irresponsible use of sources--two whole instances and a third generalization. Each one seems to actually be an example of Robert himself doing that with which he charges me.

UNSATISFACTORY PROOF?

When we come to Robert's second heading--Unsatisfactory Proof--he repeatedly attacks my claim that the Bible teaches the Edenic origin of the Sabbath commandment. See his points one and seven for example. He says "The fact is that no Sabbath commandment existed before Moses." (p. 28)

As an example of how one could evaluate others of Robert's arguments, I will consider this first one which is also the theme of the first article of his booklet. I believe chapter five of my book is sufficient answer but I will quote only a little from there and add other evidence. Truly says the learned Patrick Fairbairn:

The leading divines of the Reformation, and the immediately subsequent period, were of one mind regarding the appointment of a primeval Sabbath. The idea that the Sabbath was first given to the Israelites in the wilderness, and that the words in Gen 2 only proleptically refer to that future circumstance, is an afterthought, originating in the fond conceit of some Jewish Rabbis, who sought thereby to magnify their nation, and was adopted openly by such Christian divines as had already made up their minds on the temporary obligation of the Sabbath. The Typology of Scripture, Vol. 2., p. 110.

Why this unanimity of opinion? Because any unbiased reading of Genesis 1 and 2 naturally leads to that conclusion. Indeed the whole story of creation finds its natural climax in the institution of the Sabbath. Though that word as a noun is not present the verb form is. After picturing the creation of man, the very next picture is that of the Sabbath.

Chapter 1 gives us in vv 20, 22, 24-26 God's immediate blessing of the work of the earlier days of the first week, and Gen 2: 2, 3 in obvious parallel gives the blessing on the seventh day. See also the use of the past tenses in Ex 20: II. All four verbs are in the same tense and none deny that the first two apply to Creation week. The text is certainly saying that the blessing and the hallowing took place at the same time as the resting. The same fourth commandment makes it clear that the seventh day was already the Sabbath at the time God hallowed it. "God blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." It did not become the Sabbath 2,500 years later. Furthermore, the word "sanctified" in Gen 2:3 is the verb typically used for "appoint". See Joel 1:14; 2:15; Ex 19:12, 23; Jos 20:9. The words in the fourth commandment "and hallowed it" have no meaning unless from that very time the day was appointed as holy.

It is clear from Gen 2-4 that man was both a worker and a worshiper. On both counts man needed a special time for rest and adoration of his Maker. Jesus himself tells us that such a time was given. Mk 2: 27 in speaking of the time when man was made says the Sabbath was a gift for the new arrival. Heb 4: 1-11 also speaks of the Sabbath rest as being available from the time when "the works were finished," i.e. creation. Never in Scripture do we find any instance of a memorial being instituted long after the event it is to memorialize. Ex 20: 8-11 does not give a Jewish meaning for the institution but affirms the Sabbath to be a memorial of the creation of heaven and earth.

This globe surely is not Jewish property but for all men, and thus the Sabbath is for all men a memorial of God's gracious giving of life and space in the beginning.

Robert would have us believe that the Sabbath began under Moses in the wilderness. But where is the record of its institution? Ex 16: 4, 28, 29 assumes that the Sabbath has been long in existence. Compare the wording of Gen 26: 5. If one reads Ex 12 we see the usual circumstantial detailed way in which God inaugurated matters of significance. There is nothing like that for the Sabbath in the wilderness.

Robert tells us there is no Sabbath commandment prior to Moses. But the Scripture is clear that sin existed and was punished but "where there is no law there is no transgression." (Rom 4: 15). Let us ask where Genesis records any of the moral commandments except the sixth?

The fact is that Genesis is an account of millenniums of history and thus very truncated. Silence here as usually elsewhere means consent. Having mentioned creation, Genesis nowhere refers to it again. Having recorded the Fall, Genesis nowhere mentions that tragedy again. Having announced the coming of the Redeemer and His triumphant overcoming death, Genesis nowhere refers to that great two-fold glory again. Likewise it mentions the primeval Sabbath but once.

Robert tells us (p. 9) that the Hebrew word for day "does not consistently mean twenty-four hours in Genesis 1 and 2." He is right, but in none of the instances where the word is used is its meaning obscure. Context always makes it clear. Every time the word for day is prefaced by a numeral it means a twenty-four hour day. This is true throughout the scores of such usages throughout the Hebrew Bible. The seventh day of Genesis 2, belonging to a numbered series having the same common name of "day," must have been of the same duration as its predecessors. Ex 20:8-11 clearly affirms the same. True, the absence of reference to an evening does indeed typify the eternal rest prefigured by the Sabbath but that very fact indicates that the symbolic form must endure until that heavenly fullness dawns.

Robert also uses Neh 9: 6-14 as proving that the Sabbath was only made known to Israel. Yet in the paragraph before (p. 10) he quotes Jn 7: 22, 23 which affirms that Moses gave circumcision though it is clear that circumcision did not originate with Moses but with Abraham. See Gen 17. Obviously some of the historical statements of Scripture are somewhat stylized.

CONTRADICTIONS?

In Reply p. 27, point 6 Robert accuses me of "amazing contradiction." Admittedly I was guilty of such if trying to convey what Bob suggests, but that is not the case. In context I deal with Scripture and history, saying that Scripture has very little factual data about regular church meetings but that early church history fills in the gap. See the very next line after Bob's last line of quotation from my book. In fact while feigning to critique my point he ignored it--namely that "Many historians, recent and modern, including Sozomon, Socrates, Brerewood, Coleman, Hefe, Gieseler, and early Christian leaders, including Tertullian, and Augustine, and well-known ancient Christian writings, such as the Apostolic Constitutions, refer to Gentile Sabbath-keeping." The Forgotten Day, p. 243. For Bob to suggest that I claimed there was "abundant evidence" in the Scriptures about Gentile Sabbath-keeping when the immediate lines asserted to the contrary and proceeded to historical evidence, is evidence of very poor attention to the book he was criticizing.

FALSE ASSERTIONS?

(a) In Reply p. 28 Robert quotes p. 95 of my book regarding "the original arrangements of human duty in Eden" and goes on to talk about fruit and nakedness. But p. 95 of The Forgotten Day very clearly is speaking of the Sabbath and marriage. The original creation ordinances said nothing about nakedness but were fourfold--parenthood, marriage, the Sabbath and work, or they can be reduced to the two as I summarized them. Robert continues by saying that such Edenic laws cannot be assumed as applicable to all ages (p. 29). But observe our Lord's words to the contrary concerning the very ordinances I have named. See Mt 12: 12 (compare Mk 2: 27) and 19: 8. Our Lord returned to "the beginning" when setting forth ideals of human behavior.

(b) In Reply p. 29 I am taken to task for echoing "one of the great fallacies of twentieth-century liberalism" when I affirmed that "The Epistles have almost nothing to say about the life and words of Jesus." (p. 237). Four lines further down from this reference of mine on p. 237 I spoke of "the Gospels as historical and biographical" so it is quite clear what I had in mind. Bob quotes from Davies' list of echoes in Paul of Christ's words and life but his references are quite irrelevant to my point--history and biography. Both Christ and Paul drew largely from a common stock of counsel on behavior--the Old Testament, and much of what claims to be an echo of Christ could be just as truly an echo of the Old Testament whether Christ had lived or not.

Where are the concrete historical and biographical allusions in the Epistles to the life of Christ? Where in the Epistles do we find the geographical sites, historical persons (apart from Pilate), and actual events (apart from the Cross) so frequently mentioned in the Gospels? It was to these I referred and Robert has furnished none because they are not there to furnish. In the writings of Paul we never find concrete references to specific miracles or events such as the massacre at Bethlehem, the expulsion from Nazareth, the trial after the miracle at Bethesda, the raising of Lazarus, the anointing of His feet, etc.

(c) Robert rebukes me (Reply, p.30) for saying that the New Testament contains "nothing analogous to Sinai." In support he goes into typology at great length. But reference to p. 214 of my book makes quite clear the nature of my contention. The preceding line to that which Bob quotes says: "Nowhere is there found in the N. T. the proclamation of a new code." (p. 214). That is the point, not typology. To the latter I have alluded in my Physicians of the Soul, p. 59. But the apostles enacted no laws and instituted no ordinances. Their task was to "teach all things whatsoever their Master commanded them." They did not claim "dominion over the faith" of Christian believers. The New Testament is not a new code but a commentary upon the life and teachings of Christ which themselves fulfilled the ideals, laws, and promises of the Old Testament.

UNSATISFACTORY THEOLOGICAL METHOD?

(a) In Reply p. 36 I am rebuked for lack of "logical pattern in its (The Forgotten day) developing argument." Did Robert not read my preface, p. viii? The logical pattern of developing argument is indeed present in every chapter as others have recognized, but the work as a whole is said on p. viii to include "papers.... prepared at different times over the last twenty years." Why criticize the book for not doing what it does not claim to do?

(b) Robert comments on p. 36, "He circumvents Col 2:16, 17 with the analogy of marriage." Let the reader read my chapter 8 on Col 2 and ask how much space I give to the argument of analogy. It is for the most part a closely knit argumentation from the biblical text.

(c) Reply p. 37 accuses me of leading others in "an apocalyptic flea hunt." (tn. 26) This criticism has merit from the standpoint of humor, but none whatever from the standpoint of the facts. Does Robert not know that the best of scholars have affirmed in our generation that "Jewish apocalyptic was no ignoble thing"? That it is "the mother of Christian theology" and that Jesus, while no apocalypticist, assumed the apocalyptic teachings of the O. T. in all his own presentations. See such scholars as Kasemann, Pannenberg, Rowley, etc. Our Lord's title of "Son of Man" came from apocalyptic. His teaching on the kingdom of heaven came from apocalyptic. His instruction regarding the judgment, the resurrection and the ministry of angels--all came from apocalyptic. Mt 24, Lu 21, Mk 13 are sermons based on the Jewish apocalyptic book of Daniel. Furthermore His closing testimony to His church came in the form of apocalyptic. Thus the Bible's last book is frequently referred to as the Apocalypse. Despite Robert's criticism of my contention that eschatology like protology sets forth a test on obedience, this position is well known to scholars on apocalyptic. The latter is said to ever revolve around the issue of fidelity to the law of God. See the detailed discussion of this point in my Crisis, Vol. 2.

(d) Finally, what should we say of Robert's chief charge that I have made a Christ out of the Sabbath (p. 40. passim)? I can only excuse him on the basis originally mentioned, that he must have read my book very hurriedly. Note my introductory caveat:

Nothing in this little book should be understood as teaching that Sabbath-keeping earns the favor of God. It is true that we are saved by the works of perfect law-keeping, but they are Christ's works, not ours. They were accomplished in the first century of our era. Only our Substitute and Surety kept the Sabbath perfectly, and He did so for the whole human race. Those who believe in the Saviour's atonement on the Cross have that perfect Sabbath-keeping imputed to them... As regards salvation, the Sabbath is not primary. But neither is it unnecessary for those who learn of it. (p. ix)

The putting together of these pages of rejoinder has been today's pre-breakfast exercise. May it be of some help to troubled souls inquiring concerning their duty before God. But better still may the clear words from Eden, Sinai, the Mount and its surroundings prove better than those of all human disputants.

PART II

THE SABBATH'S IMPORTANCE

Let not the reader think the issue not worth the time and effort of close study. The matter challenges the use we make of a seventh part of our time, a seventh part of life itself. In contrast to Robert's comments on p. 39 and elsewhere protesting against a high value on the Sabbath, the church's leaders in all ages have seen the indispensable place of the sabbath institution. Dr. Timothy Dwight rightly observed that "To this institution we owe the greater part of the spiritual blessings which we enjoy; and in a high sense we owe them all. But for this day, we should neither have sought, nor secured, eternal life: for where no sabbath is, there is no religion." (see Sabbath. Theology) Calvin, Barth, Moody, Spurgeon, and a host of others have so affirmed.

It is obvious that the God who spoke from Sinai saw the importance of this commandment which He placed in the heart of His law.

Observe that three of the Ten Commandments are given with a preciseness of detail that contrasts sharply with the nakedness of the others. The expansion, re-iteration, limitation, and minute direction found in these cannot be accidental. The second, fourth, and tenth commandments are prohibitions against sins towards which man has a strange affinity--idolatry, Sabbath-breaking., and covetousness. Particularly is the Sabbath a restriction upon the idolatrous, greedy, ambitious, selfish nature of man. Observe also that the Sabbath is made the arch between the first three commandments of our duty to God and the last six of our duty to man. It supports the whole system as telling us who is this God that commands us--He is the Creator of heaven and earth and therefore to be obeyed. Without this divine bond of union between the two aspects of duty neither piety to God nor love to man could long be preserved in the world. It is the fourth commandment which makes provision for the learning of the rest, and for that devotional study which provides the necessary motivation of faith, hope, and love.

THE REFORMERS AND THE SABBATH

Regarding John Calvin's view of the sabbath we quote from his Exodus commentary: "...we have an equal necessity for the Sabbath with the ancient people, so that on one day we may be free, and thus the better prepared to learn and to testify our faith."

Paul Jewett in his book The Lord's Day also quotes from Calvin:

....since we have this external ordinance (the rest day)... lay aside our earthly affairs and occupations, so that we may be entirely free to mediate the works of God, that we may exercise ourselves in considering the gifts which He has afforded us, and above all, may apply ourselves to apprehend the grace which He daily offers us....

The extended quotation from Calvin speaks also of employing "the Sabbath in praising and magnifying the name of God" and in meditation. See Jewett, pp. 105-106.

Patrick Fairbairn and others have reminded us that the amount the Reformers wrote on the Sabbath issue is slight indeed and can be read in a few minutes. Because they found it in the midst of a multitude of mediaeval holy days they were in danger of rejecting it. Like Saul it was "hidden under the stuff." But for practical purposes the Reformers were agreed that the fourth commandment required Christians to observe a day of rest and worship. See the references from Luther, Calvin, Bullinger, Bucer, and others as listed by Beckwith and Stott in their This is the Day (p. vii).

These Christian leaders recognized that even in the most spiritual religion there is an irreducible minimum of formal observance. During the ancient Babylonian captivity the Sabbath did not fall with the Temple and the Altar. It proved independent of all locality. So after the fall of Jerusalem again in AD 70 we find in Scripture all days are reckoned from the Sabbath. See the discussion of this in H. Riesenfeld's The Gospel Tradition. The word translated "week" in the N. T. is the word for "Sabbath." Again, after the Babylonian captivity of the Middle Ages it was God's intention that the Sabbath should survive and the Puritans did much to restore recognition of the importance of the fourth commandment. Some who reject the Sabbath make fun of Puritan theology but scoffers should read Kevan's The Grace of Law on the topic. John Bunyan's attempt to support Sunday-keeping ends with these words:

A sabbath then, or day of rest from worldly affairs to solemnize worship to God in, all good men do by nature conclude is meet; yea, necessary: yet that, not nature, but God reveals.

Cited in W. Chantry's God's Righteous Kingdom, p. 138.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

Neither should the student of Scripture be misled by the claim (Reply p. 35) that "the commandments of God" as mentioned by the N. T. mean something new in this dispensation. The most famous theological aid to exegesis (Kittel's, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament) tells us that the word for "commandment" in Paul always means the commandment from the Old Testament. The same work assures us that the passage cited by Brinsmead--1 Cor 14: 37--did not in the original contain the word "command." See also Godet's commentary on this passage.

Again and again Robert has told us (eg. p. 35) that the law of Moses is a jumble of moral and ceremonial laws without any clear categorization. Gilfillian is more correct when he says:

There are undoubtedly instances in which the two classes of subjects (moral and ceremonial) are intermingled, but not when laws are formally enacted or proclaimed, and when accuracy, order, and the interest and intelligent obedience of those to be ruled by them, require that they should be placed in their respective categories. And our minds must be peculiarly constructed or biased, if, considering the Decalogue as consisting of laws not only of universal concern, but carefully detached from political and ceremonial statutes, and alone announced in circumstances of special solemnity and grandeur, we can discern no difference in character between a precept prohibiting idolatry or murder, and one forbidding to touch a dead body, or to plough with an ox and an ass together.

The Sabbath Vindicated, p. 484.

Compare the common sense of this statement with the claims in Reply, p. 36 that God has conjoined simple principles of common morality with a cultic religious duty in the Ten Commandments.

JESUS AND THE SABBATH

Ultimately we must prayerfully seek to know the mind of Christ on the matter of the Sabbath as revealed in His own life and teachings. It is clear that He not only did for the fourth what He did for the third, fifth, and seventh commandments--freed it from the glosses of men, but He also personally observed the holy day in life and in death. Consider that a very important part of sabbath observance was the worship and teaching in the temple or synagogue on that day. The sabbath day assembly which went on until the late afternoon (with an intermission in Palestine to break off at noon for refreshment) presupposed the sabbath rest. Josephus tells us that on the Sabbath according to Agatharchides the Jews prayed in their synagogues till the evening. Similarly the rabbinical literature everywhere refers to at least one service in the afternoon apart from expository lectures. We find four distinct accounts in the Gospels which show Jesus teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and indeed we are told that Sabbath observance was His custom. See Lu 4: 16. In thus attending services which lasted most of the day it is clear that Jesus observed the rest abstinence from work required by the Decalogue.

While it is true as Robert tells us that Jesus made messianic claims in connection with His Sabbath actions. He never uses His claims as an independent argument. See, for example, the John 5 debate which continues in chapter 7. Never did Christ use His messianic function to teach that the Sabbath was now abolished and that all days were consequently equal. While He risked His mission to free the Sabbath from traditional trappings He never honored any ceremonial or judicial enactment by freeing it from the glosses of the Scribes. In summary, not one word of His, not one act can be construed as repealing the Sabbath. God blessed the seven day of mankind at creation and never do we have a rescinding of that blessing. Laws remain till withdrawn.

COLOSSIANS 2:16

Robert (p. 37 passim) again and again comes back to Col 2:16, because it is the only passage in all Scripture which names the Sabbath negatively. Here his case must stand or fall. And it certainly falls for his arguments are demonstrably inaccurate. Take for example the claims of p. 31. Robert tells us that the warning of Col 2: 16 first of all concerns "food" and "drink." He says this may refer to food and drink regulations and that the link between Eze 45: 17 and Col 2: 16 is grammatically possible. Now I challenge him to write a thorough paper defending this claim. I challenge him to authenticate such a claim so that those who know the Greek New Testament will agree with him. It cannot be done. N.T. scholars are clear that the words used by Paul whenever he uses them mean not "food and drink" but "eating and drinking." As made clear by vv 21-23 of the context the issue had nothing to do with what foods were clean or unclean but rather with the issue of fasting. It certainly does not as Robert suggests have anything to do with "the clean-unclean food laws of Moses."

His other option is nearer the mark but it then yields no link with Eze 45: 17 which refers to "cereal offerings and drink offerings". See RSV. Let those with access to commentaries check the German Meyer commentary, and Lange, and the English Expositors Greek Testament and the International Critical Commentary. We insist that this passage cannot be used to offset Christ's clear testimony.

Col 2:16 as the following verses (and vv 4, 8) clearly show has nothing to do with the Sabbath as God instituted it but as it was being perverted by a Gnostic philosophy based on human traditions as men were encouraged to worship the angelic spirits controlling the heavenly bodies. Such worship involved ascetic fasting and neglecting of the body. On the contrary the Jewish law had many feasts but only one God-given fast. Neither did the Jewish laws contain prescriptions for the ordinary worshipper concerning drink. Thus Colossians in contrast to Romans and Galatians never uses the Greek word for "law". The issue was over human philosophy. See Col 2:4, 8, 22, 23.

THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES

For those who wish to examine closely the claim that the Epistles have priority over the Gospels (a view most N. T. scholars certainly could not tolerate) we recommend the modern works which deal with the background to the writing of the first books of the N. T. --first in position, not in time, for they come about a generation after Paul. See Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew by Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held; Rediscovering the Teaching of the Evangelists by J. Rohde; The Gospel Tradition by H. Reisenfeld; The Theology of St. Luke by Hans Conzelmann; Luke: Historian and Theologian by H. Marshall; the writings of T. W. Manson, W. Marxsen, B. S. Easton, A. Schlatter, J. Schniewind, E. Schweizer, and any modern N. T. Introduction. J. Houlden's New Testament Ethics is a book of special merit, and Reumann's Jesus in the Church's Gospels, as well as Hultgren's work.

I myself have believed for years that to some extent it is true that the Epistles interpret the Gospels. In Answers on the Way, p. 127 I pointed out that "only after the great sacrifice had been offered and accepted could its significance be fully spelled out. Thus the systematic presentation of righteousness by faith was reserved for Paul to pen to the Romans." This I still believe--the Atonement is not systematically spelled out in the Gospels but in Paul alone. This certainly, however, should not be understood as denying that each Gospel is a theological document deserving of separate consideration in its own right. That truth also I have expressed elsewhere. See my Abomination of Desolation, chapter two. But the theological truth that the Epistles by Paul (particularly Romans) systematically explain the atonement cannot be used as an "out" from the Gospel evidence.

Much work has been done in Matthew's Gospel in recent years showing that its great theme has to do with the continuing relevance of the law for Christians. Contrary to early views Matthew does not just have Jewish Christians in mind but also Gentile believers concerned with the problem of rightly relating to the law once Judaism had been "axed" by the disaster of AD 70.

For example, most commentators conclude from Mt 24: 20 that those to whom Matthew wrote certainly observed the Sabbath. It is not correct to say that Jesus was warning against the dangers of Sabbath flight for such was certainly acceptable to the Jews of the first century. Matthew enlarges Mark's account of 2: 23-28 in order to point out that Jesus does not conflict with Moses over the Sabbath law. Scholars now point out that Matthew links his extended discussion on the Sabbath with the call of Mt 11:28-30. The rest of justification through Christ is imaged in the Sabbath (contrary to Reply p. 26) as even the Old Testament had suggested by making the Sabbath a sign of deliverance. See Deut 5: 15.

As another Brinsmead has written:

Matthew has the two Sabbath controversies followed by the first explicit death decree against Christ (12: 14). It is as Christ restores the Sabbath to its true intention, and as He makes it His own personal property, that the gulf between Himself and official Judaism with respect to the law becomes most apparent. The Sabbath in a particular sense comes to stand for the whole of Christ's mission.

B. H. Brinsmead, "The Sabbath in Matthew," Unpublished MS, Avondale College, p. 9.

In this invitation to further study we have specially invited the reader to attend to the N. T. evidence provided by the Gospels. It is quite apparent from my friend's initial presentation on Jesus and the Gospels (as regards the Sabbath) that he had not been able to take into account many of the significant insights afforded by the recent scholars on the subject of the theological teachings of the Gospels, particularly Matthew.

In conclusion we offer a climactic statement from the writer last cited.

The importance of the Sabbath in Matthew is only seen when this gospel is understood as a theological document in lively dialogue with its life-setting. It is to be always remembered that Paul and Matthew each stand on different sides of a towering watershed crucial to early Christianity--the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Before AD 70 the infant church faced perhaps its greatest threat from Judaism.... hence Paul's struggle with Judaisers....

But after AD 70 Judaism became increasingly repugnant in the Roman world.... soon after the beginning of the second century this concern to be distanced from Judaism was expressed by a flood of Christian anti-Jewish tracts. This concern was also demonstrated by a change from the observance of Sabbath to an observance of Sunday. The Christian church was gradually severing its historical roots in the Hebrew religion, preparing the way for a more thorough Hellenising.

Matthew stands at the beginning of this latter era. It is a theological statement perhaps a little homeless among Paul's letters for each was dealing with a quite different life-setting. What is the essence of the danger faced by the Church today? The danger of legalism is alive and well, and Paul still speaks to us urgently. But an equally pressing danger is the threat of loss of identity in a secular, post-Christian, humanist age. Matthew's theological statement is just as urgent, reminding us that the offensiveness of our religion lies in part in its commitment to values and ideals about God and man enshrined in the Hebrew traditions. It is not for nothing that God has given us Matthew as well as Paul. Jesus was not some rather obscure Pauline disciple, but the Lord whose person and teachings were powerful and alive in the Christian church, constantly opening up ways of new theological creativity.

Ibid. p. 10

The New Testament thus is clear on the vital nature of the Sabbath. In strong contrast to the claim of my friend Robert (p. 39), Leonhard Goppel writes in his Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times (p. 5):

....the Sabbath controversies in Mk 2:23--3:6 did not intend merely to justify the Sabbath practices of the Church--the Palestinian Church kept the Sabbath commandment--but to explain in particular why and for what purpose Jesus died (Mk 3:6).

See also Bultmann's History of the Synoptic Tradition, pp. 12, 16f, 48f. G. Campbell Morgan has written to the same effect in his comments on the Gospels.

Ephesians 6: 24

ELLEN G. WHITE--GIFTED CHRISTIAN LEADER OR CHARLATAN AND FRAUD?

(Chapter 11)

Many observers and participants in the present controversy believe that its touchstone is the traditional administrative approach to the writings of Ellen G. White--the treatment of them as an "easy" Bible, whereby all theological questions may be authoritatively settled in a manner impossible by the use of Scripture alone. That this view was rejected by James White, William White, W. W. Prescott, A. G. Daniells, Uriah Smith, F. M. Wilcox, M. E. Kern, W. A. Spicer, Ellen White herself, the writers of Questions on Doctrine, and the vast majority of loyal Adventist scholars today, has been strangely either unknown or disregarded by present administrators.

The subject is charged with emotion for most discussants. People are usually polarized over Ellen White and neutrality or moderation are almost unknown in this area. This fact, in itself, is deeply significant, and all should inquire as to the wherefores, for neither fairy tales nor the exploits of Santa Claus could stir those who react against Ellen G. White with such vehemence. Apparently, the ministry of this little old lady who spoke so lovingly of Jesus has a challenging reality which none can either avoid or remain neutral regarding it.

The present writer has given his personal convictions in three chapters of Physicians of the Soul, and the sixth chapter of the Glacier View manuscript. Only a portion of the latter will be referred to here. In this chapter we make no pretense at solving all the problems associated with Ellen G. White. No one living has enough information to do that. But we will try to clear the ground somewhat of the misconceptions which impede clear thinking on the matter.

First of all, we would plead that where God is at work, a gospel spirit always attends the gospel message. Those who knew the living E.G.W. (and the writer has talked to several such), felt that such was so in Ellen White's case. But it is often not so with those who oppose her. Those who indulge the flesh by strong stinging condemnation in discussing this issue are certainly not following the spirit of Christ. Let us not plead that if Christ and Paul could be stringent in rebuke that we can necessarily be likewise. None of us is another Christ or another Paul. We are erring, weak, prejudiced, Lilliputian mortals, judgment-bound, and we have been instructed by God to "speak evil of no man" (or woman), Titus 3:2.

On the other hand, it must be conceded that strong reactions against Ellen White are sometimes the result of a provocative extreme view by those on the opposite side. So far as Ellen White is concerned, hagiography has replaced biography in Adventism. We have made an idol of a mere erring mortal, and sinned by false worship.

Second, a Christian who assents to the inspired Word that love "believeth all things, hopeth all things" is duty-bound to be charitable even to the dead, and give the benefit of the doubt wherever a real doubt exists. This does not mean that a Christian is gullible, but that he should strive to be both humble and meek like his Master, who dared not bring a railing accusation even against the devil himself. See Jude 9.

Third, we would plead for avoidance of both extremes in this issue--the extreme which regards every word of Ellen White as inspired as those on the tables of stone (a view vehemently rejected by Ellen White herself--see 1 Selected Messages, p. 24), and the extreme which views her as a cunning deceiver, habitually covering her tracks as she climbed toward religious power (which ignores seventy years of consistent, strenuous Christian service). For our part, we confess that both positions in the light of well-known evidence are not only lacking, but ludicrous. Neither is even partially correct.

Some things are clear, and these we wish to emphasize. One basic reason for the present antagonism toward Ellen White is a non-biblical view of the New Testament gift of prophecy and a superstitious view as to how God operates. The facts about Ellen White just do not agree with these ideas. Most Adventists have imbibed from their early years the notion that a prophet stands, not just head and shoulders above all others, but miles above. This view is neither logical nor Scriptural. Similarly, most Adventists have taken for granted the idea that Ellen White's ministry was attended by continuous miracle so that she had no necessity to gather information as other mortals must. Very few have ever stopped to realize that most of the testimonies written by Paul for the church had very little, if anything, to do with miraculous visions, despite the truth that the apostle did himself have the gift of prophecy and did in truth experience visions. Furthermore, if the writer of Luke-Acts had to consider uninspired documents before writing his own account (Luke 1:1-4), it is clear that God practices an economy of miracle, never doing even for biblical writers anything they could do for themselves. What is known as the synoptic problem illustrates that both Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source, as well as their own individual understandings.

As for the doctrine of inspiration, the concept of most Adventists in this regard is certainly not biblical. Inspiration does not make its product an "inquire within" upon everything. Inspiration is perfect for its purpose according to John 20:31--the purpose that readers might be brought to know Christ. In twenty centuries the church has never formulated an explicit creedal statement on the nature of inspiration. All God's mighty works, creation, atonement, regeneration, inspiration, are beyond our analysis, and we know them best by their fruits. "The Spirit blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes", John 3:8.

Similarly, the typical layman (and administrator) holds views about the relationship between the Ellen G. White writings and Scripture which as indicated in our first paragraph are quite contrary to all our official statements on the subject between 1844 and 1979, and are as certainly contrary to Ellen White's own view of the matter as L. E. Froom has well documented in chapter five of his Movement of Destiny. All should read Froom's summary in pages 91-106.

So far as Scripture is concerned, the gift of prophecy since the Cross is neither the gift of oracular doctrinal pronouncements, nor authoritative theological truth. It is a practical gift for correction of behavior of professed Christians, and for encouragement in the way. It is not to be compared in its operational purpose with the miraculous providences attending those selected for canonical messages. God's miraculous care over His instruments is proportionate to their importance in His scale of values. Biblical writers were blessed in a way no subsequent Christians have ever been.

The New Testament gift of prophecy, like the other spiritual gifts, is a phenomenon resulting when the Spirit of God sets alight a natural faculty making it contribute in a special way to the needs of the church. The gift of teaching, for example, is not a pure miraculous endowment conferred on one who could not himself put words together in acceptable sentences. It is rather the Spirit's nurture of a natural gift already present as is the case with the other gifts. The New Testament gift of prophecy resulted in the type of preaching blessed with

divine illumination, but not infallibility and was available for all. See 1 Cor 11:4, 5; 14:1, 5, 24, 31, 39. Cf. Joel 2:28

Twice the New Testament urges upon us the necessity to "weigh", "test", the announcements of the true prophets in the congregation. See 1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thess. 5:19-21. Christians were told to test all prophetic statements and to hold fast what was good. Doctrine is not in the scope of statements regarding the church's prophets, for the summary of doctrine came with Christ, God's last word, and His apostolic commentators. So says Heb. 1:1-2, and Jude 3 very clearly. 1 Cor. 14:3 tells us the purpose of the gift of prophecy since the cross. Note very carefully the words and read several translations of the text. "He who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation." This harmonizes precisely with William White's statement regarding his mother's work and his comments that when his mother did touch upon theological matters, at that point she paraphrased denominational authors.¹

We wish to urge upon readers the duty to at least listen to Ellen G. White's own concepts regarding inspiration. When she quoted from and paraphrased Calvin Stowe on the matter, she did so at considerable risk, inasmuch as what she thus borrowed, changed, and expanded, was contrary to the run-of-the-mill understanding of the matter in the Christian church, and Adventism in particular. Any other church leader saying what she said ran the risk in the nineteenth century of being expelled for heresy, or of being tarred and feathered. Observe closely her comments.

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented.... But God has not put himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible are God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that are inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expression, but on the man himself, who under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind...

Each dwells on particular points which his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling on the different objects gives those objects a different hue.²

Ellen White has clearly told us that additional truth is not brought out in the testimonies. They contain no new light. Instead, they take the practical rules of Scripture and apply them to Christian behavior in specific circumstances.³ This being the case, it is quite wrong to ever use Ellen G. White's writings to prove a doctrinal position that cannot be proven from the Bible. She affirmed this repeatedly but the church has ignored her counsel.

The views of Ellen G. White regarding inspiration accord well with the best of modern theological thinking in this area. A typical example from a contemporary theologian is the following:

God speaks. But what language does He speak? There is a story of an old lady who prepared for her approaching death by studying Hebrew that she might be able to greet her Maker in His native tongue. She had been brought up in the tradition that every word of the Bible is a direct utterance of God, taken down at His dictation by a series of private secretaries. But we shall see from the Bible itself that when God spoke to men, it was not necessarily with a sound that could be heard by human ears. It is a great mistake to take too literally the language of religious experience. Only when we speak of that which can be perceived by our senses can we be sure of using words in their literal meaning. As soon as we talk of the intangible, the immaterial, the spiritual, we are compelled to use symbolic metaphorical language. We use no scale to measure the weight of an argument, no trigonometry to calculate the height of a lofty ideal. We cannot see to read by the light of a sunny character or the brilliant genius. Nor can the voice of God be recorded by a radio engineer. 'The word which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw'; 'I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision'; when a man speaks of seeing a word or obeying a vision, we know that he is straining language to express that which bursts the bounds of thought.

The prophet is before else a man, and it is by the heightening of his normal human faculties that he attains his depth of insight. But like all men, he is fallible. He may imperfectly understand the word that is spoken to him. He may lack the interpretative powers to make clear to others what he has seen. Though he be far in advance of his age, he cannot wholly divest himself of the way of thought in which he has been brought up.⁴

It should be observed that Caird, like Ellen G. White, is discussing the inspiration of the Bible Writers. If they were hampered by their human contribution, how much more is the case with those whose role was as much below that of the Biblical prophets as the moon is below the sun in its illumination.

Coming now to the matter of Ellen G. White's use of other writers. It must be first happily conceded that Walter Rae is accurate in his delineation of the chief Ellen G. White sources. There can be no legitimate doubt about this whatsoever, and it is tragic that a sincere Adventist pastor should be stigmatized as Walter Rae has been. Not all of us might choose to express our conclusions as he has done, but none who know Walter Rae can doubt the sincerity of his Christian profession, and the legitimacy of his claim as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor.

But the real issue is not whether Ellen G. White used sources, but was she practicing deception? It is very important to notice that the usual quotations used to support the idea that she was engaged in deception are all used out of historical and literary context, and do not yield what such proponents suggest. Let us illustrate:

I do not write one article in the paper expressing my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne.⁵

I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal articles in the papers that my mind should not have any understanding of anyone's ideas and views, and that not a mold of any man's theory should have any connection with that which I write.⁶

I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own.⁷

It is important that each of these statements should be read in its own context. The one from 5 Testimonies 67 is where she is counselling the church in Battle Creek, and people are asserting that Ellen White is just parroting gossip that has been relayed to her, and her opinion on that gossip. She is denying such a charge and is certainly not dealing with the issue of whether she has sometimes used convenient

expressions of truth (with which she agreed) that she found in other writers.

The second statement has to do with Ellen White's contemplation of the coming Minneapolis meetings with Waggoner and Jones and Uriah Smith. Ellen White, with reference to that particular situation, and that particular controversy, asserts that she is not making up her mind beforehand from articles in either the Review or the Signs. She is certainly not discussing the issue of whether she ever read doctrinal articles in the papers. It was well known that Ellen White kept scrap books with vast amounts of materials from Adventist and non-Adventist magazines. For example, from these she compiled volumes of scrap book stories for young people, and also from these she took much material incorporated into her written books.

The statement with reference to the words being her own has nothing to do with a contrast to using words of other writers, but a contrast to words from heaven. She is saying that the responsibility is hers for finding words to express the ideas given her. She is not discussing the issue of using sources at all. Another well known statement from Ellen White is one that need not necessarily mean more than that her convictions were originally God-given.

My books are written independent of the books, and of the opinion of others.⁸

And in the Review of Oct. 8, 1867, she affirmed "I did not read any works upon health until I had written". This statement has reference to the early health writings and it should not be made to cover everything that Ellen White wrote on health. The only things that she is referring to from her writings is the one chapter in Spiritual Gifts, entitled "Health", "Appeal to Mothers", and the sketching out of her six articles for How to Live. These are the only things she said she wrote before she read the works of other writers on health reform. She also says later in the same article:

After I had written my six articles on How to Live, I then searched the various books on hygiene and was surprised to find them so nearly in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to me. And to show this harmony and set before my brethren and sisters this subject as brought out by able writers, I determined to publish How to Live in which I largely extract from the works referred to.

In his General Conference worship services in November 15-19, 1981, Ron Graybill spoke as follows:

The choice was this: either her writings were all from God, or all from Satan. Given these two options, Mrs. White honestly and justifiably chose to refer that her writings were all from God. However, while it is true that her writings taken as a whole are all from God, there are elements found in those writings which came to her through human sources under the guidance of God's Spirit, a situation very similar to that observed in Scripture. Thus, Mrs. White's statements about her writings were not dishonest or deceptive, but they were incomplete in that respect. She simply did not get into the mechanics of inspiration. When we see what people do from this evidence that we have been studying this week, we can understand perhaps why Mrs. White didn't get into the mechanics, because people are so anxious to find some way of saying, "Well, this is not God's message to me."⁹

In the same meetings, after quoting from the Signs of the Times, February 22, 1883, and the Review and Herald, December 26, 1882, where Ellen White recommended Conybeare and Howson's book, and also D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, Graybill added:

Now I submit to you that if I were borrowing in a time when I felt borrowing was wrong, and I was writing books for you to read, I would not, at the same time, be recommending that you read the book that I was borrowing from. So, I don't think that Mrs. White was dishonest. I think that she appealed to the essential fact, the most basic fact about her writings, knowing that they were given her as messages from God, for His people.¹⁰

Personally, I would not give a fig for a book produced by someone who had not previously read widely on the topic about which they chose to write. As Spurgeon said long ago: "He that doesn't quote, will never be quoted. He that doesn't read, will never be read, and he that doesn't use other people's brains shows he has no brains of his own." Not one woman in a hundred got through the massive amount of work that Ellen White accomplished and undoubtedly one reason for her usage of other works was merely the matter of time-saving. We know that this is true for in a journal description of Lake Geneva which she had seen with her own eyes, she chose to give the words from Wylie describing what she had already seen. For anyone to conclude that she had never seen Geneva with her own eyes because she quoted from another viewer would be erroneous.

In the only preface to her books Ellen G. White ever wrote (Preface to The Great Controversy), she told of her use of sources both historical and theological. At the same time she said why it was that she did not give chapter and verse--she had no wish to lead others to consider her source as authoritative in all matters of which they spoke. She further declared that the intention of her book was to draw spiritual lessons from reformed movements of the past in order to illustrate the coming crisis. Accuracy in history and doctrinal matters was not among her primary objectives. This statement about her use of sources was written before the first public charge of plagiarism by Canright in 1889.

What did Ellen White think she was doing when she paraphrased so many books and incorporated these statements in her testimonies? To use her own often-repeated words, she was gathering "scattered gems of truth" and putting them "in right settings". We have her own admission that she felt she was duty-bound to gather up truth regardless of its source. In Manuscript 15 in 1888, Ellen White wrote:

The Lord has been pleased to give great light, yet I know that He leads other minds, and opens them to mysteries of His word, and I want to receive every ray of light that God should send me, though it should come through the humblest of His servants.

Ellen White certainly had no claim to omniscience and was forever struggling to express better the truths she sometimes only dimly perceived. In W. C. White's Answers to Questions Submitted by Elder B. L. House, March 6, 1932, he asserted that "in her earliest writings there are found a few statements which indicate that a vision was imperfectly understood, or imperfectly described". Visionary elements drawing from the pool of a prophet's own subconscious mind have a measure of obscurity attending them. Ezekiel in chapter 1 of his book had a vision of God's throne moving among the exiles in Babylon. He also sees it move out of the most holy place to the threshold of the temple at the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem. In actual fact, of course, God's throne was in heaven and not moving anywhere, but the symbolic representation was meant to teach that God was with the captives in Babylon and that the mere presence of the temple in Jerusalem is no guarantee of the divine presence.

One thing is certain, Ellen White was not a high-bound restricted traditionalist. She was ever open to new ideas, and new methods, and was grateful for any resources that Providence placed in her way. In some respects, she was as far removed ideologically from her Adventist

contemporaries as the North Pole is from the South. Consider her comments to the effect that the instructors in our schools should not be bound to teach what has always been taught. In Manuscript 15, 1888, we have her words that "what would not have been truth twenty years ago, may well be present truth now". In articles in the Review and Herald she instructed workers to gather up the scattered gems of truth found in erroneous settings and use them as food for the flock.¹¹ Undoubtedly, she felt that her fellow workers should always be improving, and always be studying and always recognizing that truth in all its variants came from Christ, the Light of the world, and was therefore for all to use freely.

A few years ago, I came across the following excellent statement from the Preston and Hanson commentary on Revelation. I felt it so pertinent that I forwarded it to the Ellen White Estate. Here it is:

In fact, of course, every great writer has materials and sources which he uses (Aeschylus and Shakespeare are admirable examples). The important question is not, what sources does he use? but what uses does he make of them? Indeed, if we once get some idea of John's technique, the masterly way in which he adapts and combines his various sources makes us pay more, and not less, attention to what he is using in those sources to express.¹²

Johannes Brahms was frequently accused of plagiarism, but he always remained totally unmoved by the accusation because he felt that those who accused him completely misunderstood the spirit of his work. In our day, his work is held with great appreciation in every place where he was once held to be an abstruse re-creator. According to some, he is now recognized as the master craftsman of his time. When it was pointed out to Brahms that his sonata in A major, piano and violin, was being called the "Meistersinger" Sonata, because its first few notes were identical in interval, though not in pitch, with the first notes of the "Prize Song" from Wagner's opera "Die Meistersinger", his reply was, "Every donkey can see that." Few Americans are aware that there is identically the same arrangements in note of notes for the song "My Country Tis Of Thee" as for the British "God Save the King". But also in Switzerland and Prussia, the same music and accompaniment have been used as the air of their national anthem. The French also have used the same musical arrangement.

All should read Emerson's essay on plagiarism. In it he declares that "Chaucer is a huge borrower". After numerating the many sources of Chaucer's indebtedness, Emerson adds:

Gower he uses as if he were only a brick-kiln or stone-quarry out of which to build his house. He steals by this apology--that what he takes has no worth where he finds it, and the greatest where he leaves it.

As concerning Shakespeare, Emerson says: "In point of fact, it appears that Shakespeare did owe debts in all directions and was able to use whatever he found". Regarding the first, second and third parts of Henry VI, Emerson asserts: "Out of 6,043 lines, 1,771 were written by some author preceding Shakespeare; 2,373 by him, on the foundation laid by his own predecessors; and 1,899 were entirely his own." Emerson then asserts:

It has come to be practically a sort of rule in literature that a man having once shown himself capable of original writing, is entitled thence forth to steal from the writings of others at discretion.... All the debts which such a man would contract to another wit, would never disturb his consciousness of originality; for the administration of books, and of other minds, are a whiff of smoke to that most private reality with which he has conversed.

Alfred Ainger in his introduction to Lamb's Essays, tells us that Charles Lamb was one whose mind was so imbued with the writings of others that he was a constant, and often unconscious, borrower from his favorite writers. Says Ainger:

He is rich in quotations.... but besides those avowedly introduced as such, his style is full of quotations held--if that expression may be allowed--in solution. One feels, rather than recognizes, that a phrase or idiom or term of expression is an echo of something that one has heard or read before. If such is the use made of his material, then a charm is added by the very fact that we are thus continually renewing our experience of an older day. His style becomes aromatic, like the perfume of faded rose leaves in the China jar.... His observation was his own, though when he gave it back into the world the manner of it was a creation of his reading.

In the U.S.A., until the twentieth century, no book written overseas was protected by copyright. In the nineteenth century, in every field writers borrowed copiously from each other. There were copyright laws in U.S.A. but most Americans regarded these as particularly applicable to creative aesthetic literature such as poetry. It is just not correct to say that all writers were giving their sources meticulously. For example, Conybeare and Howson borrowed from other writers without giving credit or using quotation marks.¹³ In well-known Adventist writings by Uriah Smith, and D. M. Canright we find the same practice. But anyone who has worked in the stacks of the Library of Congress can find thousands of examples of the same in every area of nineteenth century literary work. The case is especially so in the area of religion, where all truth was regarded as God's gift to man and in reality only heaven's property, like the cattle on a thousand hills.

Ellen White's use of sources is an undeniable fact, but it is a stumbling block only to those who have the stainless steel pipe concept of inspiration. It is tragic that usually the situation is much exaggerated by reports that line after line in Ellen White's writings are a verbatim reproduction of other books. This is not the case. One would find it very difficult indeed to find two or three lines together in the book Desire of Ages that is a verbatim reproduction of any other source, even though undoubtedly Ellen White used a score of sources as she prepared that work. Even in The Great Controversy chapters on the sanctuary which paraphrase Uriah Smith, there are practically no verbatim sentences.

Having tried to off-set one extreme towards the writings of Ellen White, let us now endeavor to counter the opposite extreme. The following quotation is one that is accepted by practically all loyal Adventist scholars:

Three points have been clearly established. One is that Ellen White took much material from other authors. She did not use secular literary sources just to provide clear descriptions of historical events, health principles or other information revealed to her in vision; she also used these sources to provide information not seen in vision.

Second, Ellen White was a part of the nineteenth century American culture and was influenced by contemporary health reformers, authors, and fellow Adventist church leaders. This fact should not surprise us, for no one can live outside the culture and be uninfluenced by contemporary values and contemporary tastes. Ellen White travelled extensively, read widely, and learned from experience. Without diminishing one whit from the special revelation of the Holy Spirit to Ellen White, we must acknowledge that she was shaped by her environment just as all of us have been shaped by ours.

The third point which Ellen White's scholarship has established, is that Ellen White was not inerrant. Inevitably, as she incorporated into her own articles and books contemporary ideas and the words of contemporary historians, health reforms and devotional writings, she passed along errors of fact and some of the misconceptions of her generation.¹⁴

We should also inquire as to whether Ellen White was so incompetent with words that it was necessary for her secretaries to do the major work in all her books. Over twenty years ago, Horace Shaw wrote his doctoral dissertation on Ellen G. White as a public speaker. The resulting Ph.D. thesis is now to be found in all our college libraries and is well worth close study. In preparation for the task, Elder Shaw contacted hundreds of people in countries around the world who still remembered hearing Ellen G. White, the living preacher. The contemporary accounts of this woman as a speaker agree with the majority accounts of those who could still recall such addresses fifty years or so later. Ellen G. White could hold large audiences spellbound for over an hour by extempore speaking. Undoubtedly, her verbal skills were exceptional, and although secretaries sometimes selected historical quotations and certainly tidied up hastily written manuscripts, it would be quite false to say that Ellen White was entirely dependent upon them for competent verbal expression.

In the present doctrinal controversy, one fact has been much neglected and it is this. The proportion of doctrinal material in Ellen White's writings is very slight indeed. Let the inquirer take up the volumes of the Testimonies and the Conflict of the Ages series and her many letters of counsel as reflected even in the compilations, and he will find that well over 90% of the White writings are on practical issues of Christian conduct. In Great Controversy where Ellen White was giving the history of the Adventist Church, it was necessary to present the history of its doctrine also, and Ellen White did so, warts and all. Those unfamiliar with her writings in general make Great Controversy representative of her work. But this it is not. Her work fulfills the specifications of 1 Cor. 14:3.

What shall we say of Ellen G. White's use of "I saw"? We believe the White Estate is correct in admitting that some of the statements are statements of cognizance amounting to "I was convicted". Many others, however, certainly refer to her memories of her visions. The evidence is overwhelming that some of her beliefs are erroneous and do not represent miraculously conveyed truth. The conclusion is thrust upon us that the visions also were not entirely supernatural and that a human fallible element is present. This would place it on the parallel with the other spiritual gifts--all of which unite human faculties and capacities with the work of the Spirit. When one remembers that the last writer of Scripture continually drew from existing storehouses of culture concepts to illustrate his convictions, it is clear that God does nothing independently of the human element. Ellen White herself tells us that some of her visions grew out of her conversations or reading. See her discussion on the iceberg incident in the Kellogg situation. Church history contains many accounts of people like St. Bridget of Sweden, Immanuel Swedenborg and others who were exemplary Christians who experienced visions, none of which were infallible revelations of the truth. The statements that Ellen White wrote early about the shut-door demonstrate our contention here.

We personally do not believe that the epilepsy theory of "partial-complex seizures" is an adequate explanation for the phenomenon of Ellen G. White. Such seizures typically are common within a few months of the cause of the injury, not eight years after. If disease could provide the dedication, energy and wisdom that Ellen White revealed for over seventy years, some of us would pray "Lord, give me that disease".

We recommend The Abiding Gift of Prophecy by former president of the General Conference, A. G. Daniells, particularly the pages dealing with the prophetic gift throughout the ages since Christ as possessed by fallible servants of God. This is material worthy of much closer consideration in the present climate. Dr. J. Provonsha's discussion of the prophets in his God is With Us also has many valuable insights on the nature of inspiration.

We would stress that it is the misuse of Ellen G. White that is the causative factor of many of the problems in the SDA church today. When the church remembers that E.G. White denied infallibility and acknowledges that even such volumes as Great Controversy contain theological errors then such misuse will greatly decrease. For example, if E.G. White was wrong regarding the ministration of the blood in the tabernacle, the prophecies of Rev 9:15; Rev 11; Dan 8:13,14, and the exposition of such passages as Mt 24:29; 25:1-13; Gal 3:24 why should any contend for her view in any instance that conflicts with Scripture? (See the sixth chapter of my Glacier View manuscript -- available from Desmond Ford Publications -- for a detailed discussion of this issue.) The marvel is that such errors compared with the huge content of her work are so few and even some of them disappear when we recall that N.T. prophecy is inspired preaching rather than technical exegesis. The church must admit what her scholars have declared in print --that her writings are primarily homiletical.

We should keep in mind that Scripture too has been frequently misused over the centuries, but that such misuse should be no barrier to proper use. Were the Ellen White writings used for devotional and pastoral purposes and ever held subject to Scripture, the results would be overwhelmingly positive and beneficial. Those who have doubts about this should read the Contents pages of the six large Review volumes comprehending the thousands of E.G. White messages to the church over seventy years. They are chiefly practical in nature and such doctrines as the Investigative Judgment are prominent by their absence.

If infallibility is not the test of a prophet what is? The following criteria should be taken as a whole, for no one item on its own is necessarily significant. A messenger with the gift of prophecy: (1) Claims a "Thus saith the Lord". That is, such believe God has spoken to and through them supernaturally. The claim alone without the following characteristics is valueless. (2) The messages are in substantial harmony with the dominant motifs of Scripture and based upon them. Complete originality would discredit a modern prophet. (3) The messages offered the church are practical rather than esoteric, primarily promulgating the "how" of glorifying God by holy lives. (4) The messenger is characterized by abundant evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, a character and life singularly elevated in spiritual tone. (5) The fruit of such a messenger's labors testifies to its heavenly source. God and heaven are exalted, Scripture is acknowledged as the all-supreme source of truth, Christ and His gospel are made precious and pre-eminent, and the obvious advancement of God's cause through obedience to the counsels ever results. (6) There is evidence of supernatural knowledge.

Those who doubt the integrity of Ellen White should read her own Life Sketches and note particularly Uriah Smith's summary---pages 469-470. Read also the Review account (found in the last of the six volumes of compilation) of the final preaching tour --from the west coast to the east and back wherein E.G. White in her eighties took over seventy public meetings to the great blessing of thousands. This she did at the risk of life itself, almost dying on the return trip. Many of these meetings lasted approximately an hour and testified that the speaker was in no wise senile.

For evidence of E.G. White's supernatural knowledge consider the fact that she wrote thousands of people rebuking often their secret sins with hardly a squeak of indignant protest from the vast majority of the recipients. That she was essentially sound on the gospel though most of her Adventist contemporaries were not is made clear by the "interview" which follows this section. As for the view that Mrs White was moulded by fellow church leaders and sought to protect her image at any cost one need only remember her refusal to abide by her earlier

statements on the law in Galatians and the daily despite constant urging from such men as Uriah Smith and Stephen Haskell. The woman who crossed the floor at Minneapolis to stand with the despised young heralds of the gospel was no puppet.

(See appendices for further materials relevant to this topic.)

References for Chapter Eleven

1. 3 S. M., pp. 447, 449-450.
2. 1 S.M., pp. 21-22.
3. 5 T., p. 665 and 2 T., pp. 604-605.
4. The Truth of the Gospel, by G. B. Caird, pp. 54, 55, 58, 59.
5. 5 T., p. 67.
6. Letter 37, 1887.
7. 1 S.M., p. 37.
8. 4 S.P., p. 535.
9. E. G. White's Literary Work: An Update, p. 23. 10.
10. Ibid., p. 24.
11. See Review and Herald, Nov. 8, 15, 1892 and compare D.A., p. 287-288; Ed. 14.
12. Page 93.
13. See F. D. Nichols, Ellen G. White and Her Critics, pp. 424-425.
14. Spectrum, March 1980, p. 39.

AN 'INTERVIEW' WITH ELLEN G. WHITE ON RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

- Q. Sister White, because so many people are asking me about Righteousness by Faith, may I seek your help? Firstly, is it wise to make so much of this topic? Cannot we be content with proclaiming our distinctive doctrines?
- A. You will meet with those who will say, "You are too much excited over the matter. You are too much in earnest. You should not be reaching for the righteousness of Christ, and making so much of that. You should preach the law." As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth.

Review and Herald, March 11, 1890.

Some of our brethren are not receiving the message of God upon this subject. They appear to be anxious that none of our ministers shall depart from their former manner of teaching the good old doctrines. We inquire, is it not time that fresh light should come to the people of God, to awaken them to greater earnestness and zeal? The exceeding great and precious promises given us in the Holy Scriptures have been lost sight of to a great extent, just as the enemy of all righteousness designed that they should be. He has cast his own dark shadow between us and our God, that we may not see the true character of God.

Review and Herald, April 1, 1890.

Some of our brethren have expressed fears that we shall dwell too much upon the subject of justification by faith, and I hope and pray that none will be needlessly alarmed; for there is no danger in presenting this doctrine as it is set forth in the Scriptures. If there had not been a remissness in the past to properly instruct the people of God, there would not now be a necessity of calling special attention to it. . . . The exceeding great and precious promises given us in the Holy Scriptures have been lost sight of to a great extent, just as the enemy of all righteousness designed that they should be.

Selected Messages, I, 372.

- Q. Will not such emphasis on justification, etc., spark off controversy, and is not that dangerous?
- A. The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth, know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the work for the present time. When the time of trial will come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Unless thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe, but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weaknesses.

Testimonies to the Church, V, 707.

- Q. But how can we free people from the power of Satan if we do not put first the distinctive truths which reveal his special errors?
- A. The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.

Gospel Workers, 161.

Every true Christian will be strong, not in the strength and merit of his good works, but in the righteousness of Christ, which through faith is imputed unto him.

SDABC, VII, 907.

...and this alone, - Christ's imputed righteousness, - makes you able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Sons and Daughters of God, 346.

The very first and the most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the sinbearer, the sin-pardoning Saviour, making the gospel as clear as possible.

Evangelism, 264.

- Q. But have not other religionists erred by preaching the gospel only and by neglecting the law? Are we to follow them?
- A. If we would have the spirit and power of the third angel's message, we must present the law and the gospel together, for they go hand in hand. As a power from beneath is stirring up the children of disobedience to make void the law of God, and to trample upon the truth that Christ is our righteousness, a power from above is moving upon the hearts of those who are loyal, to exalt the law, and to lift up Jesus as a complete Saviour. Unless divine power is brought into the experience of the people of God, false theories and ideas will take minds captive, Christ and His righteousness will be dropped out of the experience of many, and their faith will be without power or life.

Ministers are to present Christ in His fullness both in the churches and in new fields, that the hearers may have an intelligent faith. The people must be instructed that Christ is unto them salvation and righteousness. It is Satan's studied purpose to keep souls from

believing in Christ as their only hope; for the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin is efficacious in behalf of those only who believe in its merit, and who present it before the Father as did Abel in his offering.

The offering of Cain was an offense to God, because it was a Christless offering. The burden of our message is not only the commandments of God, but the faith of Jesus.

Gospel Workers, 161-162.

Q. What connection is there between righteousness by faith and the third angel's message?

A. Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity".

Review and Herald, April 1, 1890.

Q. Do you mean to say that the best preparation for the Time of Trouble so soon to come is to understand righteousness by faith?

A. If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner.

Review and Herald, Nov. 22, 1892.

Q. I have always understood that our special emphasis should be on holiness. Will the proclamation of the truths about justification do this as effectively as preaching the law?

A. The present message--justification by faith--is a message from God; it bears the divine credentials, for its fruit is unto holiness.

Review and Herald, Sept. 3, 1889.

Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness.... The meager views which so many have had of the exalted character and office of Christ have narrowed their religious experience, and have greatly hindered their progress in the divine life. Personal religion among us as a people is at a low ebb. There is much form, much machinery, much tongue religion; but something deeper and more solid must be brought into our religious experience.... What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge.... Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character.

Testimonies to the Church, V, 742-744.

Q. Do many understand how righteousness is to be found?

A. There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject justification by faith that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare.

Review and Herald, September 3, 1889.

The small churches have been presented to me as so destitute of spiritual food that they are ready to die, and God says to you, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God".

Review and Herald, March 4, 1890.

This I do know, that our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths.

Gospel Workers, 301.

Q. Will not constant teaching on justification lead to careless living--a type of antinomianism?

A. No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.

The Desire of Ages, 555.

In the religion of Christ there is a regenerating influence that transforms the entire being, lifting man above every debasing groveling vice, and raising the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. Linked to the Infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of evil have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ's righteousness.

Counsels to Teachers, 51, 52.

The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.

The Desire of Ages, 323, 324.

When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the suffering of the Son of God.

Review and Herald, March 18, 1890.

Q. Many of your statements stress the necessity for effort. Are we not to instruct people to agonize, watch and pray?

A. There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favour. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept everyone that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour.

Selected Messages, I, 353, 354.

We can no more repent of sin without Christ, than we can be pardoned without Christ, and yet it is a humiliation to man with his human passion and pride to go to Jesus straightway, believing and trusting Him for everything which he needs....

Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. Neither say that after you have done all you can on your part, Jesus will help you. Christ has said, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5). From first to last man is to be a laborer together with God. Unless the Holy Spirit works upon the human heart, at every step we shall stumble and fall. Man's efforts alone are nothing but worthlessness; but cooperation with Christ means a victory. Of ourselves we have no power to repent of sin. Unless we accept divine aid we cannot take the first step toward the Saviour. He says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (Rev. 21:6) in the salvation of every soul.

But though Christ is everything, we are to inspire every man to unwearied diligence. We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch, pray, lest we shall be overcome by the wily foe. For the power and grace with which we can do this comes from God, and all the while we are to trust in Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

Selected Messages, I, 381.

Q. Please sum up the meaning of Righteousness by Faith.

A. Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and "God is love". 1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for "all Thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172), and "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 18.

But that which God required of Adam in Paradise before the fall, He requires in this age of the world from those who would follow Him, - perfect obedience to His law. But righteousness without a blemish can be obtained only through the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Review and Herald, Sept. 3, 1901.

The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace. It was the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest fullness of the exercise of grace, mercy, peace and love to the most guilty of Adam's race.

What is righteousness? It is the satisfaction that Christ gave to the divine law on our behalf.

Review and Herald, Aug. 21, 1894.

Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the sinner may feel that he is pardoned, and may know that the law no more condemns him, because he is in harmony with all its precepts. It is his privilege to count himself innocent when he reads and thinks of the retribution that will fall upon the unbelieving and sinful. By faith he lays hold of the righteousness of Christ.... Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to His death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law.

Sons and Daughters of God, 240.

What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

Review and Herald, Sept. 16, 1902.

Q. What is my part in receiving righteousness?

A. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).

Selected Messages, I, 367.

Many are confused as to what constitutes the first steps in the work of salvation. Repentance is thought to be a work the sinner must do for himself in order that he may come to Christ. They think that the sinner must procure for himself a fitness in order to obtain the blessing of God's grace. But while it is true that repentance must precede forgiveness, for it is only the broken and contrite heart that is acceptable to God, yet the sinner cannot bring himself to repentance, or prepare himself to come to Christ. Except the sinner repent, he cannot be forgiven; but the question to be decided is as to whether repentance is the work of the sinner or the gift of Christ. Must the sinner wait until he is filled with remorse for his sin before he can come to Christ? The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent.

Ibid., 390.

My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength, and will finally

become discouraged.

Ibid., 351.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing, but these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as we are--sinful, helpless, dependent.

Ibid., 353.

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Mark 2:17). I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised."

Ibid., 392.

All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

Ibid., 343.

Q. What are the worst and most likely errors of religious people?

A. Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception. If you would understand it, you must cease haggling over your pet ideas, and with humble hearts survey the atonement. This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail.

Selected Messages, I, 343.

The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was that mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth, often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life. The darkest chapters of history are burdened with the record of crimes committed by bigoted religionists. The Pharisees claimed to be children of Abraham, and boasted of their possession of the oracles of God; yet these advantages did not preserve them from selfishness, malignity, greed for gain, and the basest hypocrisy. They thought themselves the greatest religionists of the world, but their so-called orthodoxy led them to crucify the Lord of glory.

The same danger still exists. Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. They have not believed and loved it, therefore they have not received the power and grace that come through sanctification of the truth. Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world.

The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God, and maintain a vital connection with Him.

The Desire of Ages, 309, 310.

Q. Can believers achieve perfection in this life? Do not many of your own statements urge us to seek perfection?

A. If those who speak so freely of perfection in the flesh, could see things in the true light, they would recoil with horror from their presumptuous ideas.... And while we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul. Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God that we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our substitute. Ye are accepted in the Beloved. The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be molded and fashioned after His own likeness.

Selected Messages, II, 32.

The more we contemplate the character of Christ, and the more we experience of His saving power, the more keenly shall we realize our own weakness and imperfection.

The Sanctified Life, 83.

Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.

Ibid., 7.

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.

None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ.

Acts of the Apostles, 651-652.

Let us remember that we are struggling and falling, failing in speech and action to represent Christ, falling and rising again, despairing and hoping.

Testimonies to the Church, IX, 222.

Are you in Christ? Not if you do not acknowledge yourselves erring, helpless, condemned sinners.

Testimonies to the Church, V, 48.

Q. You often urge us to reflect the image of Christ. Will we ever have that in this life in an absolute sense?

A. ...excellence of character is found in Him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another.

SDABC, VII, 904.

Show that the life of Christ reveals an infinitely perfect character.

Testimonies to the Church, VI, 60.

A. Have you ever summarized the opposite errors associated with teaching on justification?

A. There are two errors against which the children of God-particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace-especially need to guard. The first, already dwelt upon, is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith that can make us holy.

The opposite and no less dangerous error is, that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.

Steps to Christ, 59, 60 (Pocket Companion Series).

Q. What was your own personal experience in this matter?

A. Read Life Sketches, 28-40 (the following are fragments of this passage.)

...I could not comprehend what was necessary in order to be fully consecrated to God. My Christian friends said to me: "Believe in Jesus now! This I tried to do, but found it impossible to believe that I had received a blessing which, it seemed to me, should electrify my whole being. I wondered at my own hardness of heart in being unable to experience the exaltation of spirit that others manifested. It seemed to me that I was different from them, and forever shut out from the perfect joy of holiness of heart.

My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from each other; yet I failed to comprehend the difference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers increased my difficulties.

...the beauty and simplicity of trust in God began to dawn upon my soul.

Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience. My heart went out toward Him in a deep and fervent love. Obedience to His will seemed a joy; it was a pleasure to be in His service.

...My whole endeavour was to do the will of God, and keep Jesus and heaven continually in mind. I was surprised and enraptured with the clear views now presented to me of the atonement and the work of Christ.

A. Are we to think of ourselves as Protestants, or are we something different from both Protestantism and Catholicism?

A. Christ was a Protestant... Luther and his followers did not invent the reformed religion. They simply accepted it as presented by Christ and the apostles.

Review and Herald, June 1, 1886, 338.

Q. What is your counsel for all who teach and preach?

A. Dare not to preach another discourse until you know, by your own experience, what Christ is to you. With hearts made holy through faith in the righteousness of Christ, you can preach Christ, you can lift up the risen Saviour before your hearers; with hearts subdued and melted with the love of Jesus you can say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world".

Testimonies to Ministers, 155.

(The insight of EGW in soteriology are matched by her views on hamartiology and christology and are miles ahead of her Adventist contemporaries. Similarly, while defective as to the IJ teaching some of her views on eschatology not only differed from those of her associates but were far ahead of her time. In Great Controversy we find nothing about Turkey coming to its end in fulfillment of Dan 11:45, or an east-west Armageddon in Palestine. Never does she sink to such depths as men like J.N. Andrews and her husband and others in applying passages like Nahum 2:4; Dan 12:4 to modern inventions. The principle that the Cross portrays the pattern of the Church's future is clearly set forth in many passages in the Conflict series though unrecognized then and now by the majority of American fundamentalists. Her perception of the recurring application of prophecies even beyond the customary "double application" was in strong contrast to other Adventist writers yet in accord with the best of scholarship. Thus the remarkable dexterity shown in the preceding pages

whereby EGW avoided perfectionism and antinomianism is matched by her in many other theological areas. As one reads the summary statements on the Atonement in the appendices of Questions on Doctrine one is compelled to marvel at Mrs White's thorough grasp of the variegated facets of this theme in Scripture and her avoidance of such errors as the moral influence theory and those defective positions common to Jehovah's Witnesses and Christadelphians. The present writer can never forget being told by the greatest evangelical scholar in the world that his views on "the restrainer" of 2 Thess 2 could be claimed as a special contribution to theological knowledge and worthy of a Ph.D. (Those views had been taken from EGW.)

Dear Walter and Helen,

Great to hear your report of the trip to Australia and thank you also for your good letter just to hand.

Walter, I appreciate very much what you have written--thank you for taking time to say it. Feel very free to show or read this reply to any person or audience you wish.

You and I, though both Seventh-day Adventists, come from very different backgrounds. My work has been chiefly academic, yours has been largely pastoral. To start with we have different approaches to different theological problems including the matters of inspiration and prophecy.

For example, I have long taught "the economy of miracle" in God's usage of what we call inspiration. Prophets were not omniscient, nor infallible. Elijah believed he was the only faithful one left in Israel and he was more than 99.9 percent wrong. John the Baptist thought Christ came to inaugurate the kingdom of glory by force and thus doubted whether He was even the Messiah. He too was much in error though "the greatest of the prophets".

My understanding of prophecy has for many years been rather different to the popular one. I do not look upon prophetic announcements as crystal ball detailed prevision of future events. Prophecy to me is moral rather than sheerly intellectual. Prognostication is its least intent not its main. Thus prophecies about the future are frequently contingent upon the moral response of God's people. With this as background I come to the present issue and I can for brevity's sake only summarize one man's viewpoint.

God was in the SDA movement. Its emphasis was not 1844 (which neither Miller nor his close associates accepted till a few weeks beforehand--the date was not their burden--but the fact of the soon Advent) but the return of Jesus before the millennium--an emphasis long neglected. Adventism's stress on the law of God was salutary for an era bordering on a developing antinomianism. The Sabbath was a challenge to atheistic evolution which beginning in 1844 soon swept all before it. Our stress on life only in Christ was meant to be part and parcel of RBF which taught eternal righteousness also was only to be had as a gift through faith in Christ. The insight into man's unity of nature brought an excellent emphasis on the sacred nature of the body temple--very appropriate for an age where over 90 percent of people die of sickness rather than old age.

2nd. If God was in the SDA movement He must also have had a purpose in EGW without whom the movement would never have gotten off the ground.

3rd. But use and "infallibility" of the instrument are not necessarily related. If they were, God could use none of us ever.

4th. 97 percent of the EGW writings have to do with morality not futurology. They apply the law and the gospel to Christian experience. I believe the emphases present in this 97 percent--and I think you do too and almost all who have read EGW, including her critics.

5th. I believe her "visions" contain elements springing out of her times, her culture, her temperament. This was true even of biblical visions. I do not believe every jot and tittle of her reports of these visions to be correct or biblical. They certainly contain errors. On the other hand, on the basis of visions she wrote reproofs to thousands of people and we have only a handful who ever rose up and declared her visionary revelations inapplicable to their case.

6th. I believe you are entirely correct in your conclusions regarding EGW's chief sources (used mainly but not solely in her works of biblical commentary). As a woman of three years education I would expect her to read widely and follow her own counsel about gathering "scattered gems of truth". She even declared that Christ so gathered. Obviously she thought if Christ could do it, she could. And she did. Please note that in my Physicians of the Soul written before your discoveries came to the Adventist public I insisted on this very point and even listed some sources you have not yet referred to.

This borrowing does not bother me because I find that in the libraries of her ministerial contemporaries many of these sources existed, and indeed she even recommended to these ministers AND lay people that they study such books--e.g., Conybeare and Howson and D'Aubigne. Obviously she was not too concerned that in following her counsel they would discover she had used such books. The 1888 GC said in the preface she had used not only historians but contemporary writers in religious reform--this would include J. N. Andrews, James White, Uriah Smith, etc. She also gave a reason for not always citing the particular ones she used--she said she had no wish to make them authoritative in all things.

It is not true that 19th century writers uniformly gave credit to sources. E.g., F. W. Farrar, a very great scholar used Conybeare and Howson considerably but gave no specific credit. Howson himself used a Jewish writer without giving credit. Most 19th century books on ideology used an abundance of sources with little or no credit--unless they were university works.

7th. The largest statement of EGW on her own writings is found in 5T "Nature and Use of the Testimonies". The whole stress of this section is on their MORAL, ADMONITORY, PRACTICAL NATURE. There is nothing there about being doctrinally authoritative. The entire stress has to do with urging reformation of life.

8th. In this section she disclaims entirely being an addition to Scripture, or being a depository of new light. I quote her 5T 663: "Brother R would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the word of God; but in this he presents the matter in a false light.... 665 The written testimonies are not to give new light.... additional truth is not brought out.... 666 (The Testimonies contain) reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements... (for) practical use.... 667 to set before the backslider and the sinner his true condition and the immense loss he is sustaining by continuing a life of sin. Some who believe the Testimonies have erred by urging them unduly upon others.... 669 some had taken an unwise course... they had read from my writings instead of going to the Bible for proof.... this course was inconsistent.... some do harm by making (the Testimonies) an iron rule.... they have taken the extreme meaning.... to discourage and dishearten the church."

So in summary: here is my attitude to EGW:

1. She is not an extension of Scripture.
2. She is not on a level with Scripture.
3. She is not an authority in doctrine.
4. She is not infallible--and that particularly applies to prophetic expositions which were, according to W. C. White, copied from contemporary authors and were never original with her.
5. She was a special instrument in God's hand to preserve the SDA movement and to counsel its members towards that holiness of life symbolized by the Sabbath and required by both the law and the gospel.
6. Those who read her, as they would read a good pastor used of God, will be blessed, provided they do not as a result of pharisaical disposition turn her counsels into laws, and her generalizations into iron-clad rules.

I repudiate entirely the wrong use made of EGW by the Church leaders. They have fostered a superstitious view of her person and writings which the facts do not support. The church leaders have repudiated the careful statements of earlier writers of the church who stressed that the EGW writings were never thought of as inerrant, or verbally inspired, or intended as a new rule of faith and doctrine. Dallas was the first SDA official statement to make EGW "authoritative".

There is a field of study yet neglected. How did EGW manage to avoid being entirely moulded by her culture and reading? Some errors she absorbed and transmitted but they are remarkably less than what one would have expected. She avoided dispensationalism's errors re literal Israel and Armageddon and often ignored men such as U. Smith and Andrews in their wanderings. Similarly re some key doctrinal issues.

Warmest regards,

Des

HEPPENSTALL ON E.G. WHITE

Dear Brethren:

After reading the Nichol MS, I certainly appreciate the critical piece of research that has been done and am thoroughly satisfied that the replies to Mrs. White's critics are, for the most part, very convincing.

I presume that the work of Brother Nichol has been written because of the felt need of establishing the authority of Mrs. White and her writings as well as simply answering the critics. I believe it is important to teach and defend the Spirit of prophecy with a sense of direction that is founded upon those realities which are true, right and defensible. I am not, however, so sure that everything dealt with here can come under that category. It appears in view of this type of defense, that the inspiration and authority of Mrs. White depends upon a foolproof evidence and arguments against the various charges made, and that the whole structure is more or less akin to a skeleton or a house of bricks, where the weakening of one bone or brick means the collapse of the entire composition.

Authority based upon divine inspiration, which is surely the implied major premise of the defense, does not, as one reads the MS, appear so much a production of inspiration from God, but rather a datum of human wisdom and technical arguments of reason. And even though as Mrs. White says, "the kingly power of reason, sanctified by divine grace, is to bear sway in our lives" (MH 130) this does not mean that the proof of inspiration, revelation, and authority in her writings, is contained in this kind of an apologetic. For such an argument is too often an abstraction. Revelation and inspiration in and through Mrs. White, and for all the Bible writers for that matter, does not mean at all the impartation of a neat bundle of foolproof doctrines or messages, so much as it is the activity and communication of God himself, his purpose, presence, saving love, living reality and victorious power. This is not based merely upon reason but upon the response of the entire person.

The work of Brother Nichol, to my mind, has become too heavily involved on the side of an apologetic. Thus inspiration and revealed truths become subordinated to human judgment and appropriation. The truths of these things are not known on the basis of mere intellectual proof, but by a power not of ourselves, but by the Holy Spirit. I feel that many of these answers are only verbal answers to certain Divine realities, and, therefore, lose sight of the real purpose of the Spirit of prophecy. The work seems to be a process of extricating such terms as "dress reform," "amalgamation of man and beast," "the shut door," "plagiarism" and many others. I would not be misunderstood at this point, but I hope it does not place us in the strangle hold of a static and formal interpretation of Mrs. White, whenever some minister or worker feels he has to rise to her defense. For if it does, then the revelation through God's mouthpiece, becomes no longer the Good News regarding the purpose, power, love, presence and personal guidance of God in the remnant church, but a static system of formal messages, ideas and doctrines. It seems that it is the technical points that we are here defending. I doubt very seriously whether they can be defended to the ultimate because I do not think this was intended in the first place. I believe that the issue is drawn here. There are men today who regard the writings of the Spirit of prophecy as a collection of "infallible proofs" rather than a living, incarnate and dynamic revelation of truth for the remnant church. The consequence is that we may go so far as to lose sight of the true meaning of this revelation, that of bringing Christ's power into the life, and condescend to a defense of only verbal descriptions of these divine realities.

I doubt seriously if we can give a satisfactory explanation of all the so-called discrepancies either in the Bible or the Spirit of prophecy. I doubt that God intended we should do so, since neither of them is written to present "infallible proofs", arguments or evidences. What God regards as "infallible proofs" may not be in harmony with our concept at all. Both the Bible writers and Mrs. White use passages of Scripture out of their context and with a freedom that is not at all satisfactory to the critics. If God permits this, I doubt whether He ever intended that explanations should be given to whatever critic comes along. This does not mean that Brother Nichol's arguments are not good; many of them are uncontroversial, but once we have started on this road, it seems to go on ad infinitum, and we are obligated to make a defense to the death against every criticism made. And if we say we are not, then it is tantamount to saying that her authority at this point is of no consequence. For example, in the argument on dress reform, pp. 564 ff, is it merely the principles governing proper dress which are given by inspiration, or does this include the ideas as to style, length of dress and so on, even to being nine inches from the floor? Or are the latter simply her private interpretation of the principles involved? We say that the principles are the important thing, but where does the division come in, and how much private interpretation do we allow. And if we do allow private interpretations, we admit of fallibility, personal opinions and variances, and consequently deny any distinctive inspiration at certain points or reduce inspiration to everybody's level, or to any minister's private comment. And is not such private interpretation the privilege of everyone of us?

As to Mrs. White's answering her critics, the point is made that she answered those problems of consequence and ignored the rest. The argument is reduced to whether the problem is or is not worth defending; and that is an open question for us at any rate. My conclusion here is not at all that of Brother Nichol. To me she is not making the distinction between the important problems or those that are not; rather is she refusing to reduce the vindication of her works to the rational or apologetic level. She is simply following the dictum that truth does not need to be defended. This is definitely indicated on pp. 841, 842.

Furthermore, if rational proof of these problems is the very structure of authority of the writings of Mrs. White as a skeleton is the structure of the body, every minister of this faith will have to know all the answers of critics to maintain her authority, effectively. But the authority of the Bible by the Spirit of prophecy does not depend upon this at all. It is based primarily upon a living realization and experience of God in and through them. And the question involved is, can we instruct people, even our critics, in the truths of the Spirit of prophecy, or do we lead people who have met Jesus Christ in the way, into a transforming experience revealed in these works? If the redemptive power of the writings of the Spirit of prophecy is through divine revelation which involves a radical redirection of the will and the springs of motivation in man, then is it possible to effectuate a real vindication of Mrs. White and her writings through the apologetic method? This means, and I think it is a very important point, that whether one accepts or rejects Mr. Nichol's defense, whether one believes there are discrepancies or not, that has very little to do with whether a man has or has not been confronted with God's truth and love in such a way that he has made a choice for or against Mrs. White and her authority. If authority rests where this MS places it, the test of truth becomes a technical, verbal and institutional one rather than experimental. Would not a safer position be that believers in the Spirit of prophecy and in the Bible for that matter, are those who experience the truths revealed here, who respond to the divine initiative, which is something far more than winning the argument.

This appears to me to be the only valid grounds to stand upon. I am not saying that the writings of Mrs. White are intellectually or doctrinally formless; far from it. There is a theological framework in all her work. But what it is that coerces us with any real degree of

compulsion is nothing less than that of authentic truth and love in a divine-human fellowship. It is in this sense that "all scripture (and I might say the Spirit of prophecy) is given by inspiration of God."

In the argument on plagiarism, this is admitted, (p. 366) and it is justified by quoting others who did the same thing, being the common practice of the day. But the issue is, how does this affect the question of inspiration and authority? It seems to me a mistake to compare Mrs. White with other secular or religious writers. She claims to establish her authority on the basis of superior knowledge and on a "Thus saith the Lord." This places her and her authority on an altogether different level. All that the critics are seeking to establish is her fallibility and equality with other writers and, therefore, liable to mistakes. changes of mind and position. Yet to vindicate her at the point of plagiarism she is compared with other "uninspired" writers which is tantamount to admitting her identity with them and fallibility. My question is whether to admit to plagiarism or not is any real part of a true defense of Mrs. White. I do not believe that her authority stands or falls by this.

I feel in certain other cases such as "666," "the Image Beast" and other defensive positions, that the argument is strained; there is too much of a leaning upon man's method of vindication. We are putting Mrs. White and her writings on a level which seems too difficult to defend. But if her writings rest upon divine inspiration and initiative and not so much upon rational argument, then a defense cannot be reduced to some method of investigation. For this it is not; it is nothing less than the communication of God to man, person to person. This is not merely intellectual proofs at all. It is experience.

I realize that all this argument entails the place of reason in the scheme of faith, experience and the understanding of truth; but this is not the place for further comment. This MS appeals for vindication to logical certitudes and rational interpretations. I question whether we should go on record as taking this kind of a position, for there is too much of a danger that the authority of Mrs. White and her writings stands or falls by it. This, I am convinced, is not the case.

Edward Heppenstall

(This letter was written by Dr Heppenstall years ago when the manuscript of Ellen G. White, And Her Critics was being considered by a committee. Dr Heppenstall has always affirmed that God has used E.G. White in a way He has not used other members of the Adventist Church, but he has consistently refused to give EGW "veto power over Scripture." The new information we now have regarding the EGW diary entries on the Salamanca vision should underline to us the vital significance of Dr Heppenstall 's warnings.)

Variant Views on Ellen G. White

What do Wildwood, Yucchi Pines, Takoma Park, Weimar College, and Loma Linda have in common? Answer? They all believe Ellen White was inspired. And I challenge you to find much more that they have in common. Common belief, extremely variant behaviors.

Now that I have your attention I would like to give you some positive analysis and wind this to a conclusion before we have our question and answer period. I would like to suggest that this Adventist pluralism and these double-standards are the result of our interpretation and preoccupation with the counsels of Ellen White, not primarily our interpretations of the Bible. And a pastoral word: pluralism and double-standards in the church cause no end of disequilibrium problems for new members. While we traditionalists have learned to live with or above them, because we have become calloused, the new, weak believers are stabbed by the phenomena.

I believe these phenomena can be explained on the basis of at least six schools of thought in our church regarding what it means to believe in the inspiration of Ellen White. Please note.

1. There is the inerrantist-infallibilist school of thought. This school says that Ellen White was equal to the Bible--or at least the actions demonstrate this. She constitutes a third canon. Everything she said was inspired. She could hardly utter a word on any subject but what it must overshadow all previous statements on that subject even of experts --her word, even in passing, is to be taken as absolutely correct in the fields of science, history, health, theology, ethics, Biblical chronology, exegesis, agriculture, methodology, etc. After all, as the argument goes, would not God correct her all along? So, the world is 6,000 years old, Hebrews was written by Paul, etc.
2. There is the paradoxical school of thought. This includes those who believe Ellen White was infallible when it comes to theology but that in application to the running of our schools, hospitals, and other institutions, she is antiquated. This school makes little or no allowance for the fact that theology and religious thinking also develops in 100 years. It may be coincidental that most administrators are in this school, if my observations are correct. When you ask some of them why they do not follow 'the blueprint', they usually retreat to the historical conditioning argument: education must be 20th century, medicine of the Victorian era is no more, and so on. But somehow they will not allow theologians to do the same with theology--it must remain stable. Hence the 'paradoxical' designation.
3. There is the 'religious statement' school. For those in this school every statement Ellen White ever uttered or wrote is inspired and infallible provided it is a religious statement. As one reads her lectures if she makes any reference to God or anything that can be construed as 'inspirational' that is an authoritative statement either from vision or special revelation. This school holds the notion that all religious facts came in vision, and Mrs. White only wrote about those changes she had seen. This is closely related to the paradoxical school but there are some differences, the chief of which is the emphasis on thought rather than behavior.
4. There is the 'divine messenger' school. This group of believers says that Ellen White was a messenger, and that that is all she claimed to be. She was somewhat of a spokesman for God only during her lifetime. Her counsels are historically conditioned, largely antiquated and definitely out-dated in many cases. But God used her to start this movement and as such she is to be considered a person used in a different way from the rest of us. Many of our historians seem attracted to this school.
5. There is the 'pastoral role' school. Mainly Ellen White was to fulfill a devotional role. She was to demonstrate how to marry creed and deed, truth and life. To put religious truth about God, etc., in the language of the people so that people could live the kind of lives that is conducive to being a "child of the king." In this school it is not important that everything she uttered or wrote is inspired or inerrant. We are to study the Bible for ourselves. But she helps in that God spoke to her in a way that He did not speak to us. She is not to be the final word on doctrine but we should be very interested in discovering the core principles of her writings for they constitute something of the key to sanctified living.
6. Finally, there is the 'natural inspiration' school. Those who equate 'inspiration' with talent, or vice versa. Just as Bach, Beethoven, Michaelangelo, and their kind were 'inspired,' so Ellen White was inspired. This school fails to make much, if anything, out of the fact that 'inspiration' in scripture is considered a spiritual gift, not a natural talent.

I have delineated these schools (and I don't claim these schools are exhaustive, they are just all I have thought of so far and there are combinations of these elements) because when I want to emphasize the fact that when you ask someone in our church, 'Do you believe in the inspiration of Ellen White?' and they answer 'Yes,' and you reply, 'Oh, good,' you don't even know what you have said, 'Oh, good' to! Because they haven't told you anything precise. They haven't told you what school they belong to. When you were baptized into our church, if you are a convert, and you assented to the vow that you believed in spiritual gifts, and maybe you even were asked the question I just suggested, I would be very surprised if your minister or Bible worker asked you to explain what you understood by 'inspiration'. So if you were a Baptist and you believed in the inerrantist view of scripture you probably came into our church with that view regarding Ellen White as well. So you joined one of the six schools without even a formal matriculation process.

Now perhaps you can understand better why Ellen White has always been an issue in our church. Preachers have traditionally fallen into the first three schools. And preachers usually make the decisions regarding one's employment in this denomination. It may be that some of our problems are not so theological as we all have been led to believe. It may be that those preachers who verbalize that they are transferring schools are actually misunderstood as leaving the faith.

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This talk was presented at the Collegedale chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums, Sabbath, November 22, 1980. It does not represent a dogmatic position on the part of the author nor does it necessarily reflect the position of the Division of Religion at SMC. The purpose of the Forum is to probe, nudge, and explore areas of contemporary interest to Seventh-day Adventists. These thoughts are made available for the purpose suggesting a positive approach to the current Ellen White discussion.

Edwin Zackrison
Associate Professor
SMC Division of Religion

THE SPIRITUAL IDENTITY CRISIS IN ADVENTISM

(Chapter 12)

Transcript of Edited Sermon by Desmond Ford

The subject for our meditation is the Adventist identity crisis. There are so many troubled souls in the Adventist Church today, not sure where they are, or even who they are spiritually. Many, discovering that some things which they have long believed are not entirely true, are wondering if perhaps they have taken on a complete system of error. Did God lead them long ago? Have they, for years, been walking in a false path? These are some of the questions which are being asked in many minds. I hope to try and answer, or at least indicate the answer, in this meditation.

As we review the way that God has led in His providence and by His Spirit in the last 2,000 years of history, it is very significant to discover, that the seven main divisions of theology have received attention at different periods of time. The promise of Daniel that knowledge would be increased has been a promise fulfilling right through the Christian era. With the increase of knowledge has come also the increased awareness that some things people thought were knowledge were really error. But there has been progress on the whole--progress like the tide coming in. The interesting thing is, in church history, different periods of time have been dedicated to different areas of truth.

Theology has always been divided into seven major divisions. We speak of them as Christology, which is the truth about Christ--the doctrine of Christ; Theology, which includes the doctrine of the Trinity; Pneumatology, which is the doctrine of the Spirit; Anthropology, which is the doctrine of man; Soteriology, which is the doctrine of salvation; Ecclesiology, which is the doctrine of the church; and finally, Eschatology, which is the doctrine of the last things. These are the seven divisions of Biblical truth.

Church history falls roughly into those areas of interest. For the first few centuries of the church, until about 325, Christians were preoccupied with the study of the nature of Christ--who was He? Some went to extremes and came to the conclusion that He was just human, particularly the Ebionites. Others went to the extreme of saying He was only divine, and not at all human. These were the Docetists. Gregory Nazianzus was one of the prominent names in connection with the truth about Christ's godhead.

Next, the study of Christians moved into theology proper--the study of the nature of God--the Trinity, in short. Athanasius had perhaps most to do with that. In 350, the Christian Church was to some extent out of that doctrinal wood.

Then came Augustine with his study of Anthropology. Until about 450, we have the church studying the nature of man and the nature of sin.

The study of Soteriology, or salvation, including the atonement, and justification by faith, covered the centuries from the time of Anselm, about 1,000 A.D., down to the close of the Reformation, about 1600.

Then came John Wesley, with his stress on the work of the Holy Spirit-sanctification in particular. Both the Reformers and he were interested in Ecclesiology as well, a study that paralleled to some extent Soteriology, and Pneumatology.

But, it was only in the 19th century that Eschatology came into its own. Remember, Eschatology means the science or study of the last things. Until 1844, just about everything of value that had been said could have been put on a very small post card. Jokingly, it's been said it could all go on the back of a postage stamp. While that is an exaggeration, the implication is true. Very little of real worth had been done in the area of Eschatology until the 19th century. Why was it so important that the church should move into this area of study? Because Christ's salvation is a complete salvation, and it includes salvation of the body as well as the soul. It takes in society as well as individuals. It even includes the redemption of the physical system of the solar system in which we live. If this world were ever to continue as it is now, it would be a type of purgatory, and God has no intention in that regard.

The Bible is indeed an "adventist" book. There are 2,000 promises approximately of the second advent. One verse in every twenty-five in the New Testament refers to the second coming of Christ. Christ was certainly an "adventist" in preaching that theme again and again. See Matthew 24 and Luke 21, Mark 13, John 14:1-3, etc. It is even in His sermon on the mount and in His parables. See Matthew 25. The angels are "adventists"--they could say to the disciples at the ascension, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go". All the prophets were "adventists", all the apostles were "adventists". The first preacher of the advent is still living and is millenniums old--"Enoch also the seventh from Adam, prophesied saying the Lord cometh". The Lord's Prayer is an "adventist" prayer. "Thy kingdom come." The Lord's Supper is an "adventist" ordinance, "Do this until I come" was the admonition of Jesus.

The theme of the second coming is complementary to the theme of the first coming. Just as an ellipse has two centers, while a circle only has one, the plan of salvation does have two centers, the first and second advent. One is Eschatology inaugurated, though that language itself was not heard before the 20th century. The other is Eschatology consummated, only understood in our century. But my main point is, that the study of Eschatology in the providence of God was left for the last days! Why was it so significant that it should come in the 19th century?

Everyone in the churches in the 19th century believed in the second coming of Christ. But most believed it was at least 1,000 years away. This was why the premillennial second advent of Christ was a most important revival of truth. What happened was that while the main scholars of the Reformation had believed in the premillennial coming of Christ, men by the name of Whitby and Vitranga and others in the 18th century began to teach that there would be 1,000 years of bliss before the Lord came back--that things would get better and better, that crime would be banished, poverty would be banished, and the world would know an idealic existence for at least ten centuries before men would see the returning Christ.

This means, of course, that the second advent teaching lost its punch altogether. It wouldn't excite you if I told you about something that would happen in 1,000 years time! So, it was in the providence of God that the adventist message was proclaimed in the 19th century, and on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as in Europe.

Suppose you had been a twin, but didn't know it. You had been raised by people other than by your parents. But at the age of 21, you suddenly discovered that you were a twin. How interested you'd be to find the other twin! Well, let me introduce you to the twins in 19th century Eschatology. Adventism as known in this country is one. But in the British Isles there arose the Brethren movement, the twin of Adventism!

The Brethren movement that began in the 1800's in Britain is responsible for what the vast majority of fundamentalists now believe about "the last things". The secret rapture teaching, the return of the Jews to Palestine, a personal anti-Christ at Jerusalem, the setting up of an image at Jerusalem, an Armageddon at Palestine, the coming of the eastern nations (Japan and China) to meet with the western ones, Russia coming down from the north -- all of these teachings originally came from the Brethren "adventists" in the 19th century. The pre-tribulation rapture, the "any-moment" appearing of Christ, the separation of the 70th week from the first 69, the return of the Jews to build a temple where sacrifices will be offered again, the 144,000 Jews who at the beginning of the 70th week will go forth to be missionaries for Christ, and yet not offering the gospel of blood, but the gospel of the kingdom--that these Jews will gather out an innumerable multitude of believers such as sat forth in Revelation 7:9--that they'll be successful in gathering out more converts than the Christian Church has done in over 2,000 years, and that after this last seven years, Jesus will come back in glory. Seven years after Christ's secret coming to rapture away His saints, He returns in glory to begin 1,000 years reign on earth. All this is the teaching sponsored and created by the Adventist twin--the Brethren movement of the British Isles.

It began with a man called J. N. Darby, one of the noblest men that perhaps has ever lived. The head of Scotland Yard towards the end of the 19th century was Sir Robert Anderson. He knew J. N. Darby well. He said, "He's the greatest man I've ever met". And that came from a man who knew Gladstone, and Disraeli, the British prime ministers! J. N. Darby was a lawyer, an Irish lawyer. He became a Church of England clergyman. It was a falloff his horse that led him to give very close study to Scripture. Later, he translated the Bible into various languages, for he was a scholar indeed. Darby began to mix with a group of people who were tired of the union of church and state that was found in the Anglican Church--tired of the system of hierarchy which had caused "the priesthood of all believers" doctrine to be pushed into the past. So Darby began a little group in Dublin in 1824, and in Plymouth, England, a similar group began within about a year. And Darby became very prominent there.

The Brethren movement grew rapidly, and some of the greatest Christians of the 19th and 20th centuries came out of the Brethren movement--men like George Mueller, who cared for so many orphans, and Hudson Taylor, that great missionary to China, men like Samuel Tnegelles, the great Hebraist, the modern scholar F. F. Bruce, perhaps the greatest evangelical scholar in the world. (He doesn't believe in the secret rapture, I should add! But he is a member of the Brethren movement.) Men like General Dobie who cared for Malta during the great siege of World War II, etc. Many, many wonderful Christians have come from the Brethren movement.

But, it had a rather strange beginning, because there was a revival of interest in the forgotten spiritual gifts. In association with the Brethren movement in the British Isles, men began to talk in terms of the "latter rain". They linked Pneumatology with Eschatology, and rightly so, because the Old Testament had said that the messianic era would be marked by the gift of the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit for the Old Testament believers was an eschatological affair, and they were right. What they didn't know was that the New Testament would say that the whole New Testament era was eschatological--that the whole New Testament era is the last days.

But, there in the British Isles, in the 1820's, men began to study and pray about the latter rain--the restoration of spiritual gifts. In Scotland, a preacher by the name of McLeod Campbell began to preach differently to his Presbyterian associates who were Calvinistic. He taught that "whosoever will might come"--that Christ had died for all, not just for a predestined elect. Some of those who came to hear him were earnest Christians already, and revival broke out in the city of Glasgow. Certain names are prominent in that revival. There were folks like the Campbells, including Mary and her sister Isobel. There were folks like the MacDonalds, Margaret MacDonald and her brothers who claimed a restoration of spiritual gifts, including the "spirit of prophecy", the gift of tongues, and healing.

J. N. Darby heard about what was happening in Scotland and went there to stay and to observe. Henry Irving, a genius, was preaching in a London church about the restoration of the Spirit, and the soon advent of Christ. He too had preached in Scotland, he too was interested in what was happening in Glasgow. Margaret MacDonald was one who gave accounts of visions. Read them. Ever and again she is saying, "I saw, I saw". Sometimes she is saying what she thought she saw in vision, and sometimes saying what she saw as truth by way of conviction. She could speak about "I saw that the wicked would not stand, and they would be destroyed by the brightness of His presence".

What shall we say about these folks--the Campbells and the MacDonalds? We must say that they were wonderful Christians. They were not demon-possessed, or anything of that nature. There was a cholera outbreak about this time and it was the MacDonalds who did much of the ministering to people in that area. They were not people who sought publicity, they were people who fasted and prayed. They were earnest Christians indeed! But it was to Margaret MacDonald that the view came of the secret rapture. A terrible heresy actually! Nowhere taught in Holy Writ, though most American fundamentalists think it is. It was Margaret MacDonald who claimed a revelation to that effect. A similar revelation, according to some writers, came to Edward Irving's church, when tongues broke out in his community.

J. N. Darby observed it all. It was about the year 1844 that he settled on the secret rapture theory. Let me read you a comment or two from writers on the history of the Brethren. Here is one from Neatby's History of the Plymouth Brethren, p. 339.

Brethrenism is the child of the study of unfulfilled prophecy and of the expectation of the immediate return of the Saviour. If anyone had told the first Brethren that three-fourths of a century might elapse and the church still be on earth, the answer would probably have been a smile, partly of pity, partly disapproval, wholly of unbelief. It is clear now that Brethrenism took shape under the influence of a delusion, and that that delusion was the decisive element in all of its distinctive features.

And yet another writer, Alexander Reese in his book The Approaching Advent of Christ, p. 318:

Brethren today would only gain from realizing that the movement of a hundred years ago was over-confident that the Lord would certainly come to them: wrong in thinking that the Midnight Cry, Behold the Bridegroom Cometh, was then being fulfilled in their testimony. They were wrong also in seeing themselves also as Philadelphia.

Now please note. Here was a movement in the British Isles claiming that it was giving the Midnight Cry around 1844, many of its members expected the Lord could come in 1844. They believed that they were separate from the Laodicians, and that they were the Philadelphians, and they believed that the Lord was coming soon. May I remind you, they included many of the greatest saints of that century! Most Anglo-Saxon Protestants believed something great was to happen to the world about 1843-1844--not just William Miller and his followers.

Please get it well into heart and mind, that inerrancy is not the seal of Divine approval. God works through human beings, and human beings are sinful beings, and wherever there is sin, there is error! There has never been a time in the church where truth has been entirely pure. Whether we study the early Christology, or the early studies on the Trinity, or on Anthropology, or on Ecclesiology, or Soteriology, there was always a mixture of error. The greatest scholars, the greatest church leaders, the greatest saints: in their knowledge there has ever been a mixture of right and wrong. Many have said about the Brethren movement that it was demonic because it has had some terrible consequences. It has caused by its errors the deaths of thousands of people. How come? Well, the idea of the tribulation rapture, that the saints were to be taken away before the great tribulation led many missionaries in China to tell Chinese believers, "You need not flee to the hills when the Communists are coming. There won't be any tribulation before the Rapture". So thousands died! The same is true in countries like South America and some parts of Europe and Russia. People affected by the Brethren teaching of the secret rapture remained in the face of advancing persecution and died unnecessarily.

Is Brethrenism then demonic? No, indeed. To read the biographical sketches of these people is to be impressed with their saintliness. If they were all rascals and rogues, then none of us have any hope! Have you ever heard of Henry Moorhouse? He was a converted pickpocket, converted through the agency of the Brethren movement. Moorhouse was responsible for the best work of Dwight L. Moody. When Moody was in Britain, he met Moorhouse, and Moorhouse said, "I'm going to come and preach for you one day". Well, Moody didn't like the look of this cock-sparrow converted pickpocket. Nevertheless, he said, "Right!" Later, when Moorhouse did go to America, to Chicago, Moody was absent. The Brethren evangelist preached in his church because he told the elders, "Mr. Moody said I could preach here when I came." After the first night they loved him. He preached on the love of God. He preached on John 3:16. And he preached night after night that same week from the same text. Hearts were broken. Then came Moody, back into the city. He heard what was happening and resolved to hear the new preacher. And he heard Moorhouse stand up and say, "love been looking for a better text than John 3:16 to preach on tonight, but can't find it". And he preached again on the love of God. Moody was never the same man thereafter. Never! He began to preach unremittently about God's love. And Moody changed the world of his day, because of the influence of the Brethren.

May I point out that God has promised His church the Holy Spirit. Why the Holy Spirit? To bring holiness and to lead us into all truth. But may I also remind you, the Holy Spirit has done neither in an absolute sense. None of us are fully holy, and none of us are inerrant. All of us are sinful and all of us are ignorant and in error to some extent. Even teachers are one-eyed leaders of the blind. I tell my classes continually at the end of a course, "I know that fifty percent of what I have taught you is wrong, but I don't know which fifty percent!" So though the Holy Spirit is given to lead the church into truth, and deliver it from sin, it is a progressive work like the tide coming in. God can be with people and movements who are not yet infallible.

God was in the Lutheran movement, but Luther didn't know about baptism, the Sabbath, or the separation of church and state. Nor did Calvin. Calvin burnt Servetus. Luther said about the peasants in the revolt, "Stab them, hang them". Wesley was a great man, but Wesley taught serious errors. Spurgeon was the greatest preacher since Paul, but he believed in everlasting torment.

Friends, we are children in understanding. We are very prone to throw out the baby with the bath water. God indeed was in the Adventist revivals, in the twin movements in Britain and America in the 19th century. But both of them had serious mistakes. Both of them had errors. Both of them had godly people whom God used and their main emphasis on the return of the Lord and the necessity to look for the Spirit's special working, this was of God. But, we do very wrong to look for infallibility in any movement! Let's rejoice in the working of God, but test all movements by the Word!

To see the relevance of these twin Adventist movements, one only has to study the religious and social situation of the world in the 19th century. As already indicated, the masses who believed the Bible, also believed in a temporal millennium of peace and joy before the return of Christ. So the precious truth of the imminence of Christ's return had been lost. Second, in 1844, Robert Chambers produced his momentous Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation, using Lyell's uniformitarian doctrines to explain the origin of species. That same year, Darwin wrote his first sketch of The Origin of Species--the most influential book in centuries. Surely a message was needed to call people back to the truth of Creation as well as that of the second advent. And in 1848 came the Communist Manifesto affirming that morality was only a prejudice. All men now needed a reminder that the moral law from Sinai was the everlasting manifesto of the Creator. Third, at the same time modern Spiritism was revived and wrought havoc among the churches. Only truth on the Biblical teaching of man's sleep in death and conditional immortality could prove a safeguard against Spiritism's heresies. Fourth, the hierarchical structure of much of 19th century Protestantism demanded that the truth of the priesthood of all believers be sounded afresh by Bible believers. Brethrenism fulfilled the latter as well as affirming the imminent Advent. Adventism in America ultimately presented the other emphases. Regardless of their errors, both movements made invaluable contributions and were certainly raised up by Heaven at the most appropriate hour.

It should never be thought that 1843-1844 as a crisis time was just the invention of Miller. Most of Protestantism in England and America looked for something momentous to happen at that time. Neither should it be thought that an exact date was the key emphasis of the Miller revival. Three of its leading spokesmen (out of the five most prominent leaders) were opposed to date-setting, and Miller himself only accepted the exact date a few weeks before October 22, 1844. It was the fact of the premillennial second advent, rather than its timing which was the main message of the Miller movement. The Adventists of 1842-1844 erred in stressing a precise date, but this no more wipes out the significance of the movement than the secret rapture teaching of the Brethren invalidates their calling.

As we look at the teachings of the Brethren, I would remind you that their errors contain a warning for us as we compare them with the Scriptures. The Brethren literalized the prophecies of the Old Testament. They believed that the Jews would return in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises of Jewish restoration. Now there is nothing at all in the whole New Testament about the Jews going back to Palestine. This view is based on a literal interpretation of Old Testament prophecies rather than the spiritual. Or put it this way, the Brethren have forgotten that the true Israel is Christ Himself and all those that are in Him. "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, whose circumcision is of the heart, not of the flesh." Paul could say, "We are Israel, who put no confidence in the flesh, but rejoice in Christ Jesus". The last verse of Galatians 3 says, "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise". Earlier in Galatians 3, it says that Christ Himself is the real seed, and that all the promises made to Israel have been fulfilled in Him. You will also find that in II Corinthians 1:20. All the promises of God are in Him, yea and amen. He is the seed of Israel.

The New Testament takes the things of Israel and applies them now to Christ's body, the church. So, if you were to study passages like Romans 9, you'll find prophecies from the Old Testament about literal Israel now applied to the church. Take Amos 8--you'll find a prophecy that comes from centuries before Christ and originally for literal Israel. But when it is quoted in Acts 15, it is applied to the church. The whole Book of Revelation quotes from such Old Testament passages, but it applies them now to spiritual Israel--that is, to

Christians, not to Jews. For Revelation is addressed to the churches of Jesus Christ. You can see that in chapter 1.

Hal Lindsey's book about the Late Great Planet Earth has sold about 15 million copies. But it is fantastic in its portrayal! There isn't a scholar that know of on earth today (I'm generalizing when I say "scholar". I mean a well-known and well-accepted scholar of Apocalyptic) that is a dispensationalist like Hal Lindsey. Even some of the leading thinkers in dispensationalist groups disagree with many of the elements in Hal Lindsey's presentation. The tragic thing is that fundamentalists circles persecute those who disagree with the secret rapture. If you read books by Douthett who wrote Will Christ Return in Two Stages? or Ladd's books The Blessed Hope, Crucial Questions Concerning the Kingdom of God, or Reese's book The Approaching Advent of Christ, and many other such books, you'll find accounts of the persecutions brought upon nonconformists by people in dispensational fundamentalist circles. We as Adventists do have some paranoia about religious persecution, but we should realize that Adventist flesh is no worse than other flesh, but is also no better. The fundamentalists persecute all those that disagree. They will not let speak in their public meetings those who don't believe in the secret rapture. That's true in many circles!

The error of the Brethren movement in interpreting prophecy was really a legalistic error. While the Brethren were great on advocating grace, at this point they made a grievous mistake. We like to believe that we can see the fulfillment of prophecy such as the Jews going back to Palestine, it gives us something tangible to support our faith. But that is a form of legalism. Righteousness is by faith, not by seeing or touching. The Brethren have always had a wrong view of prophecy. If we want to know the shape of the future, we should look at the Christ event. And whenever the second advent is viewed apart from the first, it becomes panic theology. God only meant for us to look at the second advent through the lens of the first advent. For several reasons. It is only if we know the Saviour that we can stand at that dread appearing. But secondly, what happened to Christ in His last days is a paradigm of what is going to happen to the church. This understood counters legalism in both Advent movements.

If you read Revelation 13 closely you'll find there many an analogy to what happened in Pilate's judgment hall. You have the beast representing the state; you have the two-horned beast like a lamb that represents the apostate church; and then you have the persecution of the remnant that will not conform. That's what happened to Christ! Pontius Pilate, the state; Caiaphas, the apostate church, linked together to sentence Christ to death. That's a pattern of the future! There is nothing to happen in the future that hasn't happened in the past. There is to be a great crisis, a crisis over worship. That's always the issue!

Now Brethrenism with its heresy about Israel has diverted the gospel emphasis that the test is now. Not a test from a literal anti-Christ in Jerusalem for 3-1/2 years, but a perpetual test right through the Christian era, as to whether we'll worship God in Christ by accepting the gospel, or whether we'll worship another idol, an image, the things of men--the teachings of men--the desires of men--the laws and traditions of men.

We are meant to read the Old Testament prophecies in the light of the cross of Christ. God is now gathering out His Israel by the gospel! All who come to Christ are being restored. Those in Babylon are those who reject the gospel! Babylon is not a literal place, and neither is Israel to be understood now in Bible prophecy as literal Israel. Those who are in Christ are Israel. It's true that Romans 11 does tell us that in the last days there will be a remnant of literal Israel that will accept the gospel, but that's the point. Israel is only true Israel as it accepts the gospel! But there is nothing in the New Testament about the Jews returning to Palestine--nothing whatever. No true Remnant exists apart from the gospel!

God meant us to read the Book of Revelation and see the necessity for accepting the good news of what Christ has done on the cross. That's its point! There will be a test for those who so accept. There is to be an eschatological test as Revelation 13 sets forth. And it will be over worship and the commandments of God. That is something that applies to all Christians everywhere--not a few Jews in Palestine! See Lu 6:46; 1 Cor 7:19.

The dispensationalists speak much about the difference between the parousia and the apocalypse and the epiphany. They believe that the first term applies to the secret rapture coming and that the other terms apply seven years later. But the New Testament applies all three terms synonymously. Read II Thessalonians 2 about the destruction of anti-Christ by the brightness of Christ's appearing. Read in Titus about the blessed hope of the appearing of Christ. The blessed hope is the parousia and the epiphany and the apocalypse. There are no grounds whatever for the strange distinctions made by the Brethren movement.

Adventists too have had their strange distinctions in some areas of their sanctuary teaching. The blotting out of sins at conversion and then blotting out at judgment. They talk also in terms of places in the heavenly sanctuary. But as one reads Hebrews 9 and 10, there's no basis for this two phases of ministry! We must bring all doctrines to the test of Scripture! And yet, look not for inerrancy. But, rather see the providence of God in giving truth on the whole, like the coming in of the tide.

We must have an openness and an honesty to Scripture that will enable the Lord to be our teacher. And a faith in Him that will save us from throwing away the precious truths that are so often tainted with the error of men. We need to pray,

Teach me the truth, Lord, though it put to flight my cherished dreams and fondest fancies play. Give me to know the darkness from the light, the night from day. Teach me the truth Lord, though my heart may break in casting out the falsehood for the true. Help me to take my shattered life and make its actions new. Teach me the truth Lord, though my feet may fear the rocky path that opens out for me. Rough it may be, but let the way be clear that leads to Thee. Teach me the truth Lord, and false creeds decay, when man-made dogmas vanish with the night. Then Lord, on Thee my darkened soul shall stay, Thou living light.

Why is it that people are so slow in throwing out their traditions that have been mixed with truth? Well, an old writer by the name of Lucian had the answer. He said,

Truth is often not pleasant to the ear. Fiction is far more esteemed. It is prettier. Therefore pleasanter. While truth, conscious of its purity blurts out down-right remarks and offends people. You are offended with me telling you the truth. Suppose you had been in love with a statue, and hoped to win it under the impression that it was human, and I had realized it was only bronze or marble. I would give you a friendly warning that your passion was hopeless. You might just as well have thought I was your enemy then, because I would not leave you prey to an extravagant and impractical illusion.

That's thought-provoking isn't it?

Maybe you have heard the story of the man who was mentally sick and thought he was dead. A friend at last brought him to a psychiatrist

and he said, "Look, you have to convince this man that he is not dead". So, the psychiatrist day after day gave him textbooks to read on how dead men cannot bleed. After weeks of instruction and reading, the psychiatrist took a needle and he came to the man who thought he was dead and said: "Watch me carefully", and he pricked his skin and the blood sprang forth. "Ah," said the man, "dead men do bleed!" This is typical of our human nature. So, let us laugh at ourselves somewhat. Let us not look for infallibility in any movement, in any teacher. Only Christ is the pure truth! But let us rejoice that God down through the ages has worked through all honest Christian people. He has been in each movement that has longed to honor Him. He has been in the Adventist movement, on both sides of the Atlantic, but neither has had the whole truth. What a challenge! To follow on to know the Lord more perfectly. Not casting away our confidence, but giving thanks for precious truth, and looking for more, and then living that truth to the glory of God!

THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN

(Chapter 13)

Edited from a Transcribed Sermon by Dr. Desmond Ford

As we well know, life consists of more than sunshine and green fields, lap dogs and pussy cats. There are tempests and hurricanes and earthquakes and volcanoes. Nothing we can see or touch is really stable. Everything under the sun shares some of the characteristics of quicksand. We step upon what seems quite solid and down it goes! Physical health can be torn away, our comforts dissipated, our wealth stolen or lost, our investments disappear through bankruptcy. There seems nothing really secure beneath the sun. This applies to the realm of the mind as well. To learn also means to unlearn. In every center of education all good teachers know that they are only one-eyed teachers of the blind.

I think of a passage of scripture that is very pertinent to the twentieth century. Hebrews 12:27. "He will sift out everything without solid foundations, so that only unshakable things will be left." Did you get it? He will sift out everything without solid foundations, so that only unshakable things will be left. Not only the physical comforts, not only finances, not only health, not only loved ones, but in the realm of the mind, our beliefs must constantly be reinvestigated.

We all know, of course, that we should build only on the Rock, Christ. But in actual practice, too often our confidence is in a system of foolproof doctrines, or a structure that exceeds any other structure in the world for its wisdom, contribution, or claims. So our practices are often different to our profession. If all we have to depend upon is something that is without solid foundation, the day will come when we will have nothing!

The scripture is clear that there will be a time of great shaking when Jesus comes again. Particularly for the church! It is in the tenderness of God, and in the wisdom of God, that He permits there to be little shakings before that time. It's always been that way. There's never been an infallible religious movement. There's never been an infallible religious teacher except Jesus. The early apostles taught a "shut door" and taught it for about fourteen years. They had to have a great church council before they opened up that shut door and let the gentiles in. There was another "shut door" in the nineteenth century, but it only lasted half as long.

When the Reformation came along, with mighty men like Calvin and Luther and Zwingli, God was in that movement, but it was not infallible. They were fighting about the Supper--"This is my body", said Martin Luther, smashing the desk with his hand and writing the word "is" in chalk on the table, as he faced Zwingli. "This is my body." Consubstantiation. Zwingli tried in vain to tell him that there was no word in Aramaic for signify and symbolize, but that it was implied nonetheless. Luther wouldn't listen. That same mighty man Luther said at the time of the Peasants Revolt, "Hang them, stab them, drown them!" And Calvin, the greatest religious mind perhaps in 1000 years burnt Servetus at the stake in Geneva. They knew nothing about the separation of church and state.

So, there were shakings. Luther shook the Catholic Church. Protestantism was later shaken by the changes within it. Wesley shook the Episcopal Church. Wherever Baptists have been, they have caused a shaking. Shaking after shaking. Why? Because there is no such thing as human infallibility. The progress of truth is like the progress of the tide, it is progress on the whole, it laps in and recedes, laps in a little more and recedes. Truth and error, but with each advanced wave some of the error is discarded. What remains needs to be searched and examined because only that which is unshakable will remain. Everything without solid foundation will be sifted out! God would have us examine the things on which we depend to see whether they will survive the great day of His coming--to see that our faith is riveted in the right place--no, the right Person, because the first commandment forbids that we place our confidence in anything else but God. A system or movement is not to be an idol to us. God works through every religious movement that seeks to honor Him and His word. But God has never conferred infallibility--however sincere, however earnest, however much genius may be present in the founders. As one founding mother said, "Many things to learn, and many, many to unlearn, and those who think they'll never have to change a cherished view will be disappointed." True enough!

It is a mercy to our souls that God sends us a warning, about Him sifting out everything that doesn't have a solid foundation. How can you rest on a bed that's shaky? How can you sit on a chair that is rickety? We tend to attach ourselves to so many, many things. God says that hail will sweep away the refuge of lies. God says, "My people have committed two evils--they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters and they have hewed them out broken cisterns that will not hold water". A boat cannot range the boundless ocean if it is tied to the shore. When God called the father of the faithful, Abraham, He unhitched him from everything earthly. We need to do the sifting before God does, or there will be terrible anguish on that day. We need to learn to sing with the psalmist, "God is our refuge and strength, therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed and cast into the sea, though the waters swell with the tumult thereof." God is our refuge and our strength.

Well, what cannot be moved? I want you to notice the next verse in Hebrews 12, verse 28. "We, receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved." Romans 14 says, "The kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost." There's the kingdom of God. Righteousness. The kingdom of God is the gospel, my friends, and all that it brings. Righteousness. Peace. Joy. The Holy Spirit. These are the things that cannot be shaken! We receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved. The kingdom of righteousness. The everlasting gospel is the only thing that is everlasting! We are not to pin our hopes, our faith, our love on anything less than that.

In the days of Paul, it looked as though he was shaking everything. The movement that had given him birth, that law which was the wonder of all nations and which was the embodiment of truth and knowledge were both being examined. It seemed that Paul was repudiating everything. What a shaking he gave the Jewish Church. But Paul was the greatest preacher of the gospel that there has ever been. (You say, "What about Jesus?" My friends, Jesus came to make the atonement, not to explain it. The really best news couldn't be given until Jesus had died.) Paul, the one that shook up the old church was the one who shook it up with the gospel. The gospel always brings a shaking! Jesus foresaw it, "I come not to bring peace but a sword, to set a man against his father, a daughter against a mother, and a house shall be divided against itself." The gospel always brings a shaking. "These men have turned the world upside down!" The Book of Acts is full of

riots and revivals. Take your pick, something always happens when the gospel is preached. One or the other. Always!

Paul, this man that shook up Judaism, who sifted out the things that could no longer stand, who took very seriously the words of Jesus about the old wine skins bursting and the need for new ones, is the one to whom we owe our Christian theology. The words, "justification", "imputation", "reconciliation", "adoption", are all Pauline terms. He coined them. The expression "in Christ", that and its equivalents occur 165 times in the New Testament. We owe them to Paul. He mentions the word "gospel" four times as much as all the rest of the New Testament writers put together. He mentions "grace" twice as much as all the rest of the New Testament writers put together. But Paul, you're shaking up everything! "No", says Paul, "I'm only making manifest what cannot be shaken." And, what was that, Paul?

Paul has four groups of epistles and there are four main subjects. He has a group of epistles written around the cross of Christ, Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians. He has epistles revolving around the person of Christ, particularly Colossians. He has epistles dealing with the church of Christ, Ephesians and Philippians. He has epistles dealing with the coming of Christ, Thessalonians. These are the things that cannot be shaken! The cross of Christ, the person of Christ, the church of Christ, the coming of Christ.

These were the things about which Jesus taught. See Matthew 16. Jesus took off three months for a whole summer school once to teach His disciples about the things that could not be shaken. For months He taught them away from the madding crowds, and here in Matthew 16 He said to them, "Who do you say that I am? And Peter said, You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus said, Yes, and on this Rock I will build my church." The church is composed of all that believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And the church is composed of all those who preach and practice the cross of Christ because Jesus, after speaking about Himself as the Christ and speaking about the church, then strangely went on to talk about the cross. Verse 21. "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the priests and the scribes and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, God forbid, Lord, this will never happen to you." Human nature does not take kindly to the cross. But He turned and He said to Peter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan." "You are a hindrance to me. You are not on the side of God, but of men." The church is composed of all those who see the centrality of the cross. Looking at verse 27, we read that the Son of man is to come with His angels and the glory of His Father, and then He will repay every man for what he has done.

What are the things that cannot be shaken? The Christ, the Cross, the Coming, the Church. The Church is bigger than any movement. God raises up movements from time to time to give special emphases. He did it in the middle of the nineteenth century. An emphasis was needed on the creation truth soon to be almost forgotten through the influence of atheistic evolution. He raised up a people to stress the return of Christ in an age that was settling down looking for a millennium of peace before Jesus would come. Yes, God raises up movements. They are in His providence. They are not infallible, but they are of Him! But, my friends, the Church is bigger than any movement. The Church includes all those who put their faith in the merits of Jesus and who see that the center of all truth is the cross of Christ. Only such people can face the second coming because they see it through the lens of the first advent.

But now, let me ask you, the man who wrote this in Hebrews about God sifting out everything that doesn't have solid foundations, that only the unshakable might be left, was he saying the same thing right through the Book of Hebrews? Let me remind you of the setting of the book. The book from which this verse comes, about sifting out everything that doesn't have solid foundations, was written at a time when the Sabbathkeepers of the first century were very nervous and upset because it looked as though the movement that God had raised up long before was going on the rocks. The temple was soon to be destroyed, the Jews were soon to be scattered from one end of the earth to the other, and here were the Christians saying, "Look, the real temple is in heaven. The real high priest is in heaven. The sacrifice was really the cross, not what you've got in the temple." And, everything that could be shaken was shaken.

When the Christian Jews looked at their great temple they wondered. Surely, God wasn't going to get rid of that. Did Jesus mean what He said when He predicted, "Not one stone will be left upon another"? "Lord, why are you going to shake down this temple? It's been your missionary center." So, the writer of Hebrews wrote this book to Christian Jews who were wondering about the dissolution of the old things. Was everything going to go? And over and over in this book you'll read things like this: "Don't drift away from the gospel. Don't cast away your confidence which has a great recompense of reward. Don't give up. Don't become an apostate. Don't go back. Run with patience the race, looking unto Jesus. Consider Him." This book is written to focus the mind of these people in an age of great shaking and tumult, when many things they had cherished looked as though they were being dissolved.

In the providence of God, the writer of Hebrews draws the attention of believers to the things that cannot be shaken. "Consider Him, the great apostle of our calling." This one who is greater than the prophets, greater than angels, greater than Moses, greater than Joshua, greater than Aaron. This one who is the one sacrifice, once for all. This one who is the Day of Atonement in Himself. This one who is the true temple and the true Israel and the true servant of God, "Consider Him". Don't fall away. The same counsel is relevant in the twentieth century. We live in an age when things are being shaken. Even with those who love the Lord and strive to show that their faith is genuine by bringing forth the fruit of obedience to the commandments of God, even with them it seems a terrible shaking. God would say to us, "Be of good cheer, those things that are without solid foundations, they'll be shaken away." But only to show up in true relief the things that cannot be shaken--Christ, the Cross, the Church, the Coming which will consummate the gospel. Be of good cheer, cast not away your confidence. God has been leading, but because we are all sinners, there has been no such thing as infallibility. We need to think and rethink, study and restudy. Walk with Him who is the way, the truth and the life. We cannot honor God by cherishing erroneous opinions!

I want to draw your attention to a special passage in the book where we have this warning--Hebrews 10:19,20. "Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Did you notice? Let us have confidence to enter heaven itself by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way through the curtain, through the veil. What's he talking about? It is an allusion to what happened at the cross. As Jesus died on the cross, the second veil before the most holy place was torn asunder, to show that the true High Priest of the Day of Atonement had come--to show that the antitype was now fulfilled. Read that beautiful chapter "Calvary" in the book Desire of Ages, and notice that on the very last page, the writer says that the opening of the veil at the death of Christ was a symbol that the true great High Priest had come, that one who belonged to the great Day of Atonement.

So, the tearing of the veil there at Calvary was to tell the Jewish world that the fulfillment of Yom Kippur had taken place--that their great High Priest was ascending into the most holy place of heaven. You say, "Is that true, or is that heresy?" I do hope you have read Hebrews 9 in some modern versions. If you do read Hebrews 9 in modern versions you'll find that in verses 8 and 12 and 25 of chapter 9, the Bible

teaches that Christ went into the most holy place at His ascension. That expression "through the veil" is a technical expression in the Bible. It only ever means the second veil. And so the meaning of the cross and the priesthood of Christ was summed up in that torn veil, that the way was open. It wasn't just rolled up to be let down again. The barrier of our sin had been dissolved by our Substitute. The way is open, a new and living way through the veil into the very presence of God, because the blood of the atonement has been shed.

No Jew except the high priest ever saw the blood of the atonement sprinkled. Sometimes we give too much emphasis to the significance of the cross for us as individuals and forget that the cross was a requirement of divine holiness before God could open up the gates of heaven. The cross had impact on God Himself. God and the high priest were the only ones who saw the sprinkled blood on the day of atonement. Over and over in Leviticus when the blood was sprinkled, you read the expression, "before the Lord". Romans 3 tells us that the purpose of the cross was that God might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. The cross has a God-ward aspect and a man-ward aspect, and we must never forget either. The God-ward aspect is the most important.

God could not forgive our sins unless His law, His immutable law, which is a reflection of His own nature (law is just another word for reality, what God is and how He has made the universe) was honored. God could not forgive sin unless the penalty of breaking that law had been met and fulfilled, and it was met and fulfilled in Jesus. So, when that veil was rent, sinners were meant to see that our great High Priest had sprinkled the blood of the atonement, that He had entered into the most holy place, into the presence of God. Do get that clear, my friends.

Let's look at a few verses in chapter 9. Having mentioned in verse 6 about the daily ministry, verse 7 says, "but into the second, only the high priest goes, and only once a year, taking blood." Into the second apartment, only the high priest, and only with blood. Look at verse 12. "He enters once for all into the most holy place, taking not the blood of goats and calves, but His own blood". Notice, it is the High Priest again, as in verse 7, it's blood again as in verse 7, and it's into the most holy place, which is the same as the second apartment of verse 7. Have you got that clear, friends, it is very important! Verses 6 and 7 of chapter 9 of Hebrews say that the priest went daily into the first apartment, but then verse 7, "but once every year the high priest". You see, the day of atonement was a high priestly day. He didn't offer the blood day-by-day through the year. The ordinary priest did that. The high priest's day was the day of atonement. So, in verse 7, "into the second apartment went the high priest, but only once", only on the day of atonement. Only with blood.

In verse 12, it is saying the same only instead of using the second, it says the most holy place, (New International Version and most modern versions). If you look at 24 and 25, Christ has entered not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God in our behalf. Nor was it to offer Himself repeatedly as the High Priest entered the holy place yearly with blood not his own. The New International Version translates it "the most holy place" because that's what it is. The high priest is in each verse, 7, 8, 12, 25, entering with blood, entering into the second apartment, entering into the most holy place. Now in chapter 10:19, "Therefore, we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus."

Please notice chapter 9, verse 23. "It was necessary for the copies of heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." The heavenly sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of Christ at the cross. Hebrews 1:3, says "when He had by Himself cleansed our sins, He sat down at the right-hand of God." Twelve times in the New Testament Jesus is at the right-hand of God, in the most holy place, through the veil, in the second apartment, where the high priest went once a year. It's done, it's finished, it's accomplished. That was the meaning of the torn veil. That torn veil that opened the way into the most holy place told the people that the true High Priest had come. The true Day of Atonement was fulfilled. The blood was sprinkled there at Calvary. "Therefore, let's have confidence" says the apostle, to enter in to the very presence of God through our Substitute, through our Representative.

All Israel couldn't crowd into the judgment on that most important day, Yom Kippur. They went in in the person of their high priest. And you and I are in heaven now in the most holy place in our Representative. We are there, in Him. We can never, NEVER be lost while our confidence is in Him. Our righteousness is in a very safe place--by the throne of God, in the person of Christ. That's the good news! By faith we can enter in. Everything that separated us from God has been shattered. That veil was a symbol of our bond of indebtedness to the broken law. And the law, insofar as it is against us, was nailed to the cross with Jesus. Not the law as a standard which is perpetual and forever, but the law as a condemning, legal enactment is gone! In the days when the law dominated the thinking of people, before the coming of Christ, the law meant separation, the law meant distance. Remember the Lord's command to Moses? "Don't let the people come near, set bounds around the mount." And when the people saw the fireworks, they stood back. The law always brought distance, but now my friends, the law cannot separate us from God. Infinite love calls us to draw near. With confidence!

What about my sin? Every sin has been buried in the red sea of Christ's blood as thoroughly as the Egyptians were buried in the Red Sea of old. It's gone. But what about the gap between me, the sinner and God? Christ as divinity and humanity bridges the gap. That's the good news of the gospel, my friends. Look at it again there in chapter 10. "Let us have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which He opened for us through the curtain, that is through His flesh. And seeing that we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." Not trembling like Israel of old on the Day of Atonement, but with full assurance. Because, "if one died for all, then all died." "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." It is no longer the sin question, Romans 3:28 in the New English Bible reads, "a man is justified by faith alone, regardless of his success in keeping the law". That is not antinomianism, my friends, the gospel is opposed to antinomianism. But obedience to law is never the root of salvation, it is the fruit of salvation. It is a consequence, never a means. A man is justified by faith alone regardless of his success at keeping the law. The veil is open, it is not rolled up, ready to drop down. There is not just a little rent in it so that the camel's nose can get in. It is open and whosoever will may come.

If the cross grasps our imagination, we can press into that most holy place in heaven above and see ourselves closeted with God, and know the experience of the presence of God, with the world shut out, the Christian world, the unbelieving world, just you and God in the most holy place.

The high priest then came out to bless the waiting congregation, and God wants us now to wait trustingly, having seen the vision of our standing, which can never be taken from us while we are trusting in the merits of Christ. Having seen the vision of our standing, we know we are there by the throne, that we are seated in heavenly places, because Jesus went up and sat down, a finished work, not forever working like the Levitical priests. He went up and sat down, it was done. That's why at Pentecost the Holy Spirit came and sat upon the disciples, to remind them of Him who is sitting there. So, we've all sat down in heavenly places. When He sat down, we sat down with Him. When He was crucified, we were crucified with Him. When He was buried, we were buried. When He was resurrected, we were resurrected. When

Christ, who is our life, sat down, we sat down.

The things that cannot be shaken: The Christ, the Cross, the Church and the Coming. And, in that order. Because the cross means nothing unless Jesus was the Son of God. It would be just a martyrdom.

Let me remind you what Charles Spurgeon said--his first words in that famous Metropolitan Tabernacle.

I propose that the subject of the ministry in this house, as long as this platform shall stand, and as long as this house shall be frequented by worshippers, shall be the person of Jesus Christ. I'm never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist, I do not hesitate to take the name of Baptist, but if I'm asked what is my creed, I reply: It is Jesus Christ. My venerated predecessor has left a body of divinity, admirable and excellent in its way, but the body of divinity to which I would pin and bind myself forever, God helping me, is not his system, or any other human treatise, but Christ Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the gospel. Who is in Himself, all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth. The all-glorious personal embodiment of the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Ah, there's a creed my friends. Not 22 articles or 27, but Jesus Christ.

Then, let me read to you his last words, just before his death.

If you wear the livery of Christ, you'll find Him so meek and lowly of heart that you'll find rest unto your souls. He's the most magnanimous of captains. There never was His like among the choicest of princes. He's always to be found in the thickest part of the battle. When the wind blows cold, He always takes the bleak side of the hill. The heaviest end of the cross lies ever on His shoulders. If He bids us carry a burden, He carries it also. If there is anything that is gracious, generous, kind and tender, yea lavish and super-abundant in love, you always find it in Him. His service is life, peace, joy. Oh, that you would enter in at once. God help you to enlist under the banner of Jesus Christ.

Yes, the things that do not have a solid foundation must be sifted, but only in order that that which cannot be shaken might stand forth in boldness in all its glory and wonder. Christ, the Cross. That company who believe in Christ and the cross, that's the church. And then, the hope of His return.

I have one more passage I want to share with you in chapter 6 of Hebrews. First let me review where we have been going, please. We have remembered that we live in a world of change where there is nothing substantial, where life and health and wealth, where loved ones can be torn away in a moment. We have seen that the realm of the mind is not free of this shaking. We have seen that as God has moved down through the ages, calling forth movement after movement to contribute to His church, that the leaders of those movements were great men and women, but not infallible--but after such movements there came shakings. Siftings. So that whatever was of error could be sifted out. So that Jesus might stand out bright and clear. It happened when the apostles came and they shook the Judaism of their day, until Jesus stood out, and the heavenly temple stood out, and the cross stood out. It happened with Martin Luther, when he shook the church of his day. All the works of penance dissolved into dust before the clarion call of the gospel. It happened with Wesley when he came forth and insisted that a mere claim to belief was not enough, that while genuine faith alone justified, the evidence was always found in a holy life. And Wesley shook the Calvinistic institutions of his day, including the Episcopal Church of which he was a member.

Then in the nineteenth century came movements shaking the church of their day. Not only Adventism, but Adventism's twin, Brethrenism on the other side of the Atlantic. At the same time Adventists started in this country, the Brethren started in England. You say, "Who were they?" Well, I'll tell you, they are the most influential religious group on the face of the earth. At least for 95 percent of the fundamentalists in America--their thinking has come from the Plymouth Brethren. Especially this is true with reference to eschatology, and law and grace. From the Brethren came George Muller, Hudson Taylor, the Hebraist Tregelles, and the modern scholar, F. F. Bruce. Dwight L. Moody was mightily influenced by the Brethren movement.

The Brethren thought they were giving the Midnight Cry for Jesus to come. They thought that they were separating from Laodicea. They had many wonderful emphases such as grace, and the priesthood of all believers. But, they taught the secret rapture, the return of the Jews, and many other things that were not scriptural. Today, there is a great shaking going on among Brethrenism. A very great shaking. Most of the scholars today, who have come out of the American conservative groups have repudiated many of the distinct prophetic elements of Brethrenism.

And so here's God's way. He leads a movement, and because men are sinners, they are not perfect movements. They are not all truth. There's progress, but there are things to be unlearned so a shaking comes. But the shaking has always a benevolent intention--that the things that are unshakable might stand out. And we have illustrated what they are. The Christ, the Cross, the Church and the Coming. We have seen that they were the themes of the Pauline epistles. We have seen that they were the great themes of Jesus as He came to the close of His ministry. The same things abound in the book of Hebrews.

We've noticed that the writer of the book of Hebrews lived in a day very much like our own. When the Christians of his day were just wondering what was still valid, what could you believe? The writer of Hebrews says, Don't cast away your confidence. Don't apostatize. Don't crucify Jesus afresh. Look unto Jesus and run with patience. Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself. Consider Him who is greater than the prophets. Consider Him who is greater than the angels. Consider Him who is the real house of God. Greater than Moses, the builder of the old one. Consider Him who is the true Aaron, the true High Priest. Consider Him who is the Atonement. Consider Him who has gone into the most holy place. Consider Him who has sprinkled heaven's mercy seat with the blood of the cross. See in Him your representative. See that you too have gone to heaven in Him. That you are there with God. That your righteousness is up there where no one can touch it. See that your sin is gone. That the rending of the veil means the rending of your sin, so it is no longer a barrier between you and God. See that the law, with its claims on your life as a creditor is gone. It never is rescinded as a standard, but as a creditor it is gone. The torn veil meant all barriers between man and God are gone. See in our High Priest one who unites divinity and humanity. Therefore, we can come with boldness. We can come with full assurance. We need not tremble outside the sanctuary as the Israelites did in the day of atonement. They tied a rope to the leg of the high priest so that if he should be stricken down, no one would have to venture in there at risk of life. They could tug him out by the rope. We don't have to tremble like that! We have full assurance, holy boldness.

It tells in this chapter why. "By one offering He has forever perfected them that are sanctified." In Christ we have a perfection that's

imputed to us despite our failures and our mistakes, our stupidity and our follies. His one act has rendered us perfect in the sight of God. God doesn't see us as we are. He sees us only in Christ. We can never, NEVER be lost while we are trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ.

Now back to Hebrews 6. Notice in verse 18, "through two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters within the veil, to the inner shrine (meaning the most holy place), where Jesus has gone as a fore-runner on our behalf, having become a High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Notice, we who have fled for refuge may have the strong encouragement, strong hope, a steadfast anchor of the soul--a hope to enter into the most holy place within the veil, where Jesus has gone.

To Him we have fled for refuge. It is the imagery of the Israelites' city of refuge, when a man took another's life accidentally and could flee to one of the cities that was strategically placed throughout the land. No city was more than half a day's journey away. The avenger of blood would be pursuing the man responsible for the death of another. But if the guilty party just got one foot into the city, they'd pull him in, even though the avenger was hovering over him with his knife up-raised. Here were six cities of refuge because they all symbolized the seventh and last great refuge which is Jesus Himself. We have fled for refuge to Jesus. There in those cities of refuge they were safe. No one could touch them. And when the high priest died, they were freed.

When our High Priest died, all charges against us were dropped. You know, you should never be worried when people say bad things against you. Because you know in your heart of hearts that even if they aren't technically correct in all their points, the real truth is much worse! But when our High Priest died, my friends, all charges against us were dropped. So, we can flee for refuge within the veil, the inner shrine, the most holy place, the heaven of heavens, where our High Priest has entered for us, on our behalf.

Everything that Jesus did was for you and me. EVERYTHING! Our God came down here on our behalf. He hung at the breast of a peasant woman, He upon whose shoulders the universe hung. He was tempted on our behalf. He was baptized on our behalf. And He went down into the waters pointing forward to the burial of death. He came up symbolizing resurrection, and the heavens were opened and the Spirit came on Him, a symbol that the Spirit was to be poured out on us, when Jesus died and rose again. He was tempted for us, He was baptized for us, He died for us, He rose for us, He ascended for us, He intercedes for us. We have an anchor, within the veil. It is sure and steadfast, for it is impossible for God to lie, and God has said, "Whosoever believeth hath everlasting life." God has said "whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." God has said, "I'll never leave you or forsake you." Christ has said, "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He has promised, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men."

What are we to do in this age of crisis? We are to hold on to what cannot be shaken! The Cross of Christ which is planted in the Rock Christ Jesus. If we are there, my friends, nothing can shake us. NOTHING!

Let us pray:

Our Father, we thank Thee for the things which cannot be shaken, the Christ, the Cross, the Church, the Coming. Just now, our hope and our faith enter into the veil where He has gone as our forerunner, our surety, our High Priest, our Moses, our Joshua, our Saviour. We lay hold on Him afresh, we flee for refuge to Him because we are guilty indeed. We behold in that rent veil the abolition of the note of our indebtedness. We see in that open veil the invitation to come, with holy boldness, with full assurance, knowing that we can never perish while we are looking there at our great High Priest. Lord, burn it into our hearts just now, so that we might have full assurance, that so long as we are trusting in the Christ of the Cross, we shall not be moved. Grant it to us each, for Christ's sake. Amen.

WILL THE CHURCH MAKE ROOM FOR GOD?

(Chapter 14)

Transcript of Edited Sermon by Desmond Ford

I have two parables to offer you which are very relevant for 1982, in the church climate in which we belong. First of all, the story of the Grand Inquisitor, written by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, that Christian writer of the late 19th century. He told how in the 16th century, there in Spain the heart of the inquisition, at the City of Seville, Jesus came, longing for fellowship with His people, as of old. It was the day after the execution of a hundred heretics by the Grand Inquisitor of Seville. Jesus came into the city, and there was such an atmosphere of grace and love that people somehow felt Who it was. Then a funeral scene--and a tiny coffin on the shoulders of men emerged from the cathedral. Behind it the Grand Inquisitor--tall, thin, 90 years of age--not now in the scarlet garment that had been his when he had condemned the heretics yesterday, but just in the ordinary brown cloth of a common monk.

The mother of the dead child is there, and she turns to Jesus, "If it be Thou, do what Thou didst do long ago". So, Jesus steps to the casket and He whispers, "Little maid, arise". And the little girls gets up with a smile, and there are cries and sobs from all the people. But the Grand Inquisitor looks at Who it is and he knows Who it is and he says to his guards, "Take Him and put Him in the bottom dungeon". Jesus allows Himself to be taken and He's left in the dungeon through most of the night. Then at last comes the Grand Inquisitor and he looks at Jesus and says, "Why, why have You come? Why have You come?" "Years ago You came and offered the people freedom, but the people cannot tolerate, cannot bear freedom. We, the Catholic Church, made a bargain with the people. We said, surrender your freedom and we will give you happiness and peace. You won't have to make decisions. Just do what we tell you. No freedom, but instead, peace. We'll make the decisions for you. You won't have any battles, leave them to us--the Church. Now, why have You come? Why?" Jesus looks at this old man. The old man waits. He wants the Lord to say something, however bitter, but Jesus, after a long silence, stands up and advances toward the Grand Inquisitor and kisses him on the cheek. The man jumps back as though he's been burnt with a hot iron. He looks at Christ and he says, "Go, and never come back". Jesus slowly leaves the dungeon. The kiss burns on in the heart of the Grand Inquisitor, but his ideas govern, overrule and control him more than ever.

Of course, that is a parable of the danger of the church, the Christian Church in every age, and in every place. We would do wrong if we said, "Yes, that's the Roman Catholic Church". Or, "Yes, that's the apostate protestant church". My friends, we would even do wrong if we only see it as a group we know better still, and said, "Yes, that's them". It is the peril of all churches, in all ages, as they begin to grow! You see, the Bible orders organization. It is New Testamental to have elders and deacons. A skeleton without a backbone would quickly become a jelly-fish. God doesn't want jelly-fish churches. He wants churches with backbone. There has to be some form of organization.

The first men that were called to be church officers were the apostles and the seven deacons mentioned in the Book of Acts. They were men that were filled with the Spirit, and the church people recognized the leaders God had called by their holiness and charismatic gifts. (I don't mean speaking in tongues. I mean the evidence that they were controlled of the Spirit.) Their spiritual qualifications were their primary qualification to be church leaders. But as the churches have grown in every era and every place, the spiritual has always slidden to the background. And organizers have come to the front who have been able, who have been talented, but who have not always been dominated by the Spirit. When that happens, in every church (and I want to stress the every, for we aren't throwing darts at just one group), what has happened is that ideals have begun to go down the drain. Rules have begun to take their place--freedom is exchanged for the peace of doing what they tell us from above. But with freedom, goes truth. Policies begin to count more than people. That's the test of when this has happened! When the church loses the fire of the Spirit, it has to ignite another fire, so it invokes power, power to persecute.

In the Middle Ages, there was a church and state union. In more modern times, the church has assumed power by hierarchal government. And persecution always follows the loss of the Spirit. Always! Policies--policies count more than people. The result is spiritual death, and spiritual drought.

There is a parable in Scripture that meets the situation. See II Kings 3. We are told in this story about a great army and great drought. It represents any professed army of God without the Spirit. Officers have come to the fore to organize and to control, who ultimately persecute--asking people to exchange their freedom for the peace of not having to make decisions--the peace of having the decisions handed down. So here's the story of a great army composed of three kings and their hosts. It tells us about them, in verse 9.

That the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. When they had made a circuitous march of seven days, there was no water for the army, or for the beasts that followed them.

Self-sufficient, proud, but how quickly the Lord lays them low. How quickly they are found to have no strength and no wisdom. They are entirely dependent upon God. There is no water for the army, no water for the beasts. The king of Israel says, "Alas, the Lord has called these three kings to give them into the hands of the enemy (the Moabites)". How easily we make Providence the saddle to bear the guilt of our mistakes! God is a convenient horse to blame and to place all our packs upon when we err! These three kings who had moved without wisdom from God, without asking God, are in trouble.

But there was a man there that did worship God--Jehoshaphat. He said, "Is there no prophet of the Lord, here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?" One of the king of Israel's servants answered, "Elisha, the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah". Now, what was Elisha doing there? This was an army, and not the Salvation Army! What was Elisha doing there? He represented the ever-present Christ. Even when men are going about their own business, intent on their own way, and forgetting God, the ever-present Christ is there, trying to touch the heart. Through tragedy, through emergency, through trials, through trouble, the Lord Jesus says, "I stand at the door and knock". So, Elisha, the man of God, represents the Son of God. Ever-present, in every emergency. Even when we've erred through our own stupidity, even when we've done it through our own arrogance, He is there to help. Even with a backsliding church!

I would be very discouraged if it were not otherwise! To know that God can overrule my past, overrule my folly, overrule my weaknesses,

that I always stand in the grace of God while I trust in Christ, not in the follies of my own stupidity and wilfulness--that 's the gospel! That God is with us in every emergency, if we are willing to accept His grace. These men were here because of their own fault, going about their own way--they hadn't asked God for anything. But God is there to help. God is there for every emergency, even though we've put ourselves into that mess! He's still there to help.

What did God suggest? You'll notice that in verse 16, the Lord said, "Make this dry stream bed full of ditches". That's the way most translations give it, one or two modern ones change it, but most translations give it that way. Make this valley bed full of ditches. Well, that was funny advice! Here they were tired, thirsty, why go out and sweat digging? That would make them more thirsty. Why make the situation worse? Ugly ditches in this valley wouldn't improve the landscape. But God said, "Make it full of ditches!" So the remedy is the man of God and his counsel.

Elisha is a very gentle prophet. He's a real contrast to Elijah. When you first meet Elijah, he's talking about drought and famine and judgment. When you first meet Elisha, he's healing a stream of water and making it sweet. The first judgment of Elijah represented all his miracles--miracles of judgment. If you didn't get along with Elijah, watch out! Lightnings could come down and consume you! That's what he did with two lots of 50. Miracle after miracle of Elijah was tumultuous judgment. Elisha was different. Miracle after miracle, like his first announcement, brought healing, health, peace, joy. Elisha is to Elijah as the gospel is to the law. Healing, soothing, peace, and a blessed balm. So here is the man of God, but his remedy is to make the valley full of ditches. By faith--obey! Work! Without God, we cannot. Without us, He will not. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. It's God that worketh in you, but you've got to work out what He wants to work in you. You have to work it out. We receive the great gift without works. But it always leads us to work in response. Make the valley full of ditches. What does that mean?

It means to make things worse, to start out with. It means to make room for the blessings. What was the purpose of the ditches? God was going to send them water, and He wanted to make sure they had great basins to save it. For all the animals, for all the men, He wanted to make sure there was room for the blessing. He was going to send it. You make room for the blessing. My friends, one of the greatest weaknesses of the modern church, and the modern world is that it has very little room for God. Even the church! Very little room. Yes, there's room for programs, room for socials, room for all sorts of things, but very little room for God. God, my friends is awful. (And I'm using that in the right sense--to really sense God should fill us with awe, whereby we give Him His right place.) He either matters tremendously or not at all! The church doesn't treat God that way. The church sometimes throws God the chips. Because God is a solemn God of truth, to worship God means to seek after truth. God is a God of love, and mercy, and to worship God is to follow love. To follow mercy. That's what it means to worship God. But the world, even the church in the world, has little room for God.

The condition here of blessing is "make the valley full of ditches". Make room! Our lives are so frittered, they are spread out like peanut butter. There's little room. Life is so filled with things. The worst thing about television is not the emphasis on sex and murder--that's bad enough! But the worst thing about television is the practice of the absence of God. What they present on every show almost, except for the synthetic religious shows, is a world from which God is absent. No room for God on television, He'd be embarrassing! He'd want to clean up T.V. No room for God in T.V.

In the lives of many church people, there's not much provision for God. So, if we want the blessing, we have to make room. The trouble with so many of us in the church is that we sin by being respectable, and by omitting the things we ought to do to make room for God. Now, I'm in America, but even Americans have heard of a man called Bill Shakespeare. Haven't you heard of him--the greatest dramatist of all time (albeit an Englishman)? William Shakespeare only ever included one scholar in all his plays. A real scholar. He included only one real scholar in all his dramas, tragedies and comedies. And this was the most capable person, the most gifted character of all the hundreds of characters that Shakespeare brings before us. Hamlet! "To be or not to be." He contemplates suicide, "To sleep, perhaps to dream, ah, there's the rub." He doesn't want to dream and sleep. Men aren't afraid of death being the end, they are afraid that it is not the end! They are afraid that the dream may become a nightmare, if they sleep in death.

Why do I mention Hamlet? What's he got to do with ditches? Well, Hamlet represents the scholar temperament. Sometimes in churches, scholars have the most awful temptations. It is not the same temptation as that of the administrators. The temptation of the administrator is to administer without the Spirit--to administer without the truth--to administer without love--to administer rules above people, and processes and priorities above people. That's the temptation of the administrator. The temptation of the scholar is the temptation of Hamlet--the most gifted of all Shakespeare's characters. Hamlet was responsible for murder. What did he do? Nothing! That's how he caused murder! Hamlet's problem was always indecision. "To be or not to be, that is the question." To do or not to do, that is the issue. Hamlet caused bloodshed because he would not do. Now, of course, he didn't break any of the Ten Commandments--overtly, obviously. Hamlet's trouble wasn't anything he did. It was what he didn't do, that led to the murder of others!

And in a church when it grows, the problem isn't only for or with the administrators. A problem is also encountered by the scholars, and their problem is not an academic one at all! It's the temptation not to do. Men who have failed to rise up and speak are now being saddled with greater and greater problems. I would remind you that where men who ought to do, fail to do, they are preparing for greater and greater tragedy, condemnation and blame. We can sin by not doing, as well as by doing. It is not by chance that the greatest dramatist of all time, when he brought before us the most gifted character, chose a scholar whose sin was not doing. So, we can be very respectable and go about our business, and neglect God's business! We can outwardly keep the commandments of God and be making a contribution. But if we are not courageous where the battle is, God counts us as cowards! This does not mean that we are to mount the judgment-seat and pronounce a verdict on any specific individual. Let us leave it to God to particularize duty for each of His children and be ourselves faithful in our own tasks.

Make the valley full of ditches! Apparently, make things worse, get in and sweat! Meaning sacrifice. There's no dodging sacrifice. We can either sacrifice when we hear the call of Jesus, and in response to His sacrifice, sacrifice all. Or if we do not do that, if like Hamlet we wander in indecision, if like these kings who in their original going-forth felt so strong and so self-sufficient, so full of talent, and ability, like any big church--if we refuse to sacrifice at the call of God, then, my friends, we'll end in sacrificing everything! We'll sacrifice eternal life!

If you look at the end of this story, it tells us what happened. When finally the Lord blessed the obedient response of these people in the emergency situation, when He blessed their response and gave them victory over the enemy, we read what the enemy did. It tells us in verse 27. "He took his elder son who was to reign in his stead. He offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall." Seeing he was defeated,

the enemy king took his son and sacrificed him.

Remember Tennyson? Tennyson made a little couplet that went like this:

"The king is happy, and child and wife,
Take you his nearest, take you his dearest.
Give us a life. "

You see, from the time of Eden, all mankind has known that the price of salvation is a sacrifice. From the time of the promise about the seed of the woman, all men have discerned however dimly after the ages of apostasy, that the price of salvation is sacrifice. There can be no religion without it because our religion was founded on sacrifice! The Father sacrificed His Son. And the Son was prepared to sacrifice His Father, "My God, My God, why have You removed Yourself from Me?" "My Son, My Son, because I have made You to be sin. That they who know no righteousness might be made righteous in You." It would have been an infinite sacrifice for the Son to have become an angel. It would have been an infinite sacrifice for Him to come down to an ivory palace, with the trumpets blowing and the carpets of red being laid out. But, my friends, He became a seed, a seed in the bosom of a peasant woman. He upon whose shoulder the universe hangs, became so helpless as to hang at the breast of a peasant woman--to be born in a cow shed, and to die on a gallows. Our religion was founded on sacrifice! And that is the only way we can provide and prepare for the blessings of God.

For a church, for an individual that is parched, where there is not the water of the Spirit, the only way out is to make the valley full of ditches. Make room for the blessing. Make room for God. Get in and do something! But do it in love, do it graciously! Do what God says! Be valiant for the truth! Get the dirt out of the way. My friends, a ditch is a grave. Just a bit bigger. A grave! Sacrifice!

You know the people who find it hard to die? The people who haven't died a thousand times. To be a Christian is to die every day! It's to die every conscious hour. It is the sacrifice of our own desires to the will of God. That is what it means to be a Christian. That is what it must mean for church administrators, that is what it must mean for church scholars, that is what it must mean for us in the pew. It means to choose God's will, God's truth, however devastating--whatever mess it makes of our landscape! Make the valley full of ditches, if you want the blessing. Make the landscape look dreadful. Get it and sweat! Get in and sacrifice! You've got to make room for God! And you've got to dig a grave! Whoever will not take up his cross, whoever will not go to the gallows everyday and follow Me, he cannot be My disciple!

My friends, when Israel did get in and dig the ditches, from afar off without sound, silently, mysteriously, the waters began to come down the hills, down into the valley. It filled the ditches. You know what happened? Look at verse 20. "The next morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, water came from the direction of Edom until the country was filled with water." At the time of the sacrifice, the water came.

Remember when Daniel was praying that afternoon and Gabriel came? It was the time of the afternoon sacrifice. When did our Lord die on the cross? At the time of the afternoon sacrifice. Blessings always come out of sacrifice. Those that want to live confidently and smoothly in their palace, whether it's an ivory palace of a scholar, whether it's the brick palace of an administrator, or the respectable palace of a church person, those who want to live in their palaces and who don't want a ditch, who don't want a grave, my friends, they will miss the blessing of God. Blessing only comes from sacrifice! It was at the time of the sacrifice that the water came.

And God gave them a double blessing. It says in the Scripture, verse 24, that when they (the Moabites) came to the camp of Israel, as they looked down on the water, this water of blessing, and they saw the sun shining on it, the enemy said, "The kings have turned on each other, there's blood down there in the valley". The sun shone on the water. That was a blessing to the Israelites, but it became a delusion to the heathen. As the sun shone and made the water look like blood, the enemy said, "Those men down there must have fought each other, come let's go and clean them up. They are dying down there and we'll go and finish them". They had been deceived. You see, that which is an aroma of life to those who have sacrificed, becomes an aroma of death to the heathen. The record tells us in verse 24, that they came to the camp of Israel, and the Israelites rose and attacked them until the enemy fled. The Israelites overthrew the cities, and upon every piece of land every man threw a stone until it was covered. They stopped every spring of water, felled all the good trees. Israel not only got the blessing of the water, but they became more than conquerors.

So my friends, there are two parables. I will not use them rightly unless I apply them first to my own heart, and acknowledge that there are days when the drought is on in my experience. Sometimes the drought has been caused because I have gone my own way without asking the Lord's direction. I have not stopped to tarry with Him. I've gone my own wilful way. No wonder the drought comes. I need to examine myself and say, "Well, how do I get out of this situation?" The Lord says, "Make a valley full of ditches".

Make sure you make room for God, make room in your time. There is no such thing as a person being a Christian who doesn't have a devotional life. No such thing! There is no Christianity where there is no devotion. The first duty is always adoration!

A Russian peasant said, "My prayer is leaning on the window, looking at Him, and He at me". That's devotion! That's adoration! There is no Christianity without it! It's not Christianity just to read some book against the church, or something about doctrine, and say, "Oh, I'm smarter than all those other people. Look what I know!" That's not Christianity, Christianity is adoration! It's making the valley full of ditches. Taking time for God. It means the dedication of all we have. There can be no religion without sacrifice. Sacrifice of energy, sacrifice of money. You know, the Jews gave 25% of their income. They had three tithes, two of them regular and another one less regular. Christians ought to give much more! Not that we prescribe any rules. The New Testament doesn't do that. It just says, that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". Even the Old Testament says, "I will not offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing". You know, the offering that doesn't hurt is not an offering. The Lord never looks at what we give Him, He looks at what we still have left. That's how He measures our offerings--not by what we put on the plate, but what we still have left over. "I will not offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing." But my friends, we will do the right automatically if He has our hearts!

When we see that our lives are based on the love of God for a world that didn't love Him, that they are based on the Father sacrificing His Son, on the Son sacrificing His Father (that is, being prepared to lose Him--to hang there on the cross without Him), when we see that, when we see a God who could take our guilt upon Himself, in our stead, and pay the price we should pay, in order to give us the reward that only He deserves, when we see that, there is nothing we can withhold from Him. Not unless we are blind or dead. Let us pray:

Our Father, we thank You that though we get ourselves into messes as organizations and as individuals, You still love us. The man of God is still with the host, though it be a foolish host, though it be a thirsty host, the man of God is there. And the remedy is there. If we will but

make room for You, all will be well. You will give us the immediate blessing. You will make us more than conquerors. The enemy of unbelief, the enemies of cowardice, of pride, of lovelessness, the enemy of an unbelieving world will be overcome. Grant, dear Lord, that we may have the wisdom as we gaze at Your sacrifice, to willingly dig the ditches and to make room for You.

Amen.

THE CHURCH IN THY HOUSE

(Chapter 15)

GUIDELINES FOR AN EVANGELICAL SOCIETY

Edited from a Transcribed Sermon by Dr. Desmond Ford

I must try today to walk upon egg-shells, and I therefore have a request to make: that you do not jump to conclusions too early. Please listen to all that the scriptures say before you conclude as to what the speaker's trying to draw from those scriptures.

You have heard of Scylla and Charybdis, those great rocks where ships were wrecked, usually on one or the other, as they tried to go through a Mediterranean water passage. We are going to warn against the equivalent dangers for progressive Christians.

Let me read an interesting quotation.

At the outset of every spiritual movement, there is a creative minority with a vision. When the idea takes root, a movement comes into being rapidly. Then comes the danger that the original ideas may become commonplace and quantity becomes a major goal. When that happens, standards are lowered, politicians and financiers take over, the vision is replaced by creeds and sometimes by an absolutist organization. The message goes on paper, the faith is defined by clever formulas, the fire dies out, the vision fades away and a reformation becomes imperative.

Now, did you get the essence of that? At the outset of every spiritual movement, there is a creative minority with a vision, but when the idea takes root, the ideas go on paper and administrators can take over and the fire dies and something has to happen. You'll notice that the writer, an Andrews University professor, writing in the Review and Herald, October 26, 1967, said that one of the marks of this, is that quantity becomes a major goal. There is a way of getting not only quantity, but quality. Don't confuse these different ideas. The Lord is interested in quantity, but quantity plus quality.

In every religious movement, devolution has taken place. The original vision dies. The first generation of privilege has moved to a second generation of responsibility and then a third generation of burden and formality and death. So, the question always arises, what then? Here in the USA we have thousands of religious organizations. Only about 500 provide statistics and the rest are too tiny to do that. Of those 500 that provide statistics, less than half have more than 7,000 members. There are approximately 30 religious bodies in the States that have over one-quarter million members. As one examines the various religious congregations and systems and groups and denominations, one finds that there are approximately 13 families from which most of the others descend.

From the Baptists have come about 80 different denominations. From the Methodists have come nearly 60 denominations. Even little groups that you may think are on their own like the Mormons have six different groups. So here is a fragmentation that is before us all the time and offers us both questions and a challenge.

Just a single glance at church history tells us much. God raised up the Jewish church, but the fire died out. They crucified their King. God raised up the Christian church which sprang out of the Jewish church. It was a break-away, and within a matter of a century or two, it was going the route towards a great popular medieval church that became Roman Catholicism. Out of that came the Protestant church which splintered into the Reformed Calvinistic group and the Lutheran group and some Independents. When the Reformation moved to England, the Episcopalians held sway and those who wouldn't fit in were called the non-conformists and from these came the Congregationalists. Later the Baptists emerged. In this country, 70 different European faiths took root. America has only about 5 well-known indigenous religions. They include Christian Science, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses and Adventism. The vast majority of Americans have their spiritual roots in the over three score and ten European faiths, which came either from the independent groups from the Protestant Reformation, or the Calvinistic group, or the Lutheran group.

When we look at this problem of continual fragmentation, when you and have experienced the reality of a vision dying out with administrators taking over and clever formulas replacing dependence on the Holy Ghost, when protection of a creed takes preeminence over spiritual life and growth, what then is the Christian's duty?

You remember Jesus in the sermon on the mount? He said that if the salt has lost its savor, it is of no value, and should be cast out and trodden under foot of men. What was Jesus talking about? Sodium chloride is always sodium chloride. Jesus was talking about the crude composite on the banks of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea where there was some salt plus a lot of other matter piled up in great heaps along the borders of the water. When it rained, a lot of the true salt was leached out. There were white piles remaining, but they were valueless. Jesus didn't say it was of little value, He said it was useless. He said it should be trodden under foot. What did He mean?

In Luke 13, Jesus told the story about a fig tree. Verse 6, "And He told this parable, a man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And He said to the vine dresser, Lo, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and I find none. Cut it down, why should it use up the ground?" I want to quote a commentary on this by a famous Quaker religious philosopher--Dr. Elton Trueblood. The Quakers are pacifists, but there is little that is pacifist in this quotation:

That Christ was completely realistic about the possibility and the seriousness of failure of any society, including a Christian society is shown by His use of the parable of the barren fig tree, making the same point as that of the worthlessness of the pile from which the true salt had been drained away. There's no virtue, He taught, in continuing to be patient with what is hopelessly unproductive.... In the light of this combined teaching, a Christian must always be both tough and tender. He must be tender with new life as it grows up in hope. But he must at the same time be aware of the waste of trying to keep alive what is intrinsically a dying movement. If Christian movements grow up for awhile, and later seem to have come upon periods of decay, that's not wholly surprising. Probably it is a better use of our time to start something new than it is to try and nourish that from which the major power is gone. It is better in many cases to plant a new tree than to bother endlessly with one which is really hopeless.

I don't want you to misunderstand this pacifist Christian philosopher. He is not in favor of continually starting new denominations. But he is saying that God Himself has a limit to tolerance and he is saying that Christian groups have a tremendous responsibility. If a person is genuinely religious, the only options he has are these--change his religion or propagate it. If it is not true, it ought to be changed! If it is true, it ought to be propagated! These are the only options. If a person is really in earnest about his religion, he must change it if it is not true, and he must propagate it if it is true.

Good News Unlimited is not a new church. It is an evangelistic resource center sympathetic with every group that names the name of Christ in sincerity. GNU believes that the church of Christ is composed of all those who trust solely in the merits of Jesus. Our philosophy is that God has had many movements, each of which has had a special contribution to make. But the church itself is bigger than any movement.

We are continually asked the question, "What should we do?" Some folks tell us that in their local area there is strong oppression for those who want to follow conscience, "What should we do?" Others say that they have a gospel pastor and have no problem whatever. There are many gospel people in their local church. "What should we do?" Well, it is not my duty to tell you what you should do, but it is my duty to draw some truths from scripture and for you to pray over these truths. God does not lead us all in the identical way. Principles have different applications according to the situation in which we find ourselves.

I want to draw from scripture a few truths, which if understood, may save some of us a terrible amount of unnecessary anguish. I have known new movements within the church for 35 years. When I was about 18, I remember visiting a reform movement on a little island by a Sydney river. It had its own little college in a house, but like most reform movements it wasn't growing, because one thing it lacked--the gospel. The great body of new churches that arise are short-lived! The reason is they lack the gospel!

Many, many denominations arise that have some shibboleth of no real importance. There is a group of River Brethren who are divided over the issue of whether men should both wash and dry the feet before the Lord's Supper, or whether just one man should wash and a different man should dry, and they split over that. There are over a half a million Christians in this country who believe that it is necessary to separate from a church if it uses instrumental music, and there is a large Christian community that will not use buttons, but only uses hooks. Thus, it is possible to form new movements over minor matters. Wherever a world is turned into an atom or an atom is turned into a world, you don't have a church, you have a sect. Any group that majors in minors is a sect. The heart of the gospel, my friends, is not places in the celestial regions or dates on a calendar. These things are not the heart of the gospel! The many, many movements that have fragmented (and as I have said--half have less than 7,000 members, that's half of those who allow their statistics to be recorded, for there are thousands that are so small they don't do that) are very short-lived because they lack the gospel.

The Church to which we belong has known about 20 breakaway movements. None of them has endured with any strength because none of them has had the gospel. None of them! The Church to which we belong is in chaos because there is a storm over what is the gospel! But remember, when God wanted to do some great thing at the beginning, He began with chaos. You should think of the significance of the wreck of a bursting seed. You see it every Spring. New life comes from the wreck. Christ said that He came not to bring peace, but a sword. He did not mean by that that He came to wield the sword, He came to bring peace. But, opposition to the peace of the gospel creates a sword. We must be careful as Christians that we do not reverse that. We must be careful to deal as Christ dealt.

Why was it that Christ told the parable about the salt that was good for nothing but to be trodden under foot, and about the barren fig tree? Why was it that He pled for three and a half years with lifeless Judaism? Why was it that He waited until His ministry was almost over before He said, "Upon this Rock I'll build My church?" How is it that we find on the eve of the crucifixion our Lord Jesus is saying, "If you had known, even now in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chickens, and ye would not." The patient, tender, gentle, long-suffering Christ. My friends, if we claim His name, that has to be our pattern.

Truths are often double-sided. The paradox of the church is that it has both glory and shame. To tell the truth about the church, you must say opposites in one sentence. The truth has both glory and shame. It has the glory of the gospel that has been entrusted to its earthen vessel, and it has the shame that the vessel has so little partaken of the nature of that gospel. Those who claim the gospel must have standards of love and patience and kindness and gentleness that exceed those of the ordinary churchperson as the heavens exceed the earth.

What are these truths that may save us anguish? One, there is no such thing, (and never will be in this world) as a pure church. There never has been, there is not, and there never will be a pure church on earth before the coming of Christ. Do you remember that beautiful passage that says: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, have become a sounding brass or a clanging symbol. If I give my body to be burned, etc. and have not love..." Was that written because the church to which Paul spoke was a very loving church and he caught the intensity and the fervor and the glory and the wonder? No, he wrote it because there was no love in that church. When he declared that love is very tender, very kind, very long-suffering, did he do that because the people at Corinth were very loving, and very kind, and very long-suffering? He wrote it because they weren't. When he wrote that love is never arrogant or rude (what a challenge! I have often been arrogant and rude and that's not Christian--but love is never arrogant or rude), why did Paul write that? He wrote it because the Corinthians were arrogant and rude.

One Sabbath afternoon, just read I Corinthians through. They were divided into cliques--"I am of Peter, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos," etc. They were guilty of immorality, some were attending prostitutes, there was incest, they were taking each other to law, they got drunk at the Lord's Supper, and this was the apostolic church! It was so bad that Jesus punished some of them with sickness and premature death. Paul said, "For this cause many among you are sickly and some sleep." The early Christian church! Read III John that speaks about Diotrephes who loved to have the preeminence. But then John says, "Look at Demetrius who has a good report of all men. Follow that which is good and not that which is evil." Here is a church of the first century and the inspired apostles says, "Now look, there are two groups in the church, don't follow that which is proud, follow that which is good." There's no such thing as a pure church. And never will be. You know why? A church is an enlarged ME. And there's the answer. The church is an enlarged you. The church is only an enlargement of what I am, with all my defects and feebleness and folly and stupidity and willfulness. The church is an enlarged me. That doesn't really speak well of it. And, if today I start the "Fordian" church, the best I can hope for is a reduplication of all my stupidities and faults and failings. There is no such thing as a pure church.

Read Revelation 1 to 3--the description of the early churches of the first century. Read it. John Wesley was aware of the truth we are discussing. And Wesley foretold that Methodism would have grave problems. This is what he wrote on one occasion:

I do not see how it is possible in the nature of things for any revival of religion to continue long. Religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger and love of the world in all its branches.

Do you see what he is saying? When you do get a church that is in earnest, it leads to disciplined living. It leads to stewardship. You know it is cheaper to keep a family alive than to keep one vice alive. Vice is very expensive. He is saying, when you become frugal, as a Christian, money increases, but with money come a thousand-fold times the temptations of yesteryear. So, no church can ever remain the same. Though it go well for a little time, wealth increases and with wealth, deterioration. Wesley further declared:

The Methodists in every place grow diligent, frugal. Consequently, they increase in goods, hence a proportionate increase in pride, anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes and pride of life. So, though the former religion remains, the spirit is quickly vanishing away.

What did Wesley recommend as a remedy? What way can we take, that our money may not sink us into the abyss of hell? There is one way, and there is no other way under heaven.

Wesley's first rule about money was: get all you can. He meant get it legitimately. Get all you CAN. Get all YOU can. "If those who gain all they can, save all they can, and likewise give all they can, then the more they gain, the more they'll grow in grace and the more treasures they'll lay up in heaven." There are Wesley's three rules about money. Get all you can, save all you can, and give all you can. Remember, whatever money the Lord has entrusted to us is for the spread of the gospel. And we are stewards to see that it is used that way.

So, again, there is no such thing as a pure church. The marks of a true church are not the same as the marks of a pure church. There's no such thing as the latter, but the first does exist. The marks of a true church, and a church can be true though it is not pure, are threefold. I am quoting from the Reformers such as Calvin and Luther. The ordinances instituted by Christ are maintained in a true church, meaning the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Discipline is maintained, by which is meant the church doesn't wink its eyes at evil.

We are all familiar with a scandal that has almost taken our breath away in recent times. What we call the Davenport affair involves \$20 to \$60 million of the Lord's money--a very tragic affair which indeed calls for church discipline! One of the marks of a true church is that it practices church discipline. Open wrongs are rebuked and corrected.

Third, the free proclamation of the Word, according to the conscience of clergy and laity marks a true church. Now, it is on this third one that churches particularly split, and legitimately. Seventh-day Adventists had their origin when freedom of conscience was denied the early Adventists. Wherever the Word is not permitted to be freely preached, according to the conscience of clergy and laity, there schism legitimately takes place.

Now, let me try to be very frank about it. What I am trying to say is this: Don't all feel that you have to go the same route. You must ask the lord what your duty is. know of certain situations in this country where our ministers are not allowed to say certain things for fear of losing their credentials--where members of the churches who want to say certain things according to the scriptures in a Christian, Christ-like way, are told they will never hold office. There are some parts of the country where the oppression is so cruel that members are being forced out. want to say to you, that's a different situation than in some other parts of the country, where yet there are gospel ministers, where yet there is a large group in the local church that are rejoicing in the gospel and where there is no oppression. Circumstances don't alter principles, but they alter cases. They alter the application of the same principles.

Let me summarize. There is no such thing, and never will be, as a pure church. But the marks of a true church, by which I mean, one that still is being gently dealt with by the lord of glory, is where the ordinances are practiced, church discipline is faithfully maintained (by which we mean the rebuking of evil, open evil, flagrant evil) and thirdly, the free proclamation of the gospel. And it is when the third is violated that the mother church herself becomes responsible for schismatic groups.

Most people who attend church are not fully committed Christians. That is the second point. Number one, no such thing as a pure church. Number two, most people who attend church are not fully committed Christians. In I Corinthians 10 we read about those who came out of Egypt, with most of them God was not well pleased, and they were overthrown in the wilderness. Most of those who came from Egypt were lost.

The majority of Judaism in the first century A.D. was lost. Jesus says, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say? Many will say unto me on that day, Lord haven't we cast out demons in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful things? And I'll say unto them, depart from me, never knew you--you who work iniquity." My friends, we are not saved by our works, and we're not lost by our works, but a life that is dedicated to lack of love, that is dedicated to iniquity, reveals there is no saving faith! Saving faith is always accompanied by a tenor of life that reflects the Master.

You know, the moon reflects the sun, though half of it is pure blackness, and there are holes all through the side that is illuminated. But it still reflects the sun. And feeble Christians who are truly converted, ought to reflect Jesus, even though in themselves they still find much darkness, many irregularities, many things to resist and fight, many thoughts and temptations over which they grieve, but they still reflect the Son of Righteousness. But Jesus says to those who do not reflect Him, "Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." A life that is given over to iniquity is not a life that is Christian!

The third point is this: New groups, once they are large, repeat the precise history of the group from which they separated. We haven't tried to give specific direction as to a way in which everyone should go, because there is no one way in which everyone should go, except the way of conscience. We are all in different situations. The way of Christ is plain. Where there is hope, He is patient, gentle, tender and nourishes that which is ready to die. While there is hope! But when persecution reaches such an intensity, and truth is rejected with such an antagonism, then in that quarter the persecutors become responsible themselves for the schisms that appear.

So, what are we to do? What are we to think? Our Lord Jesus knew He only had a short ministry. He knew He only had three and a half years. What did He do? He didn't write a book, didn't muster a great army with temporal weapons, didn't muster a host of scribes to copy out a creed of 27 points, didn't do any of that. What did He do? Our Lord Jesus selected a Gideon's band and trained it. When Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth", He was saying that the only hope for the world's survival was in a tiny group of twelve men. The Roman Empire was to pass away, Alexander's library was burned, the Roman legions were dissipated, the philosophic schools were scattered, but that little Gideon's band of twelve men grew and grew and grew. They grew by division. And, they preserved the ancient world.

Jesus well knew that the tendency of all natural things is downward, to disintegrate. Even soil erodes. Standards, unless they are fostered by the inspiration of the gospel, always deteriorate! Wherever only law is preached, standards really go down, not up. It is only gratitude that makes standards go up, in reality. Everything else deteriorates. So Jesus selected a Gideon's band, and this is the main point. Jesus didn't seem to be very much interested in numbers. Jesus was never interested just in quantity. A man came running to Him and said, "I want to follow You Master", and Jesus looked at him and said, "Well, foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but I don't even have a place to sleep. Are you sure you want to come?" Another man said, "Lord, I want to go, but I've got a funeral to go to first." The Lord said, "Well, if there is anything that is more important to you, you go back. Don't come." When great multitudes followed Him, He said, "Look, if any man come after Me and doesn't love Me more than His own life, let him turn back." We don't do that at our evangelistic meetings. Jesus was never interested just in quantity.

Churches in many cases would be ten times more influential if they were one-tenth as big. There are churches in this country that have turned down hundreds and hundreds of perspective members in recent years. They are real churches of quality.

The Communists, just about 70 years ago met in London, to make a decision of whether they were going to proselytize as rapidly as possible, or whether they were going to concentrate on just small groups, well-disciplined and highly dedicated. They chose the second route. Instead of easy believism, making it simple to join the party and just say you believe the party line they decided against that and said, "No, we will train commando groups, little groups, fully dedicated". When they did that, my friends, they decided the destiny of half the world. Today, one-half of the world is in Communist hands. Just think of it, two and a half thousand million people under the control of Communism in half the time the Adventist movement has been going! Two and a half thousand million! It was done by small, dedicated groups.

When Jesus sent out the 70, He said to them, "Don't carry two shoes, and two cloaks, don't make any sort of provision, I'll provide for you as you go. What's more, don't spend a lot of time in conversation when you meet people. Just say, the King's business requires haste and go on." The Lord was telling them that to join His church was joining an army. It was enlistment.

In the churches of the western world, people join churches for many reasons. It is another helpful connection to have. But, joining a church in the New Testament is surrender of the life in full, completely, all you are or ever hope to be. It is enlistment in an army. It is beginning a campaign. It means we are going to get used to roughness and toughness. You see, the thing that is missing from every church today, almost, is the truth of discipline. That discipline that chooses self-denial, not to gain salvation--they've got that before they start, but in order to glorify their Lord. The discipline of stewardship is practiced, whereby one realizes that every moment of time, every cent of money, every erg of energy, every opportunity, every possibility of influence, is God's. His by creation, His by redemption, His by preservation, and you and I own nothing! Nothing. The only thing I can claim is my sin. And when I believe, give that away. Everything else is lent to me. The cross is stamped on everything! Christian discipline demands an awareness of stewardship that all we have and own is Christ's, and is to be fully dedicated to Him. This is the type of thing Jesus was after.

Think of some of the symbols that our Lord used in connection with His gospel. Not cake, not strawberries and cream, not the pie. What did He speak about? I'll tell you. He spoke about a yoke. We speak about breaking every yoke. "Let the oppressed go free." We are glad to get rid of these old bonds. Throw them off! Jesus spoke about a yoke. It is true that He said, "Come and I'll give you rest". Troubled lives need comfort, but where you only have comfort, you don't have the gospel. Jesus gives disturbance as well as comfort. Those who have settled down at their ease and are sure that they know everything don't have the gospel. We know so little, we don't know one ten millionth about anything. Any teacher worth his salt knows that the best teacher is a one-eyed leader of the blind. Every year when I finish a class in Daniel and Revelation, I say to them, "Now half of what I have taught you is wrong, but I don't know which half." None of us knows very much, my friends! The Lord is continually disturbing us to humble us, we proud Laodiceans who think we have need of nothing! So the Lord challenges us, He warns us that we'll become like Tyre and Sodam and Gomorrah, unless we walk in the light, all of it. So, He offers us a yoke as well as rest. Wherever you have rest promised alone, that's not the gospel. Wherever you have disturbance alone, that is not the gospel. There's no health in mere criticism. It is not the gospel to feed on the husks of our brethren's failings, even if they are administrative husks. There is no profit in it. Administrative flesh is no better and no worse than your flesh and mine.

So Jesus disturbs as well as comforts. The gospel afflicts the comfortable and comforts the afflicted. That's how it works. And Jesus offers us a yoke, and a cross, and says, "If any man will come after me, take up his cross daily." And this is not the cross of the fifty rules of the church! The cross is saying "No" to our old nature at every turn. Even if you have been a Christian sixty years, your old nature is no better today than when you were converted. Your new nature has grown and should be dominating your life, but your old nature is there like a lion, struggling to get out of the cage. Taking up the cross is saying, "No" to that old nature every day. It's the battle of Romans 7:14-25. Every converted Christian knows it, and it is good news to know that the scripture has warned about it. Otherwise I might get discouraged when that old nature asserts itself in temptation. Taking up the cross is crucifying it. Everyday. Every way. When I'm tempted to lash out, to be unkind, to be cruel, to be nasty, to be critical, or to neglect duty, or to be self-indulgent--to crucify that desire.

Please don't misunderstand me. God created pleasure. God created sex. God created melody. God created food. But when these things are abused, it brings trouble and pain. The Christian will use the world, not abuse it. There's all the difference between those two. Let's use the good things. But, we are so passionate, so depraved, that our natural tendency is to abuse every precious gift. The Christian cannot. The groups of salt that the Lord elicits by the gospel are disciplined groups. The concentrated little will change the diffused big. The work of the gospel groups is to penetrate like yeast penetrating the flour. You'll be like the mustard seed that will penetrate the earth and then penetrate all space in its neighboring area. Salt has influence out of all proportion to its size. But only if it is true salt! Not if it is that composite where the salt has been leached out. That is good for nothing but to be trodden underfoot.

So Jesus can speak about a cross, a yoke, a plow, a sword, a fire, a towel, fire, pain, destruction, loss, a sword.

My friends, there is really only one remedy for our Church's ills. I expect congregational churches to multiply. MY sympathies are with them also. I do not advocate that every member of his existing church should join a congregational church. God has to tell you your duty. Situations are different. The Church itself creates many congregational churches where there is oppression. But the attitude of Jesus must be ours. He only gave up when He was forced to give up. It is all right to be made a martyr of, but you must not make a martyr of yourself. Never. We must follow Christ's way. His way is to have little cells of penetrating salt.

Throughout this country of America, there are thousands and thousands of cell Christian groups. Sometimes in large churches, there may be ten of these cells. In other smaller churches, there may be two or only one. The way they operate is this: they refuse to have more than

12 members. The original cell only had 12. Even that 12 was broken up into smaller cells, on occasion when they went two by two. When Jesus spoke about the presence of the Holy Spirit, He said "Where there are two or three". Now the way the most efficient churches of the world are operating today is on the cell plan. Where there are cell groups of 10 to 12, people who are very much in earnest about the Christian life, who want to concentrate on positives, who are not going to meet together to discuss the ills of the brethren, who will meet together to be cross-centered, Christ-centered, gospel-centered, practical. They meet together in order to gain strength to go out. We are here to penetrate the world. We are here to win a world to Christ. It is a post-Christian age.

The purpose of cell groups is to so immerse ourselves in the scriptures that we'll then be encouraged to go and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. When Jesus spoke about the keys that unlock heaven, He was saying there is no hope for the world unless little gospel groups use the key of the gospel to open heaven to sinner. And, if I don't use that key, some may be lost. These cell groups are in all denominations. They are not even restricted to Protestants. I don't know whether you know it, but there are more divisions in Catholicism than in Protestantism. That may seem strange to you that there are groups that reject the authority of the pope, that many have come to see that there is no basis in scripture for any sort of a hierarchy in the church. The New Testament doesn't give us any church polity. The New Testament gives us no finely spun out rules about the organization of the church, but it does forbid a hierarchy. "He that is senior will be as the youngest." In other words, all ye are brethren. It is quite appropriate to elect leaders, provided the leaders are among you as them that serve. Once they cease to serve, they are no longer leaders. A hierarchy that refuses service as from equals to equals is not the New Testament pattern.

Christ would have cell groups develop, of 10 or 12 members, groups to study the Word, that will make Christ preeminent, who will study the gospel in all that they do, groups that will have a hierarchy of values rather than of leadership--groups that have learned to make a world of a world and an atom of an atom, and refuses to reverse this.

We may laugh at the River Brethren who split into the "wash feet and dry feet" divisions. But some of us come from backgrounds rather similar. A Christian is someone who is pretty hard on himself, but he's not so on others. You have a legalist when you have the opposite, one who is hard on others and easy on himself. It is perfectly appropriate to have as many rules for yourself as you wish, but don't inflict them on everybody else. It tells us in I Timothy 4, "train yourselves in godliness." That person is not a Christian who does not discipline his time, that doesn't discipline his energies, that doesn't know where his money is going. It is quite all right to spend, but it is a sin to spend without knowing how you are spending. A Christian knows that nothing he has is his own, it is all to be used to promote the gospel.

Now for a warning in the matter of organizing the cell groups. If cells are over-organized, you have reverted to the same problem you are trying to get away from. There has to be a simplicity of structure whereby 10 or 12 or less agree to meet together at a set time. You'd be surprised at some of the times where American groups meet. There are hundreds upon hundreds that meet at 5:30 in the morning, others that meet at 6:30 in the morning, there are large groups that meet at 5:30 in the evening, the time between the close of work and the family time. It is unwise for such a group to meet for much longer than an hour to an hour and a half. You should have a set time to close and be consistent in closing it on time. There must be in every such cell group, prayer, study, discussion. None should be omitted. It should all be done with a consciousness that unless the Lord is recognized in the presence of His Spirit, unless there is an attitude of openness and willingness and love and reverence, the Lord Himself can't work. In a cell group, it will be remembered that the Word without the Spirit is dead. And the Spirit without the Word is dumb. So, we are to flee from both extremes. In Genesis one, the chapter of Holy Writ where God works the wonders of creation, you have the Word and the Spirit working together. In every true cell group, it must be that way.

So, what are we suggesting? We have suggested to you some principles. One, there is no such thing as a pure church. Two, most people who attend church are not fully committed Christians, so don't expect to see the whole church ever revived, as it will never happen. Three, new groups once large repeat the faults and failures of the groups from which they pulled out. We have said you can have a true church even though it is not a pure church, where the ordinances are practiced, church discipline is administered and there is freedom of conscience in teaching the Word for both clergy and laity. When I say clergy, that is a concession. The Bible knows nothing about clergy. The Bible is not anti-clergy, it is anti-lay, by which I mean the Bible says, "we are all priests".

The remedy which Christ proposed wasn't a sudden laying of the ax to the root of the tree, but a calling out of disciplined Gideon bands, dedicated, disciplined, that would meet together to gain strength to go out. That text that speaks about "I'll build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it", we nearly always read wrongly. We think that it means that the gates of hell will beat on the church, but the church will somehow stand up. That is not what it means. It means the church will go out as a commando force right to the gates of hell and storm them. That's what it means. We only have a place to meet in order to go out. Life is to be between the mountain and the multitude.

A brother once came to church and said, "Is the service over?" They were all coming out. The first man out of the church said, "Oh no, the service is about to begin. It is just the meeting that is over."

I want to draw your attention to a text in Colossians 3:12. "Put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience, forbearing one another, and if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in the one body." That's the body of the church. We are all brethren--those who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ--whether of the Salvation Army, or Methodists, or Presbyterians, or Roman Catholics, or Pentecostals. If their sole faith and hope is in the Calvary of Christ, the merits of the Son of God who died for us, such believers are in the church of God, and they are our brethren and sisters. The mark whereby we recognize them is not their creed, even if they can spell "justification" perfectly. This text tells us the mark. Love. Opinions may be wrong, but love never is. So cherish love above and beyond all mere opinions, and then the true church of Christ will penetrate the world.

WILL YOU BE A BUTCHER OR A SURGEON?

(Chapter 16)

Transcript of Edited Sermon by Desmond Ford

The human heart craves and its mind demands better bread than can be made from flour. By which we mean that we have a tendency to idealize which ignores some elements of reality. This applies to almost everything except our own ideals for personal character development where we are content with much less than we demand of other people and other situations.

Nowhere is this tendency better illustrated than in religion. Because the march of truth is ever onward, and because the disclosure of new truth always means the unmasking of traditional errors, poor human nature is tried to the utmost in this process. What is it to do with a hoary system of belief cherished by the fathers when new light shows up cracks in the once-cherished ideological structure? Should one react with anger and frustration casting out the whole affair, or should one carefully examine "brick" after "brick", retaining what is sound and only discarding what is obviously unsound? That is to say, if we can use metaphors, should there be butchery or surgery? Demolition or repair?

Some of us are for surgery rather than butchery, and for the following reasons:

1. Butchery destroys the baby as well as the bath water.
2. Butchery naively assumes that after its work is done there will remain a perfect body of truth never requiring further treatment.
3. Butchery forgets that its primary motivation is not the pure love of truth, but anger that it should have been duped at least in part.
4. Butchery forgets that wherever there is sin, there is likewise error, and that therefore everything human throughout all time is tainted.
5. Butchery forgets the wonder of the love of God which leads Him to use what is less than perfect, and to accept what is in itself unacceptable.
6. Butchery usually has an excessive legalistic temperament, and one that concentrates on externals and mere intellectual forms rather than the "meek and quiet spirit" which is the fruit of the gospel. It is more concerned with heterodoxy than with heteropraxy--with mental stereotypes rather than faith, hope and love. It thus cherishes the gnostic heresy of the primacy of knowledge and will lose the Tree of Life because of its lusting excessively after the Tree of Knowledge.

Most of these points are self-evident, but we will enlarge on the others. For example, consider point four, that wherever there is sin, there is likewise error, and that therefore everything human throughout all time is tainted and always less than the ideal. Or to put it another way--infallibility for human beings or movements is a chimera. It is not available to poor sinful human nature. Consider the wise words of Dr. Salmon:

Thus, with respect to Christ's promises that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church, that He would be with it always, even to the end of the world, and so forth, we see what they do not mean. We see that they contained no pledge that ungodliness should never assault His Church; that overflowing wickedness should not abound in her; nay, that monsters of impiety and immorality should not be seen sitting in her highest places. The question is, therefore, whether God hates error so very much more than He hates sin, that He has taken precautions against the entrance of the one which He has not seen fit to use in order to guard against the other. We hold that what He has done in both cases is strikingly parallel. First, His great gift to His people, that of the Holy Spirit, is equally their safeguard against sin and against error. He is equally the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Holiness. It is His office to inform our understandings, by taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us; and to direct our wills, and make them conformed to that of Christ. And the means He uses for both ends are the same. The Scriptures are equally guides to truth and to holiness. They make us wise unto salvation. They are "a light unto our feet. and a lamp unto our paths". "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word". And the Church also is used by the Holy Ghost, both as a witness and guardian of Christian truth and an instructor in Christian morality. She has been called... "the pillar and ground of the truth". And she has certainly been in the world a preacher of righteousness. And yet the use of all these means has not banished either sin or error from the world. Even those "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" are still not impeccable. Signs of human frailty betray themselves in the conduct of men whom we must own to be good men--not merely good with natural amiability, but really sanctified by the Spirit of God. And those who have so been guided are no more infallible than they are impeccable. In proportion, indeed, as they live close to God, and seek by prayer for the Spirit's guidance, so will their spiritual discernment increase. They whose will it is to do His will are made by Him to know of the doctrine whether it be of Him. But yet, as their holiness falls short of perfection, so also does their knowledge. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves"; and if we say that we have no error, we deceive ourselves no less. And since not only may individuals fall into sin, but... ungodliness may overspread the Church widely, so we see no reason to doubt that not only individuals may err, but Christians collectively, or large bodies of them may make doctrinal mistakes. The analogy I have been insisting on between the understanding and the will, and the operation of God's Spirit on both, is of the utmost importance in this controversy.

The Infallibility of the Church, pp. 103-4

When Alexander Reese wrote a protest against the errors of dispensationalism he spoke of Darby as sponsoring a doctrine of a secret, pre-tribulation Rapture. He then comments:

This has been attributed to demoniac influence. I think Christians would be well advised to abstain from such accusations. They are quite gratuitous, and generally based on misconceptions. The imperfection of the human mind, and its tendency to err or be

fanciful, are a sufficient explanation.

The Approaching Advent of Christ, pp. 316-7

A little thought lends support to Reese's contention. From the Brethren movement have come doctrines which have cost the lives of thousands. (At the time of the Communist threat in China, dispensationalist missionaries told believers it was unnecessary to flee, as their rapture would precede the great tribulation.) Yet, from this same group have come such men as George Mueller, Hudson Taylor, S. Tregelles, H. Moorhouse, F. F. Bruce, etc.--godly Christians unsurpassed anywhere. Darby himself was declared by Sir Robert Anderson (the Head of England's Scotland Yard who had fellowshipped with Prime Ministers such as Gladstone) to be "the greatest man I ever met". It is always much easier to be critical than correct. Frequently it is true that "those who can--do; while those who cannot--criticize." Christians who believe themselves to be reformers following advanced light should be of all people the most courteous and kind, remembering that harsh criticism never accomplishes true reformation.

To return to the matter of infallibility so crucial for our right understanding of religious groups and ideological constructs, we quote Christian philosopher Elton Trueblood:

It is as much an evil to say that we know the truth perfectly as it is to say that there is no truth to know.

The doctrine of necessary fallibility is the philosophical equivalent of the religious doctrine of original sin. This latter doctrine asserts with much factual evidence to support it, that a chronic sinfulness dogs our steps at every point, especially in our claims to virtue, which are tainted with the sin of pride. Every human institution, no matter how noble its aims, is inevitably involved in the struggle for power and prestige, and this, so far as we can see, is not likely to be lessened with the passage of centuries. In short, sin is not a matter of cultural lag but is intrinsic to the situation, part of the price which man pays for his self-consciousness and relative freedom from external constraint. Just as all our efforts to be virtuous are tainted with sin, so all our efforts to achieve the truth are liable to error. We correct some errors only to make others, frequently making one in the very act of correcting another. We are very small; our grasp of reality is very slight; to claim anything else is to be arrogant and presumptuous

Any religious doctrine which claims infallibility, whether it be that of Biblical inerrancy or papal claims or any other, is bound in the end to fail to sustain itself intellectually because it runs head on into the fact of human failure. We are always in the finite predicament, even when we are most religious, and often especially when we are most religious. If our human capacity to err needs any demonstration, it is given to us constantly by the fact that we have to reconstruct our theories and reassess our facts. The changes that are necessary, as results of further insight, include not only the physical world but the spiritual world also.

It is conceivable that, by some miracle, God could make an exception to liability to error by creating an infallible Bible or an infallible papacy, but how could we ever know that this is the case? Infallibility necessarily includes not only an infallible revelation but the infallibility of the human mind to judge that revelation. It is helpful to realize that the Bible never asserts its own infallibility. Even if there were some institutions which had never made any mistakes, in precisely defined areas of inerrancy, how could we know that must always be the case or is intrinsically the case? In the nature of things the future is not yet, and the evidence is never all in.

Philosophy of Religion, pp. 42-43

The whole of church history illustrates the truth we are considering. There never has been a religious movement nor a religious leader free from error. Read the first verses of Acts as regards the Apostles, and such epistles as 1 Corinthians and 3 John as regards the Church. At no time or place was there a pure apostolic church either in doctrine or practice. The first Jewish Christians had a "shut-door" dogma which excluded gentile believers for years. Similarly the Reformers insisted on a shut-door principle which isolated the greater percentage of mankind from the mercy of God. They called it predestination. Similarly, the great Methodist movement was plagued by error--the error of perfectionism and instantaneous sanctification. Among the Baptists, even such giants as G. C. Spurgeon insisted that the Almighty one day would consign most of mankind to an ever-burning hell.

Even the biblical prophets fell short of infallibility and perfection. John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets according to Jesus, had less understanding of the kingdom of heaven than the youngest convert after Pentecost. He expected the Messiah to put an axe to the tree of human rebellion immediately and usher in the kingdom of glory. Thus his doubts as to whether Jesus really was the Messiah.

When R. H. Charles wrote his monumental study on the Apocalypse, he gave the following reminder: (compare with the facts re the Salamanca vision)

...the visions are of an elaborate and complicated nature, and the more exalted and intense the experience, the more incapable it becomes of literal description. Moreover, if we believe, as the present writer does, that behind these visions there is an actual substratum of reality belonging to the higher spiritual world, then the seer could grasp the things seen and heard in such visions, only insofar as he was equipped for the task by his psychical powers and the spiritual development behind him. In other words, he could at the best only partially apprehend the significance of the heavenly vision vouchsafed him. To the things seen he perforce attached the symbols more or less transformed that these naturally evoked in his mind, symbols that he owed to his own waking experience of the tradition of the past; and the sounds he heard naturally clothed themselves under a twofold disability. His psychical powers were generally unequal to the task of apprehending the full meaning of the heavenly vision, and his powers of expression were frequently unable to set forth the things he had apprehended.

Revelation, I, cvi-cvii

Others besides Charles have often written in this vein that we might perceive the truth that even inspired writers can fall short of the exact truth. Caird writes as follows:

The inspiration of the prophet, then, is no isolated phenomenon. The same human nature is involved in all forms of the "divine madness", and in each case imposes its own limitations and imperfections. A man is not necessarily a good husband because he has fallen in love; other factors enter in. An artist who has been gripped by a vision of beauty does not produce a masterpiece without sound judgment, precise craftsmanship, and hard work. An inspired idea does not evolve into a new scientific theory independently of the technical training and the mental equipment of the scientist. The prophet is before all else a man, and it is by

the heightening of his normal human faculties that he attains his depth of insight. But like all men he is fallible. He may imperfectly understand the word that is spoken to him. He may lack the interpretative powers to make clear to others what he has seen. Though he be far in advance of his age, he cannot wholly divest himself of the ways of thought in which he has been brought up

It is an almost blasphemous error to suppose that God was directly responsible for every word of the Bible.... The Bible comes to us through men of limited understanding, who could and did make mistakes. But through all the imperfections of the messengers there rings the authentic note of the divine message.

The Truth of the Gospel, pp. 58-59

Edward Fudge of the group known as The Churches of Christ has recently published excellent counsel to those of his own denomination who believe that God raised them up as a special remnant entrusted with distinctive truths. His words apply to all who pride themselves on their special spiritual heritage, but also to those now disenchanting with that same heritage.

Christ must be our message, not a historical movement or an idealistic church. In discussing the true gospel ministry Paul said: "We do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord" (2 Cor. 4:5). There is a great tendency in any restoration movement to do the very thing Paul here renounces. It is very easy to preach the church (ourselves) instead of Jesus Christ. This may take at least three forms. First, one can preach an idealized church of the ancient past, directing men's attention to a hypothetical dream which never existed on earth in the first place. Second, one can preach his own historical movement or fellowship within church history instead of preaching Jesus Christ. God's kingdom is far greater than any religious movement, in any country, in any century. Third, one can preach the theory of a pure church (which, given the power of sin, is an impossible dream, since there will always be tares among the wheat) rather than preaching Jesus Christ.

One has only to read the Book of Acts to see the content of the earliest Christian preaching. That message concerned a Savior, not a competitive church system. Regardless of where they began, all roads finally led to Jesus Christ. Today we must also preach the Son of God, not sinful men of the past or the present

We must realize that we, like all others around us, are a part of history. Our movement did not drop out of the clear blue sky. It had roots, ancestors, environment, just as all movements do among men.

We can give thanks for every insight our forefathers gained into the Scriptures. But we dare neither to stop where they did nor to assume that they were right in all their own judgments and teaching. The same may be said for the great evangelists, editors and debaters of the past one hundred years, who probably have shaped the movement today far more than any of the original... pioneers.

We can recover the sense of being a "movement" in at least two respects. We can remember first that we belong to the church universal and at best make a contribution within that larger picture. Second, we can remember that one never "restores" unless he keeps "moving". Many today have dropped out on both counts. It is unmitigated hypocrisy for anyone to urge all his religious neighbors: "Just go by the Bible, regardless of what your parents, church, or anyone else has ever taught you to be", then respond to his own critics within by intoning "What faithful gospel preachers have always taught"! Our children are neither blind nor deaf to such foolishness, and those we have taught to be honest will reject it outright. Still some will shake their heads and ask why so many are "leaving the old paths".

Our "identity" must finally be no more than that of any faithful Christian in any age of the world. Separated from trusting faith in Jesus Christ, "distinctives" are worse than worthless. They also instill self-righteousness and compete with the true gospel. In the day of Judgment there will be no point in bringing God a package of tracts proving our "soundness", or dragging in a bundle of arguments that state our "identity" and distinguish our "distinctives". Nothing we can bring will see us through that Day. We can only point then to the sinless Son of God, slain for our sins and raised for our Justification. Better to lighten our baggage now in preparation for what will then be inevitable! We can appreciate our history (everyone has one) by keeping it in perspective.

Today the... Movement resembles a venerable family that has occupied the same house for many generations. The rooms are comfortable, the furnishings are familiar, and the attic is full of fascinating memorabilia. But Spring has come, and it is time for a thorough housecleaning. Filled with youthful idealism and ideas drawn from other homes, some of the children impatiently expect radical renovation. They are ready to throw out everything that is old, to ignore the past altogether, to forget their family heritage both good and bad.

Some of the older heads wisely restrain them from such drastic action. They agree to a thorough cleansing, but ask that each room be examined individually and on its own merit. Some of the heirlooms are worth saving! And there are a few doughty aunts and uncles who have grown hard of hearing and dim of sight. They know where everything is, enjoy the familiarity of it all, and would prefer that nothing be disturbed. A light dusting will suffice, so far as they are concerned.

So it is in religious movements.... we wish to imitate the wiser family members who encourage housecleaning, but wish to combine thoroughness with caution. God has given the men and women of the... Movement certain valid insights.... But it would be foolish and naive indeed to suppose that no dust has settled, no broken antiques have been closeted, no trash has mistakenly been mixed with the treasures.

The Restoration Movement Fulfilled in Jesus Christ, *passim*. (emphasis ours)

And this counsel but echoes that of the New Testament itself which all can read in 1 Thess. 5:19-21. Which would you rather be--butcher or surgeon? And which would God prefer you to be?

The Tide is Sure to Win

On the far reef, the breakers recoil in shattered foam,
While still the sea behind them urges its forces home;
Its song of triumph surges o'er all the thunderous din;
The waves may break in failure; but the tide is sure to win.

The reef is strong and cruel; upon its jagged wall,
One wave, a score, a hundred broken fall;
Yet in defeat they conquer; the sea comes flooding in;
Wave upon wave is routed, but the tide is sure to win.

O mighty sea! Thy message in clanging spray is cast;
Within God's plan of progress, it matters not at last
How wide the shores of evil, how strong the reefs of sin,
The waves may be defeated, **BUT THE TIDE IS SURE TO WIN!**

Anon.

APPENDIX

(The pages following have been taken from the Glacier View manuscript. The complete printed volume including a post-Glacier View preface is available from Desmond Ford publications, 7955 Bullard Drive, Newcastle Ca 95658, for \$15 which includes postage.)

Few realize the comprehensive nature of the Glacier View manuscript. It deals not only with Daniel 8:14 but with many of the major theological problems that have confronted Adventism and continue so to do.

The volume has a fascinating account of over 100 years of challenges to the traditional view of the Investigative Judgment. In reviewing the history of men such as Ballenger, Conradi, Fletcher, and groups such as the two Daniel committees which wrestled for years with the problems, little known documents from the denominational Archives are brought to light. Some of the letters by denominational leaders including Daniells, Spicer, W. White, F.D. Nichol and many others cast much light on present problems as well as those of the past.

Extracts in this appendix constitute only about one percent of the original volume. All who wish to have at their finger-tips the entire range of evidence on issues relating to Adventism, the everlasting gospel and the significance of the sanctuary should secure the complete work now in print under the title of Daniel 8:14, The Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment. This sympathetic treatment of the issues will increase your confidence in the providential leading of God despite human frailties.

Over 150 pages of the printed edition of the Glacier view manuscript deal with the issues surrounding Ellen G. White. Questions answered include the following:

Does the authority of Ellen G. White supersede that of Scripture?

Is the authority of E.G. White on a par with that of Scripture?

Is E.G. White the interpreter of Scripture?

Is E.G. White inerrant?

How were the E.G. White books prepared?

Did E.G. White ever change any of her own doctrinal positions?

Where did the substance of the GC chapters on the sanctuary originate?

Was E.G. White correct in endorsing Aug. 11, 1840?

What factor in A.T. Jones view of inspiration contributed to his fall?

How did Daniells and Spicer view the relation of EGW to Scripture?

Have we for many years avoided a number of fundamental questions?

Why are many scandalized by the report that EGW used scores of sources?

(The following extracts deal only with the sanctuary issue, and E.G.W.)

CHRONOLOGICAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE YEAR-DAY PRINCIPLE

Big doors swing on little hinges, we have often been reminded. It is true in all doctrinal structures. Some of Adventism's distinctive teachings rest upon the genuineness of the year-day principle. Though one would never guess this from our literature -- for the principle is ever assumed rather than proved. Take away the year-day principle and what would happen to 1798, Aug. 11, 1840, and Oct. 22, 1844?

Let it first be made clear that Adventists did not invent the year-day method of exegeting apocalyptic chronological prophecies. Theirs was an inheritance from centuries back. Jews not long after Christ taught that in prophetic symbolism a day represented a year, and by the time the Reformation was established so was this hermeneutical dictum.

But there are problems we should frankly acknowledge. This present writer believes that it was in the providence of God that the year-day principle was espoused after the Advent hope of the early church had faded away. Prophecy had been so written that what could have quickly been fulfilled would also match the march of centuries if God's people tarried in the discharge of their task. But now our prophetic termini are far back in the past -- and nothing has happened since. It is time to look again at the evidence.

Where is the proof for the year-day principle? Num. 14:34 and Eze. 4:6 and Dan. 9:24-27 are usually volunteered, but these certainly do not yield what is demanded of them. (None of these passages state it as a rule for all symbolic prophecy that a day signifies a year. Num. 14:34 is not symbolic prophecy, and it speaks of *years* in the future -- not days. In Eze. 4:6 the years are in the past, and actual days ahead are contemplated. Dan. 9:24, as with Dan. 8, does not use the word "day." The Hebrew term translated "weeks" is actually "sevens," and is not related to days at all.) To that we will turn shortly. *But first, of much greater importance is the whole weight of New Testament testimony that God's ideal plan was that Jesus should have returned in the first century AD, not long after His ascension to heaven. This is clearly taught from Matthew to Revelation and recognized by the vast majority of New Testament scholars.* The fact helps us to understand why Hebrews could apply the Day of Atonement to Christ's ascension "within the veil" and promise that soon He would emerge to bless those who outside in the earthly courtyard were eagerly looking for Him. See Heb. 9:26-28. (See Westcott and other commentators who so apply Heb. 9:27, 28.)

This thought should not be revolutionary. Ellen G. White says it clearly in *Prophets and Kings* 703-704. What we are now doing to warn the world in order that the eternal kingdom might be set up was originally the task of Israel after the return from Babylon, and should have been fulfilled by the end of the seventy weeks of years. Our own *SDA Bible Commentary* is also emphatic that the end of all things should have come in the first century. (See *SDABC* 7:729.) But the real evidence is within Scripture itself.

IS THE YEAR-DAY PRINCIPLE COMPATIBLE WITH A FIRST CENTURY END OF THE WORLD?

Consider the following passages:

Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place. (Matt. 24:34 RSV)

When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes. (Matt. 10:23 RSV)

Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Matt. 16:28 RSV)

The saying spread abroad among the brethren that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" (John 21:23 RSV)

Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ.... (Acts 3:19, 20 RSV)

Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. (Rom. 13:11, 12 RSV)

I mean, brethren, the appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the form of this world is passing away. (1 Cor. 7:29-31 RSV)

Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come. (1 Cor. 10:11 RSV)

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days... (Heb. 1:1 RSV)

For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Heb. 9:26 RSV)

Children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come; therefore we know that it is the last hour. (1 John 2:18 RSV)

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. (James 5:1-3, 8, 9 RSV)

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to her servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John.... Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are

those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near. (Rev. 1:1, 3 RSV)

Let us give special attention to Matt. 24:34. The blacksmith's sign: "All sorts of twistings and turnings done here" is appropriate to the exegesis usually applied to this text. But *the evidence is overwhelming that Christ was saying He planned to return to that very generation He was addressing.*

The decisive fact is that the expression "this generation" occurs fourteen times in the gospels, and always refers to Christ's contemporaries. The context itself is clear enough. The siege of Jerusalem spoken of in verse 15 launches a terrible time of trouble -- see verse 21. It is quite impossible to legitimately separate the great tribulation from the attack on Jerusalem. Next, we read verse 29 which assures us that immediately after the terrible days of Jerusalem's suffering there would be signs in the heavens climaxed by Christ's own appearance in the clouds of heaven.

When we turn to what was probably the original version of the Olivet discourse -- Mark 13 -- the case is at least as strong. The description of verses 24-27 is today overwhelmingly taken as applying to the end of the age and the Parousia. The verses stand in strong contrast to the merely terrestrial phenomena of verse 7 forward. The convulsion of the heavens appears to be a fitting accompaniment of the manifestation of the Son of Man to the world which has rejected Him. Vincent Taylor writes, "In the light of 5f (wars, earthquakes, famines) and 26 (the coming of the Son of Man with clouds), it seems probable that objective phenomena are meant."²¹ The "gathering of Israel" is frequently pictured in the Old Testament as an event of the end-time. See Isa. 60:4ff, Micah 4:1-7, etc. There does not seem to have been any plainer language Christ could have used to convey the message of the Son of Man's literal coming than verse 26. We must ask those who apply this verse and its context metaphorically -- just how *could* Christ have made the point of His return, if words as clear as these are capable of another meaning? We would also inquire whether the New Testament teaching on the resurrection and the age to come is not evaporated by such exegesis. While it is true that the fall of Jerusalem helped the young church to attain independence, it remains to be doubted whether those Christians persecuted after AD 70 considered themselves to be in the age of glory.

Each and all of the statements preceding and succeeding the picture of the Son of Man coming in the clouds, bear witness to significance of this central description. The great tribulation, described as occurring just before the convulsion of the heavens, is linked with "the time of the end" in its Old Testament source. See Dan. 12:1-4. Verse 32, by its reference to *he hemera ekeine* pinpoints the event of the great day of Yahweh so often referred to in the prophets,²² while the parables of the fig tree and the master of the house, which bracket the reference to *he hemera ekeine* echo the need for alertness in view of its proximity.²³

The case is similarly overwhelming for the interpretation of verses 14-19 as local and historical. V.G. Simkhovitch long ago lunged at the heart of the matter when he asked, "If it refers to the end of the world, what difference does it make whether that end is to come in the winter or in the summer?"²⁴ And C.H. Dodd in similar vein affirmed that the description in these verses fits precisely a condition of besiegement.²⁵

Unless these verses have reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, Christ has not truly replied to the inquiry from His disciples which provoked the discourse. Furthermore, the setting of this passage in Mark's Gospel is particularly important as scholars recognize. Christ had warned the church leaders of His day that they were shortly to witness the judgment of God.²⁶ The temple had been declared abandoned.²⁷ It is then that we have the announcement to the disciples regarding the dissolution of the sacred building. Because Mark has given Christ's prophecy with this context, it is an immediate presumption that the discourse discusses the very issue which raised it, and in the manner of the prophets rather than that of the apocalyptists. Chapter 11 to 15 each refer to the temple, and such an extended description of its fate as 13:14-19 might have been expected.

What should be said of the view that the discourse includes both the crisis of AD 70 and the greater crisis at the end of the world, yet separates them one from the other? (Scholars who have taken this view include W. Beyschlag, F. Godet, E.F.K. Muller, A.B. Bruce, B. Rigaux, C. Cranfield, and G.E. Ladd.)

Not all who see both the end of Jerusalem and the end of the age in this same chapter, interpret it along identical lines. Lagrange and Rigaux, for example, differ considerably. The former considers the arrangement of Mark 13 to be the work of the Evangelist as he blended two discourses of Christ, one concerning the ruin of the temple, and the other the Second Advent. Not so Regaux, who holds that the two perspectives were indissolubly united by Christ in the single presentation. Cranfield's position is similar to Rigaux's. He says: "Neither an exclusively historical nor an exclusively eschatological interpretation is satisfactory, ... we must allow for a double reference, for a mingling of historical and eschatological."²⁸

From a faith standpoint such viewpoints may seem acceptable, but exegetically they are hardly tolerable. Some commentators, for example, point to the twofold question of Matt. 24:3. But when one takes into consideration the accounts of the same inquiry found in Mark and Luke, it is evident that the disciples had in view a single event only, of which the fall of Jerusalem was a significant part. (Matthew probably distinguished the two events because, at the time he wrote, the first had already transpired.) Note the parallelism in Mark 13:4.

pote - ti/to semeion

tauta - tauta panta

estai - melle sunteleisthai

In effect, the question of the disciples is, "When will this take place, and what will be the sign of it?"

The most obvious difficulty for commentators of this school, particularly those who view the discourse as separating the two crises, is finding the precise point of division between the two. Some select verse 24, but it is obviously tied to the preceding verse. Others prefer verse 20, despite its obvious link with verse 19. Still others fix upon verse 21, but only by ignoring *tote* in this same verse, which links the statement to the preceding and following passages. The majority settle for verse 19 despite the fact that *hai hamerai ekainai* connects the verse to the previous description.

It must ever be kept in mind that verse 24 which introduces the Parousia is riveted just as closely to the tribulation heralded by the coming of the *bdelugma* against Jerusalem, and without any hint of a separating chasm of centuries.

Mark 13:30 must be understood as belonging to a similar genre as Jonah's "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Here was the fiat of the Almighty to Nineveh. Hardly could a prediction be more definite as to what and when. The whole book of Jonah revolves around

it. Yet the forty days passed, and according to the narrator, Nineveh still pointed its proud towers to the heavens. Jonah was certainly angry, but he was not surprised. He seems rather to have anticipated it. "I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repentant of evil."

Jonah was familiar with the principles expressed in later days by Jeremiah and Ezekiel:

If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will repent of the evil that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will repent of the good which I had intended to do to it. (Jer. 18:7-10 RSV)

Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die for it; for the iniquity which he has committed he shall die. Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is lawful and right, he shall save his life. (Eze. 18:25-27 RSV)

Another Old Testament example is that of Isaiah's words to Hezekiah, "Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order; for you shall die, and you shall not recover" (Isa. 38:1). Hezekiah did not die. He did recover, and lived another fifteen years.

The New Testament also yields us several examples of this principle. Consider the following case:

As they had been long without food, Paul then came forward among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and should not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. I now bid you take heart; for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and lo, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. But we shall have to run on some island." When the fourteenth night had come, as we were drifting across the sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. So they sounded and found twenty fathoms; a little farther on they sounded again and found fifteen fathoms. And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let out four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the boat into the sea, under the pretence of laying out anchors from the bow, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." (Acts 27:21-31 RSV)

The point in this story, of course, is that Paul did not act as though the divine prediction was an absolute pronouncement. He seemed rather to believe that the reckless wickedness of a dozen men could change the divine purpose toward the remaining three score.

We have another example in Acts 21:10-14 RSV:

While we were staying for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us he took Paul's girdle and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this girdle and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" When we heard this, we and the people there begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, "The will of the Lord be done."

In this instance, Paul's Christian friends did not regard the prophecy as of inevitable fulfilment. Instead they treated it as a kindly warning whereby the disaster might be averted. This is the Christian and Jewish view of prophecy, in contrast of that of the Oriental fatalists.

The parable of the unmerciful servant in Matt. 18 has often occasioned difficulty. How could the master of the house (representing God, see verse 35), forgive his slave the debt of ten thousand talents and yet later change his mind toward him? But no problem exists, as we take the preceding examples into account. The Biblical view of prophecy is that a forecast is not necessarily a prediction to be fulfilled at all hazards. Rather, a prediction of disaster is a hint in order that proper steps might be taken to avert the evil. Similarly a prediction of blessing is an encouragement, that there might be perseverance in a right course. This view of the conditional nature of prophecy was not devised to meet the problem of Mark 13:30. It has long been held and applied to many sections of the Scripture. Some modern exegetes have seen its relevance for the present issue. Possibly C.F.D. Moule had this in mind when he commented on Mark 13:30 as follows: "... he might have been absolutely right if he had said what verses 30-31 say; for there is a sense in which great prophets see so clearly and expect so eagerly... what might happen if only men responded..." (*The Gospel According to Mark* [Cambridge, 1965], 103). See particularly the discussion in Gatton's *No Stone on Another*, 425f; and J. Hempel's *Die Mehrdeutigkeit der Geschichte als Problem der prophetischen Theologie* (Gottingen, 1936), 41.

R.A. Knox speaks similarly:

By a rather free interpretation of the language used you can just maintain that our Lord spoke *only* about the destruction of Jerusalem, and tacitly refused information about the Second Coming. By supposing that the Evangelists here, as elsewhere, include one or two sayings which really belonged to a different context, you can save the accuracy of the prediction, but at the same time you rob it of all certainty. Is it possible to preserve the unity of the passage, and at the same time to interpret its phrases in their natural sense? Only on the supposition that this was a conditional prophecy (cf. Jonah 3:4 and 10) and that the condition of it, namely the conversion of the Jews remained and still remains unfulfilled (cf. Rom. 11:22 and notes on 2 Thess. 2:6). In this way we can see the picture as a continuous whole, and at the same time understand why the fulfilment of it has only been partial.²⁹

G.B. Caird has something to say along the same lines:

Jesus clearly indicated that in its final manifestation the Day was known only to God, not because God had fixed a date which He guarded as a close secret, but because the coming of the Day was contingent upon the full realization of the purposes of God...³⁰

The Jew was able to take in his stride paradoxes which have perplexed Gentiles ancient and modern. Where we should make a guarded statement, the Semitic mind prefers to throw together two extreme statements and allow the one to qualify the other. The prophets repeatedly declare God's irrevocable judgment on human sin, and almost in the same breath call on men to repent before it is too late.³¹

Caird also quotes from J. Paterson: "Many things were foretold precisely that they might not come to pass."³² In this connection, the words of A.L. Moore are also worth consideration. He says: "Only the motif of grace withholds that which properly belongs to the complex of eschatological events which ended with the Ascension and Exaltation."³³

An unusually frank commentator was Herman Olshausen. It seemed his habit to acknowledge difficulties, and to confess the inadequacy of current explanations. Concerning Mark 13:30 he wrote: "... we do not hesitate to adopt... the simple interpretation -- and the only one consistent with the text -- that Jesus did intend to represent His coming as contemporaneous with the destruction of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish polity."³⁴ His editor did not agree with him, and saw fit to indicate this by a footnote. But the same Olshausen took pains to introduce his exegetical comments on Matt. 24 by a preparatory note regarding the contingent nature of prophecy. His measured statements afford a reasoned philosophy for his own approach -- a philosophy which he felt was drawn from Scripture itself. See appendix, "Studies in the Book of Daniel (R. Cottrell)."

It is certain that Christ and His contemporaries were well aware of contingent promises recorded by Moses and the prophets. Had not Yahweh promised to take the captive Israelites direct from Egypt to Canaan -- a distance requiring less than a fortnight's journeying? And had not that same generation wandered outside Canaan for forty years and then failed of entrance? See Number 14:34 margin.

We submit that the exegesis of Mark 13:30 is only complete if we allow for the possibility that Christ, as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, may have used an absolute statement with less than an absolute meaning, in harmony with those Scriptures He so implicitly trusted. He believed that if the early church proved faithful to its missionary commission, and if the chastened Jewish nation repented, the end would transpire in that same age. It is this linking of the gospel proclamation to the world with the end of the age that provides the hint of the contingent element. Such proclamation would be dependent upon the wholehearted dedication of the church. An uncertain human element is involved.

Part of our problem is that one half of the denomination does not know what the other half is saying. Our own *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, as already shown, agrees with this position, and sets it forth at several points. The *Daniel* quarterly of 1967 teaches the same. More recently (April, 1979) Dr. Don Neufeld has written to the same effect in the *Review*. Richard Coffen points out that even among our pioneers there were some who recognized this principle:

Other Adventist authors have also stressed the conditionality of prophecy. J.N. Andrews in *The Sanctuary and Twenty-three Hundred Days*, second edition, pp. 5, 9, quotes Bliss' *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, pp. 7, 8, which sets forth the principle of conditional prophecy. J.H. Waggoner in *Refutation of the Doctrine Called the Age to Come*, second edition, p. 92, refers to conditional prophecy. E.A. Sutherland in *Living Fountains or Broken Cisterns*, p. 81, suggests that had Israel been faithful, earth's history would have been shortened by at least 2,000 years.

Martin Buber calls conditionality the 'prophetic theologem' of Hebrew prophecy, though Buber refuses to apply the contingency principle to apocalyptic literature (*Pointing the Way*, pp. 197, 198).

The deterministic element which scholars see in apocalyptic does not necessarily vitiate conditionality in the genre. For example, certain rabbis held both concepts in tension when explaining why Messiah had not come. "Rab said: 'All the predetermined dates for redemption have passed, and the matter now depends only on repentance and good deeds.'" (Sanhedrin 97b). "R. Samuel B. Nahami said in the name of R. Johnathan: Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end Messiah's advent. For they would say, since the predetermined time has arrived, and yet He has not come, He will never come. But even so, wait for Him, as it is written, *Though He tarry, wait for Him...* What delays His coming? -- The attribute of Justice delays it [footnote: because of Israel's unworthiness of it]" (Sanhedrin 97b).

Furthermore, numerous commentators point out that determinism is not as prevalent in the Revelation as in other apocalypses. "The book of Revelation is not a book to satisfy hungry curiosity. The extent to which it reveals *what will happen* is related structurally to the revelation of *how* what will happen will happen to men according to their choices and loyalties in the present" (David W. Cain, *Religious Studies*, March 1972, 40).

"There are... in the apc exhortations and threats that do not harmonize perfectly with a purely deterministic or mechanistic conception of human history" (Pierre Prigent, *Theology Digest*, Spring 1975, 56).

"The deterministic element, though present in Revelation, never suggests man's helplessness, nor does it threaten man's freedom or responsibility. The letters to the seven churches show that John thinks that man's decisions and responses in the world do shape history as well as personal destiny" (*The Broadman Bible Commentary* 12:245).³⁵

The evidence of Matt 24:34 (Mark 13:30) makes it plain that it was no part of God's original plan for sin to endure for centuries after the cross. Prophecies such as Dan. 7:25; 8:14; Rev. 11:2; 12:16; 13:5, would have met fulfilment on a much smaller scale had the church quickly grasped the gospel and proclaimed it in its purity.

Let us turn to the evidence of the Apocalypse, as that book of Scripture has most to say about the Lord's return.

The presupposition most common to interpreters and most devastating to their exegesis is that the New Testament in general, and Revelation in particular, assumes that a gap of many centuries must necessarily intervene between the two advents of Christ. This view minimizes the significance of the first advent and the cross, however unwittingly, and assumes that the major purpose of Revelation is to predict twenty centuries of political and ecclesiastical events. J.H. Newman, from whose soteriology we strongly differ, wrote much worthy of consideration. Consider the following on the matter under discussion.

Though time intervene between Christ's first and second coming, it is not *recognized* (as I may say) in the Gospel scheme, but is, as it were, an accident. For so it was, that up to Christ's coming in the flesh, the course of things ran straight towards the end, nearing it by every step; but now, under the Gospel, that course has (if I may so speak) altered its direction, as regards His second coming, and runs, not towards the end, but along it, and on the brink of it; and is at all times near that great event, which, did it run towards it, it would at once run into. Christ, then, is ever at our doors; as near eighteen hundred years ago as now, and not nearer now than then, and not nearer when He comes than now.³⁶

Anyone who reads the New Testament from the viewpoint just expressed will find a complete harmony in its chronological statements.

Such a reader will discover that the New Testament writers viewed the first advent of Christ as the beginning of the end of the world. They did not deny the literalness of another coming of Christ but they viewed that event as an imminent completion of the End already begun.

The New Testament's last book was written to spiritually arm and prepare first century Christians for the task of the universal spread of the gospel that the end of the world might be consummated in their day!

Let us notice some plain statements from Revelation.

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants *what must soon take place*; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John... Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; *for the time is near*. (Rev. 1:1, 3)

But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay upon you any other burden; only hold fast what you have, *until I come*. (Rev. 2:24, 25)

Remember then what you received and heard; keep that, and repent. If you will not awake, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you... Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell upon the earth. *I am coming soon*; hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown... Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. (Rev. 3:3, 10, 11, 20)

And behold, *I am coming soon*... And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for *the time is near*. He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely *I am coming soon*.'" Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev. 22:7, 10, 20)

What is the meaning of these statements written in the first century -- "I am coming soon;" "the time is near;" "what must soon take place;" "if you will not awake, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you."

Many are the expedients which have been invented -- not to explain these statements, but to explain them away. The most popular explanation is to say that the events foretold are to *begin* soon. A similar line is to suggest that the end will be sudden when it comes. Another is to affirm that it is merely the certainty of the issue that is foretold, rather than the time. Yet a fourth expedient is to assert that God is speaking from *His* perspective which is vastly different from our own. A more scholarly stratagem is to admit the difficulty and then negate it by assigning all such statements to a special prophetic, apocalyptic terminology, i.e. to say that it is the manner of prophets to always affirm that the end is near. This, of course, is true. But did they always thus affirm because of a prophetic "mind-set" or could they have intended at least some of their statements to be understood at face value?

Simcox would have us believe that the purpose of the "soon" statements "is to assure us of God's practical readiness to fulfil His promises, rather than to define any limit of time for their actual fulfilment."³⁷ Swedenborg reasons in a circle as he writes, "The Apocalypse was given in the first century, and seventeen centuries have now passed away; from which it is manifest that by 'shortly' is signified that which corresponds, which is certainly." Lange makes "soon" to mean "in swift succession," implying that the events to come will follow each other with great celerity.

Other commentators, either from honesty or prejudices of their own, have protested against such misinterpretation. Consider the following:

The subject-matter of this revelation comprises the events of the future -- the near future. The argument that Gk. *en tachei* implies that the events will not take place '*soon*,' but will be completed speedily once they begin, cannot be sustained; it is not what the original readers of the work would have naturally understood.³⁸

We cannot, however, do justice to his very plain opening statement (cf. i.3; iv. 1; xxii. 10) by saying that he foresaw a long series of events covering centuries, which could be described as imminent because they were to *begin* shortly. Whatever earthly realities correspond to John's symbols, he expected them to be accomplished quickly *in their entirety*.³⁹

The fulfilment of what is announced in the Revelation is here placed in the immediate future. So also in other passages. According to v. 3, and ch. xxii. 10, the time is near. "I come quickly," says the Lord in xxii. 7, 12, 20, iii. 11, ii 5, 16. These declarations are opposed to the view of those who would convert the entire book into a history of the time of the end, and confirms the view, which treats it as our companion through the whole course of history. Neither do those do it justice who remark with Bengel, "therefore did the fulfilment begin immediately after the date of the book." Not merely was the beginning in general ascribed to the immediate future, but such a beginning as was to be the beginning of the end...

It is nothing but a shift to say, as numbers do here, that the measure of time we are to think of is not, the human, but the divine, with which a thousand years are as one day (Ps. xc. 4, 2 Pet. ii. 8). The remarks made respecting this in my Christology on Hos. ii. 6, "yet once it is a little while, and I shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the earth, and the sea and the dry land," are equally applicable here: "Whoever speaks to men, must speak according to the human mode of viewing things, or give notice if he does otherwise. It is for the purpose of consoling us, that the prophet declares the shortness of the time. But for such a purpose, that only was suitable which might appear short in the eyes of men. Only in mockery or by deception could the prophet have substituted that, which was short in the reckoning of God." We have there shewn, that the shaking spoken of began to take effect in the immediate future. The axe was already laid to the root of the Persian kingdom (as in the time of John to that of the Roman), and its subsequent visible fall was only the manifestation of a much earlier latent one. De Wette's remark, that the shortness must not be taken too stringently, that it was used to encourage the suffering and warn the impenitent, represents the Seer's God and the Lord himself, who in Luke xviii. 8 likewise promises a speedy deliverance to his faithful people, as acting like the worthless physician who feeds his patients with false hopes. That Luke xviii. 7 can only be quoted in support of such a view on a wrong interpretation, is manifest. And in refutation of it, as also against the notion of its being the *divine* measurement of time that is to be understood, there is the circumstance that in the fundamental passage, Ezekiel xii., to which the expression in v. 3, "the time is near," refers, the declaration "the days are near," in v. 23, corresponds to "in your days, ye rebellious house, will I do it," in v. 25. On the "what must shortly come to pass," comp. iv. 1, xxii. 6.⁴⁰

ἐν τάχει

designates neither figuratively the "certainty" of the future, nor the swiftness of the course of things, without

reference to proximity or remoteness of time in which they were to occur... by the ἑγγύς, v. 3, it is decided that the speedy coming of what is to happen is meant... The evasion that the ἐν τάχει is to be understood "according to the divine method of computation," as in 2 Pet. iii. 8, is contrary to the context.⁴¹

As regards the use of 2 Peter 3:8, "But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," we point out that it is quite wrong to link this Scripture with the clear statements in Revelation about the soon end of all things. Scripture never gives any examples of thus interpreting warnings about time. Such an approach is purely a human device for avoiding difficulty.

Secondly, the passage in its context is an affirmation that delay in judgment does not negate its certainty but rather indicates the long-suffering mercy of God. Peter is certainly not wishing to imply to his readers that God disregards all distinctions of time, or that He does not mean to be understood according to the human time expressions He uses. Indeed, Scriptural prophecy has frequently been very precise in its chronology. See Gen. 6:3; 15:13; 40:1; Num. 14:33; Jer. 30:11; 29:10.

Again, when we compare Rev. 1:3; 22:10 with Dan. 8:26 the meaning of the time reference is plain. Fulfilment is not to be distant but near. The entire book (thus bounded at both ends by "soon") we are told has special meaning for the existing seven churches of Asia and has reference to their experience just ahead.

Rev. 17:10 is significant in this discussion "... they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has yet to come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while." The world power is on its last legs. But one more phase is to be manifested and it will exist only for a little time. Readers in the first century would have understood this verse exactly as it reads. We repeat -- the evidence is overwhelming that the book of Revelation was written to nerve the church of that day to complete the gospel commission. Heaven intended that faithful believers of that generation might see Christ come in the clouds and be caught up to meet Him without passing through the portals of the tomb.

* * * *

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING PIONEER (INCLUDING E.G. WHITE) VIEWS

What shall we then say about 1844 and the investigative judgment? On 1844 we shall say that in the providence of God, He brought to the birth the movement with the last message for the world -- the third angel's message in verity, justification by faith. That message in all its elements of law and grace, obedience and faith, justification and sanctification, substitution, imputation, and representation, judgment, and the Second Advent -- is beautifully enshrined in the symbolism of the sanctuary (particularly the Most Holy Place with its ark and mercy seat). This symbolism is used in the first books of Scripture, its chief Old Testament prophetic book and the final book of the New Testament. In claiming that Dan. 8:14 pointed to the last judgment and the end of the world, we were miles ahead of our contemporaries; in seeing Dan. 9:24 and 7:9-13 as explanatory of 8:14 we were similarly advanced; and in fixing upon that commandment at the heart of the law in the centre of the sanctuary as the sign of the gospel, we offered a test of loyalty to the world which ultimately will decide the destiny of all.

1844 and the Advent movement are indeed a fulfilment of Dan. 8:14, an apotelesmatic fulfilment in the same sense that AD 70 was a fulfilment of Matt. 24, and John the Baptist of Mal. 4:5, 6; and Pentecost of Joel 2:28. But the revival of the truth of atonement must not be confused with the atonement itself, and Dan. 8:14 must be seen as applying chiefly to the end-time judgment ushering in a new and cleansed creation. Forensically, as set forth in 2 Cor. 5:17, this took place at the cross, but will be empirically consummated with Christ's return.

As regards the investigative judgment, we must point out that all inspired descriptions of the final judgment are metaphorical. There never will be a time when Christ gathers all who have ever lived before Him in order to separate them as sheep and goats. At His second coming, the righteous are raised in glorified bodies -- there is no prior standing before the bar of their visible Judge. Their destiny had to be sealed before Christ finished His ministry as their High Priest -- they had to be "found" (Dan. 12:1) "in Him" at the last day of their probation -- a pre-Advent judgment indeed. The fact that Rev. 20 does teach two resurrections, with all the saints rising in the first as the release from the prison of death, makes it quite clear that their judgment is prior to Christ's return. And the fact that it is stated that not only must believers come before the judgment seat, but they must also as Christ's assistant assessors judge the world and wicked angels -- this also demands a pre-Advent decision in their instance, prior to a judgment on the lost.

When Christ in Matt. 12:36, 37 spoke of judgment day He affirmed that all in that day must give account of every word. While this shall not be fulfilled in any empirical, visible, audible sense, it is entirely true, in that our Judge-Advocate reads our hearts and minds. Nothing is secret from Him with whom we have to do, and on the basis of His knowledge of us, as to whether we indeed have saving faith in His atonement, our destiny will be decided BEFORE His return.

When Ellen G. White gives her pungent searching description of judgment in Great Controversy, chapter 28, such a description is akin to those New Testament Passages which assure us by their references to judgment that the decision of faith must continually be made afresh, and that work evidences whether our profession of faith is genuine. The words of Leon Morris are pertinent:

But the New Testament will not leave religious man to rest in his complacent smugness. It prods him wide awake with its insistence that he, too, stands under judgment. Take the saying quoted in Heb. 10:30 (Dt. 32:36), "The Lord shall judge his people." This brings the matter unpleasantly close to home. And it is even worse with 1 Peter 4:17, "the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God." Jesus assures us that people like the scribes, with religious pretensions, "shall receive greater condemnation" (Mark 12:40), and James reminds us that Christian teachers "shall receive heavier judgment" (James 3:1). Jesus tells us that in the judgment some will say, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works?" only to receive His sentence, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22ff). Those with special privileges will be judged the more severely. As J.V. Langmead Casserley expressed it, "They that take the gospel to themselves must either live by the glory of the gospel or perish beneath the judgment of the gospel." So far from getting off lightly in the judgment, religious man will find himself judged more strictly, precisely on account of his greater privileges. To ignore this is to overlook a truth which the New Testament reiterates again and again. It is worth noting that the

people who will be surprised on that day are not the rank outsiders, but those who think themselves safe within the church.

The judgment of which Scripture speaks is one in which nothing can be kept hid. "God shall judge the secrets of men" (Rom. 2:16). The Lord "will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5; cf. Mark 4:22; Luke 12:2f). Most of us could face the judgment calmly if we could be assured that certain things would remain hidden. But *all* our deeds stand under judgment, and there's the rub. "All" includes all the little evil deeds, as well as the big ones. "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). It is the far-reaching and all-inclusive nature of the judgment that makes it so frightening. At the same time, the thought that all we do matters in God's sight helps make life worth living. It gives a dignity to even the most insignificant action, the most unimportant word. Even the giving of a cup of cold water will not go unnoticed.⁸⁵

Thus, as earlier stated, every description of the judgment has to be a metaphorical one because the judgment itself, belonging to things supernal, is ineffable. Matt. 25:31-46 will never be literally fulfilled, being not only parabolic but kaleidoscopic, embracing the separation between men from the time of the pre-Advent judgment till the end of the millennium.

As Ladd writes: "The fact is that when Jesus speaks of the consummation, he always uses symbols."⁸⁶ So we have the celebration of the marriage, the gathering of the harvest, angels collecting the elect, and judgment of the servants -- all symbolism. *Ellen G. White in her investigative judgment chapter is speaking truly but not literally* when she refers to heaven's careful survey of every thought, word, and deed, as well as the prompting motives. But the books are the memory of God, and the decision instantaneous according to whether a genuine trust in the merits of Christ (a trust which ever leads to obedience) is evidenced. Let none therefore ridicule this chapter, despite its linear rather than punctiliar view of the pre-Advent judgment -- a view natural enough when the infant movement was trying to understand the mystery of the delayed Advent after 1844 and the shut door. Furthermore, let it be emphasized that our concept of the judgment, though immature, was far ahead of that held by most religious bodies who anticipated a thousand years of bliss before the general resurrection and general judgment. The Adventist view of two resurrections (both literal) is now an exegetical axiom for commentators on Rev. 20, which is a far cry from the situation in the decades after 1844.⁸⁷ As for the pre-Advent judgment, this is a logical deduction, inasmuch as only the saved are to come up in the first resurrection. Because even God's children are subject to judgment, as clearly taught in the New Testament (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10; Heb. 10:30), it is a necessity that they be found without spot through a final imputation of Christ's merits while He is still priest prior to the decree of Rev. 22:11-12.

Thus, at a time when many denied that judgment had any significance at all for believers, Ellen G. White more Biblically affirmed the contrary. Her presentation of the minuteness of divine investigation of our lives is a homiletic application of the law to our souls, that we might search our hearts and turn to Him alone who can cover us by His righteousness. Let it be noted that in her exposition, Ellen G. White concludes with reference to those who through "faith in Christ are entitled" to the verdict of acquittal.⁸⁸ Other statements the same author has written must be kept in mind when reading *Great Controversy*, chapter 28, just as when reading certain passages of Scripture such as Ex. 20 and James 2, others too, such as Rom. 3 and Gal. 2 must be remembered. Only the distinction between law and gospel and their respective purposes can save us from misreading Ellen G. White or Scripture.

We have always claimed to base our doctrine on Scripture alone. Thus our *Fundamental Beliefs* state, and thus Ellen G. White and our pioneers affirmed. It is time to take this claim seriously, and to realize that in the apostolic age "the faith" was once and for all given to the saints. See Jude 3 and Heb. 1:1. In the coming test God, according to *Great Controversy*, 595, will have a people standing on the Bible only.

Until then, let us build our framework of truth solely on the Word, but use with gratitude the counsels from His Spirit conveyed through Ellen G. White in these latter days, prophetic counsels meant to be for "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" (1 Cor. 14:3). Let us remember that "God bestows the amount of divine attention... proportionate to the rank assigned,"⁸⁹ and that the non-canonical prophets did not (in the providence of God) occupy the same vital place as the canonical ones -- and yet remember also that destinies have been and will be settled according to whether one despises *any* of God's gracious instrumentalities. 2 Chron. 20:20.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A. For those who wish to give Ellen G. White greater authority than Scripture.

A very natural reaction to this manuscript would be to "sit" on certain Spirit of Prophecy statements regarding the sanctuary and to affirm in essence, "Here I stand. I can do no other."

I wish to suggest that such an attitude requires more than "standing" to validate it. It will indeed be necessary to do much "other," including the following:

1. Demonstrate that where Ellen G. White and Scripture appear to conflict, veto power must always be given to Ellen G. White rather than vice versa.
2. Reject such clear Scriptures as Heb. 6:19, 20; 9:8, 12, 24-25; 10:19-20, etc., which plainly teach that Christ entered the Most Holy at His ascension.
3. Provide clear didactic Scriptures for the doctrine of the investigative judgment. Typological evidence as a basis for doctrine has never been valid -- only typological illustration of doctrine otherwise proved.
4. Explain how it could be that Ellen G. White could sometimes misinterpret her own visions. For example, she understood her first vision to endorse the shut door doctrine -- that probation had closed for the churches and the wicked world. "I saw" often signifies a personal conviction -- not a divine revelation. See its repeated use in the report of the Camden vision.
5. Explain how it could be that Ellen G. White could teach one thing one time, and yet change that view another time -- e.g. her position on the law in Galatians, the covenants, time to close the Sabbath, etc.
6. Explain the several crystal clear Ellen G. White statements which speak of His entering within the veil at His ascension. See, for example, April 19, 1905, *Signs of the Times; Desire of Ages*, 757.
7. Explain how *Great Controversy* can be demonstrably wrong in certain exegetical positions and yet correct on the investigative judgment,

when this is not demonstrably provable from Scripture, e.g. Ellen White's understanding of the sixth and seventh trumpet. She endorsed the Litch position, which is untenable exegetically and historically. For the revision in 1911 she changed her mind about Litch having given the "exact day" of the prophetic fulfillment.

As regards the seventh trumpet, in later words she placed its fulfillment as in the future, though Great Controversy applies it to the past.

The exposition of Rev. 11 regarding the French Revolution is not accurate exegetically or historically. There never was in France a three-and-a-half year period when the Bible was banned. Hundreds of hours of research by Ellen G. White apologists have failed to find any such thing. The opposite has been found.

Ellen G. White's endorsement of the Miller exposition of Matt. 25:1-13 is quite indefensible. The passage is not talking of 1844, but of the end of the world. The introductory word "Then" seen in the context of the preceding as well as the following verses, makes this quite plain.

8. Explain how Ellen G. White can use many Scriptural concepts which belong to the last things and apply them both to 1844 and thereabouts, as well as to the end of the world, e.g. the sealing, the shaking, the covering, the fall of Babylon, the cleansing of the sanctuary.

9. Explain Ellen G. White's statements: "The Bible and the Bible only is the source of doctrine," and that "never should the testimonies be carried to the front." "Let all prove every point of doctrine .from the Scriptures." It is quite impossible to prove from Daniel, Hebrews, Revelation, or elsewhere that a judgment upon believers began as a result of a change of heavenly ministry in 1844.

10. Provide an apologetic whereby Adventists may go to the world and say: "We have a grand and important truth for you -- a worldwide judgment session is now in process. We cannot show it to you from Scriptures, but we can show it to you from writings of one concerning whom you have never before heard. True, that writer said we should prove all doctrine from Scripture and not from her writings -- but here is an exception -- this basic distinguishing truth we cannot prove from Scripture but it is clear in the writings of Ellen G. White."

When these things have been done in a convincing way, then such exponents can on the basis of the Ellen G. White writings alone, and in opposition to Scripture, say "Here I stand, I can do no other." It may also be helpful at such a time to remember significant Ellen G. White affirmations.

"The Spirit was not given -- nor can it ever be bestowed -- to supersede the Bible, for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested... Isaiah declares, To the law and to the testimony; 'if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' (Isa. 8:20)" (GC, 9). "But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible and the Bible only as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms" (GC, 595).

Inasmuch as Ellen G. White never originated a single doctrine, but only took her stand after others found such doctrines in Scripture (e.g. the Sabbath, health reform, righteousness by faith at Minneapolis, the "daily," etc.), and inasmuch as she refused to permit her writings to decide doctrinal issues, but rather referred inquirers to Scripture (1SM, 164, 416), we can only say to those who still wish to re-echo Luther's declaration at Worms that his closing prayer is also appropriate for them -- "God help me."

(These points are a protest, not against the reality of the gift of prophecy in Ellen White, but against undoing the utility of that gift by overdoing our claims for it through affirming the writings as inerrant, or as a basis for doctrine -- even having prior place to Scripture. We would like to remind group A that Luther's prayer was uttered after his affirmation of *Sola Scriptura*.)

B. For those who wish to reject Ellen G. White.

Briefly, I wish to address another group who, to my mind, fall off the straight path into an abyss on the opposite side to that dealt with above.

I have friends who, perceiving that Ellen White's comments on the investigative judgment do not parallel Scripture, and learning of her wide use of sources, decide therefore that Ellen G. White must be dropped forthwith, and likewise any belief in her prophetic mission.

This seems to them consistent and logical, but so does much other reasoning which ultimately proves unreliable. My friends who pursue such reasoning are distressed that I refuse to join them in their conclusion and therefore I have for them, as well as the group addressed above, some questions.

1. Do they owe nothing of value to Ellen G. White? Would they be Seventh-day Adventists today had there been no Ellen G. White?
2. Would Seventh-day Adventism have survived such crises as that of the first decade of this century when Kellogg numbered among his followers a large proportion of our leaders, including Jones, Waggoner, Sutherland, Magan, Paulson, etc., had Ellen G. White not intervened?
3. Suppose there had been no Ellen White at the Minneapolis conference of 1888, would the teachings of Waggoner and Jones on righteousness by faith have ever reached our constituency and paved the way for that proclamation which being the third angel's message in verity is ultimately to lighten the earth with its glory?
4. Going back further still, when in the 1840's many of our forefathers were on the verge of surrendering their faith in the 1844 movement, would this church ever have emerged and consolidated but for the influence of Ellen G. White?
5. Our work is characterized by evangelistic, publishing, colporteur, educational, and health emphases. Which of these would have assumed its present shape and prominence without Ellen G. White?
6. Is it likely that God would have intertwined with our history for its first seventy years the work of one ultimately to be revealed as a fraud? Does God work in harmony with Satan? How likely is it that a person knowing her own hypocrisy could keep up her pretense for seventy years amid crises and gargantuan labors?
7. How much of your rejection of Ellen G. White grows out of a studied understanding of the Biblical teachings on revelation and inspiration?
8. For example, what do you understand the difference to be between these terms -- revelation and inspiration? And what difference is there between them individually and illumination?

9. Has the church universal ever been agreed on the exact nature of inspiration? Do we find that creeds usually define it? Does the modern evangelical scene display unity on the matter?
10. Is the Bible written as we might have expected it to be? Does its content of history, poetry, and outdated legislature comply with our sense of fitness? Does its lack of creedal statements surprise us? Has God so written the Word that doctrinal issues are made crystal clear, and that unbelievers are quickly silenced?
11. Or to say the same thing another way: Is the Bible primarily given to convey information so as to satisfy the mind, or is it a specific moral test? That is to say, has God been content with a weight of evidence for the honest, or has He guaranteed that even the dishonest can be left without excuse?
12. Is there a parallel between the written Word and the Living Word? Did Jesus Christ also evidence some of the surprising features we find in Scripture? That is, did He come as we might have expected? Did He overwhelm all with the evidence that He was what He claimed? Were His statements unequivocal in meaning or sometimes ambivalent? Was He, too, a moral test for His hearers, rather than a great teacher chiefly?
13. Was Jesus both human and divine? And if so, might that also be the obvious nature of Scripture? Did Jesus possess human liabilities and weaknesses such as dependence on creaturely elements such as food, and drink, and rest? Did He ever need to ask questions to secure information? Were His 200 plus inquiries just a front?
14. Did Jesus work as we might expect a celestial visitor to work, or did He also confine Himself in some areas at least to cultural restrictions and limitations? Did He come speaking the language of heaven, or the language of Palestine? Was He dressed as a messenger of light, or as a Galilean peasant?
15. Did Jesus, in some of His expressions, fall short of technical precision, as when He declared the mustard seed to be the least of all seeds?
16. Was Jesus absolutely original in His oral presentations, or is it true, as one scholar has affirmed, that there is not a paragraph from His addresses which does not have its roots in the Old Testament? Is it true, for example, that every phrase of the Lord's Prayer is to be found in previous Scripture?
17. Do Christ's parables contain no difficulties? Are we fully comfortable with His use of hell-fire in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus? Do we feel quite content with His commendation of the rascally steward?
18. How is it that the first three gospels differ so much from the fourth? How is it that they cover very similar ground for much of His ministry, and omit the different materials found in John's gospel covering the same time?
19. Can we explain how it is that the first three gospels not only have broad similarity, but even at times use exactly the same blocks of material, same phraseology, same words -- even the same hiatuses?
20. Can any of us tell where the words of John break off and those of Jesus begin, and vice versa, throughout the fourth gospel? For example, in chapter three, which verse marks the close of Jesus's words to Nicodemus? Did Christ utter the famous John 3:16?
21. Why is it that the style of Christ's speeches in John is so far removed from His style as recorded in the other three gospels? Why is that style either identical or almost so with John's own style?
22. What was said at Christ's baptism: "*Thou* art my beloved Son" or "*This* is my beloved Son"? Or were both said?
23. Did the healing of the first leper take place before the Sermon on the Mount (Luke), or after (Matthew)?
24. Were there two Gadarene demoniacs (Matt. 8:28) healed, or one (Mark 5:2 and Luke 8:27)?
25. Was the healing of Bartimaeus before Christ reached Jericho (Luke 18:35), or after (Mark 10:46)?
26. Was Luke given by vision the names of the intertestamental ancestors of Christ, as recorded in Luke 3, or did he derive them from sources such as Luke 1:1-4 might indicate?
27. Where did Luke get his second Cainan from his genealogy of Christ? See Luke 3:36, 37 and compare Gen. 10.
28. Was Stephen's speech (Acts 7) inspired? If so, does it agree exactly with the Genesis account of the historical events he referred to?
29. Why was the inspired apostle Paul dependent upon news from Chloe for his information about the situation in Corinth? Why did God give it to him by vision?
30. What evidence is there in the cream of the New Testament -- the epistles that visions were given to facilitate their writing?
31. Were visions necessary for the writer of Proverbs as he conveyed some platitudes known and recognized from the foundation of the world -- such platitudes as: the lazy man shall suffer want, a nagging woman is as unpleasant as continual rain, good news makes a person cheerful, bad emotions cause poor health, to have money is to have many "friends"?
32. Similarly, did the Psalmist need visions in order to exhort us to "Come, worship, and bow down," and to comfort us by the reminder that "all the wicked shall God destroy"?
33. Were visions necessary for the chronicling of the well-known historical events in the ministry of Christ? or for most of the annals of Judah and Israel? How many of the historical authors of Old Testament books ever hint that they received visions in order to make possible their writings? Why was a Paul chosen to set forth the theology of the New Testament? Would not a school boy or a fisherman have done as well under inspiration?
34. Is inspiration "docetic" in its operation? Or is it true of the written Word, as of the living Word that it is just as much human as though not at all "divine"?
35. Does inspiration guarantee equal value for all inspired documents? That is, would we miss the genealogies as much as the Sermon on the Mount? Does Scripture like a living body contain a heart, form, and limbs, so to speak, with some members more essential than others?

36. Is there an economy of miracle in the writing of Scripture? Does God ever do supernaturally what can be done naturally? Why did Christ have others fill the water pots with water, and roll away the stone of Lazarus' tomb?
37. Are the prophecies of Scripture completely unambiguous? Are they so plain that a child may understand them? Have all the details of Biblical prophecies been fulfilled? Are some of them conditional?
38. Is our real problem with Scripture what we don't understand or what we do?
39. When Jesus told His disciples that the real truth about Himself couldn't come from flesh and blood but was a divine gift, is this true also of Scripture, and other agencies of God? Do reason and human expectation have priority in determining what is a revelation from God? Can something be supra-rational without being irrational?
40. Does God usually bestow upon separate items just that attention which is proportionate to their importance in the scale of being? Is His work always complete in every way, or just adequate? Does the human organism demonstrate absolute perfection in its formation, or chiefly adequacy? Is the eye a perfect optical instrument? Does the memory function perfectly? Is the human mind infallible in its reasoning process? Has reason itself suffered from the Fall?
41. Can we explain any of the mighty works of God -- creation, providence, miracle, regeneration, sanctification, atonement? If not, should we expect to have a thorough understanding of inspiration and revelation? If the Fall came through a lusting after forbidden knowledge, could it be that man's restoration involves repentance about such lusting, and the substituting of trust?
42. Is "ye shall know them by their fruits" a simple practical rule that even the uneducated and immature can usually apply with success if honestly desiring to know the truth?
43. What did Jesus mean when He said, "If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine"? Was He saying that it is the heart and not the head, which to the highest doth attain?
44. Is it true that two-thirds of life is conduct, and that God might not be so concerned about some theoretical issues as we are?
45. Is it true that Christ held in His hand the whole map of explored truth but only revealed enough for practical purposes?
46. Was Christ Himself a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense? And if so, could this be true also of some genuine forms of revelation besides Him?
47. Are apocalyptic visions such as those of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation typical of Scripture or exceptional?
48. How much evidence is there in reading the Gospels or the epistles that the writers felt they had divine control and minute heavenly guidance?
49. How much of Ellen G. White advocates behavior contrary to Scriptural standards? What sort of persons would we be if striving to live up to the standards of Ellen G. White? Is it possible that even the sections of Ellen G. White some of us find so taxing would be clarified if we understood the difference between law and gospel, and between law as a standard and law as a method?
50. If Scripture itself has been terribly abused, even employed for the purpose of murdering innocent millions, should it be surprising if illegitimate use be made of other of God's instruments of revelation?
51. *How much danger would there be in advocating that God had used Ellen G. White as a messenger if we followed her own admonition to base all doctrine upon the Bible and the Bible only?*
52. *How much risk would there be in advocating that God has used Ellen White as a special messenger if we simultaneously confessed, as she did, that "God and heaven alone are infallible"?*
53. How is it that when Ellen G. White chose a source which best expressed her views of inspiration she chose one which was at odds with the fundamentalist churches of the day -- one which advocated that the writers of Scripture were God's penmen, not His pen, and that in their use of rhetoric and logic God was not represented.
54. Is it possible that many who wish to reject Ellen G. White do so on the same basis that King Ahab rejected the prophet of his day -- "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (1 Kings 22:8)? And is it possible that others reject her because of a legalistic upbringing which misused Ellen G. White in advocating law without gospel?
55. If Christ came to comfort the afflicted but also to afflict the comfortable, and if John, His predecessor, likewise rebuked hypocrisy and evil in the religious, and if both, like all other prophets, called for repentance, could it be that some who reject Ellen G. White's prophetic role do so on the basis that she makes them uncomfortable by her demand for repentance in specific areas?
56. If you were choosing a surgeon, or a real estate agent, or a banker, would you feel most comfortable with one who valued the writings of Ellen G. White, or one who rejected them?
57. Do you know the difference between the Greek and the Hebrew views of knowledge? Which one held that the ideal was to gather as much conceptual truth as possible about everything in order that we might be little gods in knowledge? Which one believed that knowledge was worthless unless practical, and doubly worthless unless related to piety? What is meant by "wisdom" in the book of Proverbs? Does that book mean by "fool" one with little intelligence? And is the "wise" man of Proverbs and elsewhere in Scripture someone with great intellect and powers of perception, or someone who reverences God and acts accordingly? When Ellen G. White says of Christ that He held in His hand the great map of unexplored truth but only disclosed that which had practical value, is she following the Greek or Hebrew view of knowledge? Is there a relationship between these concepts and the apparent carelessness of Scripture about some details of fact, for example, its use of round numbers (e.g. "Seventy sevens" -- Dan. 9:25; Matt. 18:22; "fourteen" -- Matt. 1:17; "480" -- 1 Kings 6:1; "ten" -- Dan. 1:20; 7:24; "forty" -- etc.)?
58. Does the Scriptural use of figures of speech such as hyperbole teach us anything about the nature of inspiration? For example, is it literally true that if all Christ had done had been recorded, the world itself could not contain the books that would need to be written? Had the gospel been preached to every creature under heaven in Paul's day, and if so, why was he still planning to go to such places as Spain, and why does Rev. 14:6 picture a message yet to go to every nation?

59. Are you, as a Western, completely happy with all of Paul's arguments? For example, see Gal. 3:16, where he plays on the plural and Singular meanings of "seed"? Does his use of Hosea in Rom. 9:25f actually reflect what Hosea intended? Was Hosea forecasting the coming in of the Gentiles or the re-acceptance of forsaken Israelites? Do 2 Cor. 3 and the Old Testament source of the veil incident agree? Do you think that the law about not muzzling the ox was only written for our sakes, and not at all for the oxen? See 1 Cor. 9:8-10. How is it that Paul under inspiration gives a wrong account of his baptized converts In one place, and then remembers more a little later? 1 Cor. 1:14-16. And why does the Greek original of Galatians show that some of Paul's sentences were never completed?

60. What is "the bottom line" of inspiration? Is it abstract or practical in intent? Did Jesus on earth ever work unnecessary miracles, or did all His mighty works contribute to the meaning of salvation? Has God been content to be misunderstood in some things when a little more effort on His part could have prevented such a thing? Has God really done everything He could to prevent unbelief or has He only done sufficient for those prepared to be honest? If we are all dying people, with but a remnant of time left, what do we need most from God? Has He provided it? 2 Tim. 3:16; John 17:3; 20:31.

These are some of the questions which could be considered by those who urge me to join them in their rejection of the ministry of Ellen G. White. As for me, I must make Scripture the sole basis of doctrine. But for that very reason, I must also be open to any manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit promised therein, including the gift of prophecy. If I find, as is the case with Ellen G. White, one who leads me to Christ and His Word as supreme in all things, and who exhorts to holiness, I should accept the messenger, but without surrendering the right to exercise the canonical test of Scripture. Believing in the priesthood of all believers as well as *Sola Scriptura* I will remember that "The doctrine that God has committed to the church, the right to control the conscience, and to define and punish heresy, is one of the most deeply rooted of papal errors" (GC, 293), and that no ecclesiastical creedal statement shall move me one whit if obviously contrary to the plain testimony of the Word of God. We can do no other.