

Our Firm Foundation

A Report of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Conference

Held September 1-13, 1952, in

The Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church

Takoma Park, Maryland

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Preface

This book, with its companion volume, is the result of the 1952 Bible Conference that was held in the Sligo Seventh day Adventist church in Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., September 1-13. For several years the need for such a Bible Conference had become more and more apparent.

Our early history reveals the importance of the 1848 Bible Conferences, for it was in those early meetings conducted by our pioneers that a Seventh-day Adventist system of theology was brought forth. The very foundations of our teachings were laid carefully and wisely by that group of earnest, devout lovers of God and lovers of God's Word. The Bible was their only rule of faith and practice. Like Martin Luther of old, those diligent students of Scripture planted their feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages. A "Thus said the Lord" became the password which opened before that group an avenue that led to the great heart and mind of God.

During the century of our denominational existence other Bible conferences were held, though not so frequently as at first, when the foundations were being laid. The last such conference was held in 1919, and many members of the great Advent movement have felt the need of again coming together not to find the new and the sensational but rather to examine our theological thinking and to test the strength of our spiritual foundations. For two weeks we looked at the platform from many angles, and today we give a shout of gratitude and praise, for the old pillars and foundations still stand secure and unmoved.

These two volumes go forth on their mission to enrich and strengthen the ministry and the laity of Seventh-day Adventists around the world. Truly we are grateful for our firm foundation. On this foundation we take our stand, for we can find no other that offers such mental and spiritual satisfaction. It is to be hoped that these books may have a wide usefulness far beyond the Bible Conference itself and those who took part in it.

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1. By Way Of Introduction

General Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant of God's church. As was Noah and his message of righteousness by faith to the people before the Flood, as was Abraham and his message of righteousness by faith in a world that had turned to its idolatry, as was Moses and his message of righteousness by faith to a people who had lost their way in the sins of Egypt and who were called out in the mighty Exodus movement, as were Ezra and Nehemiah and their message of righteousness by faith in the period of the Restoration, as was Jesus and His message of righteousness by faith to His age of skepticism and delusion, as were Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Wesley and their message of righteousness by faith in the church's darkest hour of apostasy so are Seventh-day Adventists and their message of righteousness by faith in this last crisis hour of earth's history. Through them God is giving His last loud cry, "Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues."

These are our spiritual ancestors, and this is the message of the everlasting gospel-Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is our Righteousness, He is our Savior, and He is our Redeemer. The Bible Conference found this theme running through every study presented, and that without any foreknowledge or planning. Each man prepared his own topic in his own way and without any direction except that which was given by the Holy Spirit, one of whose functions is to "guide. . . into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself. . . . He shall glorify me." John 16:13, 14.

Every speaker seemed to fulfill the words of the Master Himself, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32. This was the drawing power of each and every one of the eighty messages given until a grand spiritual climax was reached in the communion service and the praise and testimony hour on that never-to-be forgotten Friday afternoon, which was the preparation day for the last Sabbath of the spiritual feast. It was indeed a high-water mark of the Advent movement. Such was the power and influence of one of the greatest convocations of God's people this side of Pentecost.

These two volumes, OUR FIRM FOUNDATION, attempt to bring to our people everywhere the spirit of that great Bible Conference. The Planning Committee began its work in a setting and atmosphere of prayer and mighty intercession. Every step in the development of the plans for the conference was made on bent knees. Every topic was prepared in a humble attitude of prayer and heart searching. Every speaker was present on bent knees the night before the conference began, when men's hearts were opened for the in filling of God's Spirit, when men's minds were opened for the thoughts of God. Those men humbled themselves and bent low that Christ alone might be seen and heard during the hours of those two most precious weeks in the experience of all who were privileged to be present in person.

It was not an ecumenical council, nor a session of the General Conference clothed with ecclesiastical authority to set faith and doctrine into a formal and final and unchangeable creed. The conference was not called to settle any theological problems. No attempt was made to deal with the pet theories and theological speculations of men. Fringe problems and the incidental or moot questions were carefully avoided. The speakers came together to express their thoughts, the results of their personal study of the Bible and the

writings of the Spirit of prophecy. The thoughts expressed in the papers presented in these two volumes are therefore purely personal and do not carry any ecclesiastical endorsement of any kind.

The General Conference as a body is in no way responsible for the studies presented. They are not an official pronouncement of the church. They do, however, represent the best thinking on the part of sincere, honest, earnest, devoted, loyal men Seventh-day Adventists, first, last, and always who have tried to give expression to our conception of the great truths believed, held, and taught by Seventh-day Adventists generally in all parts of the earth.

As honest searchers for truth, these men will be among the first to welcome a better, a clearer way to state these great fundamental truths found in God's Word. They send forth these papers with the one object of helping if possible, to some degree at least, to clarify our thinking and to galvanize our convictions on present truth.

The Bible Conference was not an open forum for a free exchange of extemporaneous or random thoughts and conjectures, out of which can come very little progressive or creative thinking. Rather, outstanding scholars were chosen for their reputation as men of the Word, and they were asked to spend a period of three to six months in an exhaustive study of some particular and definite topic, to put their thoughts on paper, and then to present their studies orally, and finally to put them in print for the careful and prayerful study of our ministry and laity.

This is by no means the last word on any one of these subjects. The Spirit of truth will most assuredly continue to impress men everywhere with other aspects of these great truths, for they are inexhaustible. They will be the themes for study throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

DENTON EDWARD REBOK,

Secretary for the Bible Conference.

The Bible Conference

BY W. H. BRANSON

President, General Conference

As most of our workers are probably aware, action was taken at the last Autumn Council to call a Bible Conference. This conference is to be held in Takoma Park, September 1-13, 1952. According to the action of the Autumn Council, the personnel of the conference will consist of the following individuals:

“The members of the General Conference Committee who will be in attendance at the 1952 Biennial Council, and others who may be invited to the council:

“From North America:

“a Two Bible teachers from each senior college, to be chosen by their respective boards.

“b One Bible teacher from each junior college, to be chosen by their respective boards.

“c One to as many evangelists from each union conference as there are local conferences in the union, to be appointed by the respective union committees.

“d The editors of our leading periodicals.

“e The book editors of our leading publishing houses.

“f Representatives from the Theological Seminary.

“From overseas divisions: a minimum of three in addition to the president of the field.”

There are several-reasons for the holding of this conference. Let me state them in what I believe is their relative order:

* Through the pages of *The Ministry*, July, 1952, W. H. Branson announced to the workers of the denomination the plans that were being laid for the Bible Conference. His statement lays the foundation for an understanding of this great meeting.

1. It is now thirty-three years since such a conference was held. In that period of time a whole new generation has come on the scene of action, new leaders in administrative posts and new Bible teachers in our schools, as well as new workers throughout the world field. As truly as recurring revival meetings in our churches help to refresh and intensify the spiritual life of even the most devout, and as workers' meetings in our conferences help to improve the service of even the most ardent laborer, just so truly, I believe, can a Bible Conference help to increase and intensify the preaching efficiency of even the most successful minister.

A very great power resides in the truths of God distinctive for these last days. There is a new lift for our hearts and minds and spirits that can come from studying together the doctrines that have made us a people and that justify our continued existence. It is one of the prime purposes of this conference to provide that heavenly lift for heart and soul as we reaffirm those truths that have most certainly been believed among us through all our history. I confidently believe that the very large and representative group at the conference will be able to take back to their fellow workers in all parts of the world something that will aid tremendously in carrying out our ambitious plan to double our membership. We must never forget that in seeking to increase membership we are not searching for additions to a social club. We are searching for men and women who will give a responsive ear and heart to great and saving truths that God has commissioned us to preach. Our success in this heavenly undertaking will be in ratio to our understanding of those truths and our flaming conviction that they are indeed the truth of God.

2. This leads us naturally into the second great reason for holding the Bible Conference. The very fact that we believe our message is timed for the last days implies that we believe it grows more timely as the years pass by. All of us realize this in part, but only in part. How easy it is for us to present our doctrines, yes, even the prophecies, in exactly the same setting and with the same illustrative material that we did ten, twenty, or even more years ago! But the world moves-and how rapidly! That applies equally to the political, the social, the economic, and the religious world.

Certainly a people who believe that their message for men will have its maximum meaning in earth's last hour ought to re-examine their doctrinal presentations from time to time to make sure that they are setting forth the truth in a way that most fully explains the meaning of the times and most effectively challenges the attention and response of the multitudes. The question that should ever concern us is not whether we have a great and true message but whether we are presenting that message in its true greatness.

We can leave to others the holding of theological conferences where every man does-or sets forth-that which is right in his own eyes, and where the distinguishing symbol of the meeting is a question mark. Such conferences are held in abundance and explain the weakness of Protestantism. This Advent movement was not built on question marks, nor will question marks provide a solid footing for the great company of men and women whom we hope to have stand with us in the final hour when all the world is falling apart. We have great verities to preach. The purpose of this Bible Conference is to help us all to see how we can present those timeless truths most effectively in these changing times.

3. A third reason should also be mentioned. We speak of our message as light-light for these darkened times. The figure is apt and Scriptural. But no matter how bright the light and how wide the circle it covers, there is always a twilight area beyond. This is inevitable. We see through a glass darkly; we know only in part. The path of the just is as the shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. Here is at once the reminder that our understanding is presently limited, and here is the assurance that we may see further ahead as we journey along the road to the kingdom. We can at one and the same time affirm that we walk in the light-and thus have a heavenly message for men-while admitting that there are truths of God that as yet can be but dimly discerned.

The trouble sometimes has been that a brother has mistaken the sparks of his own kindling for new light. But instead of lighting up for us further vistas of truth, the sparks only blinded or bemused those who focused on them. Genuine new light will never cast a shadow on the light we already have. The purpose of our Bible Conference is not to cast shadows over the present great areas of truth, nor to explore curiously some dim areas to the distant right or left. But, keeping in step as a company bound for heaven, we shall seek to go forward. If, for example, some unfulfilled prophecy heretofore but dimly discerned on the horizon, and thus differently described in its details, can now be seen more clearly, then we shall rejoice, thank God for the enlarged light, and go forth from the conference with one more point to add to our preaching. But we shall best see further areas of truth by intensely exploring and promoting the truths we already have.

That is why we believe that the safe and Scriptural way to advance the message of this movement is by giving first and major attention at this conference to the great truths that have made us a people, and by keeping the searchlight of those truths ever focused forward toward the New Jerusalem. Those who address us will tell us what the searchlight reveals to them of greater depth and distance to the message we have been proclaiming for well over a century.

May God grant that as one result of this conference we shall see the future more clearly than ever before. But let us never forget that the worth of our message and of this conference must not be measured by our ability to know all things and to see the end from the beginning-even the holy prophets had to search diligently, and often foresaw but dimly the very prophecies they penned. No, our

message has adequate meaning in terms of the great light God has already given us, and this conference will have adequate meaning and value for us if it but brings to our hearts a new vision of the greatness of our message and of its increasing timeliness.

We are coming up to one of the most important meetings in our history. Let us all call upon God to make it a great milestone in our journey toward the kingdom.

The Bible Conference in Prospect

BY FRANCIS D. NICHOL*

From September 1 to 13 there will be held in Takoma Park a Bible Conference to which will come representative denominational leaders from all parts of the world, including some of our college Bible teachers. The purpose of the conference will be to study the major teachings of the Advent movement. In the very nature of the case the meeting will be significant. It is understandable, therefore, that our people at large, both ministers and laity, should be deeply interested in this conference. Our doctrines are the foundation and the steel framework of the Advent edifice. Without them the structure of the movement would lack stability; indeed, would soon be shaken down by the turbulent, treacherous winds of private opinion and outright heresy. Without the doctrines there would be no movement.

On this point we are all agreed. But, some will add immediately, We passed through an initial period of discovering and formulating our doctrines when the movement was young. They have long been well defined. Is it the purpose of the Bible Conference to reconstruct the rugged Scriptural framework of these doctrines, or perhaps even to discard some of them? Why not devote our energies wholly to gathering men and women into the safety of the divinely erected Advent house of refuge?

* Francis D. Nichol, editor of the Review and Herald, wrote two editorials to explain to the church membership at large the plans and the need for a Bible Conference. They appeared in the issues of August 28 and September 4, 1952. They are reproduced here because of their contribution to an understanding of the Bible Conference and its work.

We are sure these questions are sincere; we are also sure they are based on a misunderstanding. Architects inform us that it is often possible to beautify, strengthen, and enlarge a stately, venerable structure without disturbing a single supporting pillar or removing one stone from the foundation.

Or let us change the figure a little. Our primary doctrines, such as the Second Advent, the Sabbath, life only in Christ, etcetera, are so many mighty pillars supporting a beautiful edifice of truth. The arguments, the evidence, the illustrations we employ in our evangelistic meetings, are so many paths over which we endeavor to bring men to acceptance of these doctrines. Our constant work as guides to truth should be to discover which paths of approach to a doctrine are absolutely solid, and will enable the traveler most quickly and most surely to reach the sanctuary of God on the mountaintop.

Fortunately there is no necessary relation between the foundation of a highway to a doctrine and the foundation of the doctrine itself. It should be possible to examine and correct the one without endangering the other. The doctrinal edifice of Adventism is built atop the solid rock of Mount Zion, but the paths that lead to it must at least begin as the avenues of the most familiar thinking of men down in the valley below. The edifice is of God, but the paths leading to it bear the marks of our workmanship. It is thus that we are workers together with God for the salvation of men.

If the Bible Conference did nothing more than focus the eyes of our ministry and laity for a united moment on the whole array of our doctrinal teachings, that in itself would be worth while. Gazing intently on the beauty of Mount Zion and counting its walls and battlements, we would find a new enthusiasm springing up in us to hasten the heaven bound travelers onward and to induce more valley dwellers to walk the upward road. At least once in a generation-the last Bible Conference was in 1919-it is well to turn aside from the routine business of administrative meetings to refresh our spirits and quicken our fervor by concentrating for a time on the divinely connected pattern of truth that God has given to us.

But there is another and perhaps even more worth-while reason for devoting special study, betimes, to our doctrines. Prophecy colors virtually all our doctrines. And it is of the nature of prophecy that it can be more clearly understood and more effectively presented as it merges into history. More than once Christ explained to His disciples that He was telling them something in advance "that when it is come to pass, you may believe."

We talk of the rapidity of world changes in recent decades, of changed empires and changed ideas. But do we realize that these rapid changes in the world have a direct bearing upon a great many of our teachings? Or to return to the figure earlier used: If we are truly aware of these changes in relation to prophecy and other fulfilling events, we may be able to throw much added light on the upward road to Zion and enable men thus to travel more surely. Indeed, we may be able to persuade an added number of valley dwellers to turn their feet on to the brightly lighted path.

Take, for example, our teaching concerning the signs of the Advent. Thank God, there is no reason to change our teaching concerning these. We have not followed cunningly devised fables. But we may most profitably study the currently fulfilling signs in the light of present-day history. Tremendous events have been taking place. How proper for us to focus our attention on these events in an endeavor to see ever more clearly the meaning of the times and the manner in which we may most successfully set forth the great signs of Christ's coming! One of the prime objectives of the Bible Conference is to focus our attention on these very events.

We preach the inspiration of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. When this movement began, church people, at least, were ready to agree that the Bible is thus inspired. But today! The change that has subtly come over the minds of men as regards the Bible provides perhaps the most striking Proof of the value of a conference where we may not only renew our faith but may more effectively gird for battle. There is an attack on the Bible today of which the pioneers knew nothing. The validity of Genesis, for example, is challenged on the ground that there is scientific laboratory proof that Moses was wrong. If we really wish to bring men onto the platform of Bible belief—a primary step in bringing them into the Advent faith—we must do more than merely wave aside the contrary declarations of geneticists and geologists. We must gain some measure of understanding of the issues involved in the controversy. Whether we like it or not ancient bones and rocky strata are involved in the fight over the inspiration of the Bible.

Some in our ranks, while receding not a foot from the forward position of belief in all God's Holy Word, have been a little panic stricken at times as these ancient missiles have been hurled at them by Bible critics. Now it is an inspiring sight to watch men courageously stand their ground, though troubled with fear. But in the present instance we do not feel so much like commending the courage that enables them to stand, as like bewailing the ignorance that causes them to fear. If they but knew it, these very missiles that are so confidently hurled at them could be even more confidently hurled back at the Bible critic. Why give the enemy a monopoly on antiquities?

The devil once used a serpent to confound our first parents. Why allow the devil to use the remains of the ancient reptile world of dinosaurs and kindred creatures to confound us today? We should never forget that if we are defeated on the battle line of Genesis, it avails us little to attempt to defend the rest of the line from Exodus to Revelation.

Should Be Versed in Archaeology

We should also be well versed in the evidence from archaeology. It is archaeology that provides the direct answer to that insidious line of attack on the Scriptures that would vaporize the early historical records of the Bible into mere folklore. True, we should not spend all our time digging in dusty archaeological heaps or hunting for dinosaur bones in ancient strata, but we should do enough digging so that our doctrine of Bible inspiration will be solidly planted on immovable foundations.

One of the major subjects of the Bible Conference will be archaeological evidence for Bible inspiration. Such discussions are in areas of which the pioneers knew nothing, and doubtless needed not to know anything. But we today most assuredly need to know.

Or take another illustration, our central teachings known as the three angels' messages. These messages to the world are an appeal to men to worship the Creator in connection with a judgment-hour warning, a call to come out of apostate churches, and a warning against receiving the mark of apostasy. We have preached these messages for a hundred years. But the very fact that they are essentially prophetic messages means that they acquire increasing force and timeliness as the years pass by. But we will never truly sense their increasing significance unless we give special attention to the amazing developments that have taken place in the religious world, indeed, in the whole world of thought, in the last generation or two. In a sense these messages become new and startlingly important as we trace the events of the years. Thank God that this is so. Thank God that unfolding events provide ever new validation for our claim that we have a special message for those who dwell in the last days.

One of the subjects specially to be considered at the Bible Conference is that of the threefold message in relation to fulfilling prophecy during the history of this movement. But we must not continue with illustrations. Surely more than sufficient have been given to show that time may most profitably be spent studying our doctrines in a Bible Conference. It is because we are all confident that the prime pillars of the faith can bear the light of special study that this conference is being held. More than that, this conference is being held because we firmly believe that the special study of our doctrines in the perspective of fulfilling prophecy and last-day events will serve only to enhance and strengthen these doctrines. The purpose of this conference is to enable the ministry of the Advent movement to give the trumpet an increasingly certain sound and its warning notes a greatly enlarged volume.

Discussion of Moot Questions

There are some devout and loyal brethren who feel disappointed that the Bible Conference is not going to discuss certain Biblical questions that deeply interest them. Through the years some of these brethren have written to us asking why this or that question is not settled by the General Conference. The questions may range all the way from Who is Melchizedek? to, Who is the king of the north? We have always replied that the General Conference never attempts to settle theological questions by a committee vote or by any kind

of pronouncement. Hence some of these brethren look to this great conference, where doctrine is to be discussed, and ask, Why not settle these questions at that meeting?

As may easily be imagined, it is costly to hold a Bible Conference to which brethren from all over the world will come. The total hours for presentation of topics and for discussion of them are only sixty-eight. And that is scarcely enough hours for the consideration of the most primary features of our major doctrines. Should we turn from these to consider secondary matters, Bible questions that interest this or that brother, or this or that group of brethren, but which are not of the core of our message? That such questions are secondary is clearly proved by the fact that we have been effectively presenting the saving truths of the Advent message for a century without knowing the answers to these questions. If they were primary to our salvation, is it not strange that the messenger of God left them unanswered?

Unfulfilled Prophecy

We grant that certain questions, such as those that touch on a detail of a last-day prophecy, are not inconsequential, and a clear answer to them might add luster to a prophetic doctrine. But they are questions that are tied to unfulfilled prophecy, and there is where the perplexity lies. Certain prophecies will evidently need to come more nearly into the focus of fulfillment before we can dogmatize on all the details. We say "evidently," because these very questions are ones that good brethren have studied from time to time but on which they have been unable to agree.

Here Paul's words apply: "Now we see through a glass, darkly. But Paul never allowed the fact that some truths can be seen only darkly to lead him to concentrate his energies on those darkly seen truths. Whether he spent some private hours in meditation on them, we know not. But this we do know, that his prime energies both in writing and preaching were spent on presenting the basic and clearly evident truths of salvation. The apostles set forth "those things which are most surely believed among us," or as the margin reads, "those things which are fully established." Luke 1:1. Therein lay their strength as witnesses and ministers for God and one of the secrets of their evangelistic success.

In the very nature of the case there will always be Bible questions for which no answer can be given that is acceptable to all. And sometimes those questions will be related to an important Bible doctrine. But that relationship does not therefore make the question important or the doctrine uncertain. No matter how brightly a light shines or how much area it illumines, there is always a twilight zone at the far edges of the circle of light. Increasing the candle power does not remove the shadows; it only moves them a little farther out.

We believe it is even so with our doctrines. From each of them shines a light, heavenly in quality and sufficiently extended to encompass all who wish to bask in its saving brilliance. Further concerted attention to the light by those trained in the science of heavenly illumination may extend the range of its rays, but there will always be a shadow land at the far edges. We may ever rightly hope for greater light, but it would be a sad mistake to conclude that we cannot be sure of the light until we have removed all the shadows beyond. Not until we stand in the light that shines directly from the throne will all the shadows flee away, and even then it will take us an eternity to adjust our eyes to the fullness of the light, for the plan of salvation contains many great mysteries.

We confidently believe that the Bible Conference will cause the light to shine more brightly from our great doctrines, lighting ever more fully our path in this increasingly dark world, and giving us a clearer sense of direction than ever before. But the conference is not to be discounted because it fails to remove all the shadows.

A Lesson From Church History

We need also to remember the lesson of church history, that great councils that have met in past centuries to consider doctrine have sometimes been so concerned to secure absolute uniformity on every possible question or detail that the dust and smoke created by the disputation have actually brought darkness rather than added light to those councils. The sober record of the centuries reveals that men have actually lost their religion trying to state it precisely, or rather in their attempts to make others agree with their precise statements. After all, those who are journeying to heaven are still in mortal flesh.

The Advent movement from its very beginning has been opposed to the idea of a creed, with its detailed declaration on a wide range of theological matters, some of them dark and mysterious. At most we have set down a brief statement of belief, which makes no pretense of settling innumerable questions on which devout men will ever have differing viewpoints. Through the years the strength of this movement has resided in the fact that its leaders and spokesmen have focused on the few great essential truths that mean life or death for judgment-bound men, and have preached those prime truths with directness and simplicity. We see no reason for now changing the pattern of procedure.

Mrs. White's Statements on Further Light

There are also those who on the eve of this Bible Conference remind us of Mrs. White's statement that there is yet more light to be found and that even some positions presently held by brethren will be proved false. Should we conclude from this that all we have ever believed should be thrown into question and that we may begin anew the task of discovering what is truth? We think not. As with the Bible, so with Mrs. White's writings, one passage should be compared with another, if we are to reach a balanced conclusion. Take this statement from her pen:

"I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps, the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.' I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid immovable platform." [1]

Note also this further statement that Mrs. White addressed to the Adventist ministry:

"Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle working power of the Lord. But the way marks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority." [2]

Statements similar to these might be cited which reveal clearly that the great primary truths of this Advent message are sure and settled. We doubt not that good men have sometimes used invalid reasoning to support a valid doctrine, and must needs revise their reasoning, but that is no indictment of the doctrine. Nor do we doubt the inspiring declaration that God has more light to shed upon His people. But further light will increase the light already given, not extinguish it. And when such further light comes, exposing, perhaps, some fallacies entertained by brethren on secondary points, we will find in that very fact added reason to thank God that in the great Bible Conference we confined ourselves to the lighted center of our great truths and declined to be drawn into the shadows to discuss secondary questions that are loaded with personal viewpoints.

We have a message of life and death to preach to men, and with diligence and directness we should preach it. Its essence is brief and simple and easily understood; let us keep it thus in all our study and formulation of it. Its timeliness becomes increasingly evident as prophecy merges into history. Let us study anew both prophecy and history, that we may make that timeliness stand out with increasing force and convicting power.

The Bible Conference Organized for Work

The organization of the Bible Conference was the work of a planning committee composed of twenty-three members: W. H. Branson, L. K. Dickson, E. D. Dick, H. L. Rudy, A. V. Olson, R. R. Figuhr, W. B. Ochs, R. A. Anderson, C. L. Torrey, D. E. Rebok, L. E. Froom, W. A. Spicer, Glenn Calkins, E. E. Cossentine, J. E. Weaver, M. V. Campbell, L. L. Moffitt, T. H. Jemison, W. E. Read, F. D. Nichol, M. L. Rice, F. H. Yost, C. L. Bauer.

Upon this group of men was placed the responsibility of carrying out the Autumn Council action calling for a meeting of our denominational leaders from all parts of the world. They were faced with many possibilities and many problems. Thus the success or failure of the Bible Conference largely depended upon their study and the plans they made. A number of sessions were needed to finalize and bring into being a conference that would meet the needs of the church and set a pattern for Bible study during the crisis years just ahead.

Several major decisions were made, and these more or less determined the form the conference would take and the method to be used. First, there was to be no open-forum type of discussion, for observation and experience have taught us that such a procedure usually results in a sum total of little or nothing accomplished of lasting good. Rather, certain great fundamental topics were selected for study, and

then men were chosen to present those topics, the selection depending upon the special fitness or definite interests of the men. This would ensure the greatest good to be accomplished in the shortest time. The topics and men chosen are listed in the table of contents of the two volumes of this printed report.

The second important decision had to do with the daily program and the number of days to be spent together in order to encompass that number of topics. September 1-13, 1952, was chosen because of the close proximity to the Fall Council. The Bible Conference was planned to be an intensive period of study and real work from 8:15 AM to 9:30 or 10:00 PM. With six Bible study periods each

day and one for a devotional and revival hour, the delegates were all convinced that it was to be a time of spiritual and intellectual feasting.

The third great decision set the mold for the oral and printed reports. Each topic was to be carefully prepared and written out for publication after the conference had finished its work on it. A committee of counselors was provided to study each paper and offer suggestions to the author as to how the topic might be made richer, fuller, and deeper. This committee included D. E. Rebok, Roger Altman, F. H. Yost, R. A. Anderson, W. E. Read, E. D. Dick, L. E. Froom, L. K. Dickson, F. Lee.

It was arranged that a number of question hours should be scheduled at which times any delegate might have his questions pertaining to the various topics answered from the pulpit. The questions were written out, signed by the questioner, and placed in the question boxes. Then the chairmen of the Bible Conference acted as a committee to select those questions that were of sufficient importance and general interest to be answered publicly.

President W. H. Branson and Vice-Presidents R. R. Figuhr, A. V. Olson, H. L. Rudy, and L. K. Dickson as chairmen of the Bible Conference conducted the entire session on time and according to schedule. It was an outstanding example of order and careful planning.

A tape recording of the entire conference was made for a permanent record of that great event in Seventh-day Adventist history.

The success of the entire session was largely due to the splendid work done by the following committees:

1. Platform Committee-E. W. Dunbar, R. M. Whitsett, Merle Mills.
2. Music Committee-Charles Keymer, C. H. Lauda, Bradford Braley, Faith for Today quartet.
3. Housing Committee-W. J. Harris, J. A. Stevens, J. F. Cummins, C. W. Bozarth, T. E. Lucas.
4. Committee on Devotional and Revival ServicesH. M. S. Richards, W. A. Fagal, Glenn Calkins, R. M. Whitsett, E. W. Dunbar.
5. Seating Committee - J. A. Stevens, Roger Altman, G. E. Peters.
6. Distributing Committee-W. P. Bradley, E. E. Roenfelt, J. A. Stevens, N. W. Dunn, H. T. Elliott, J. I. Robison.
7. Committee on Saturday Evening Programs-Paul Wickman, E. R. Walde', W. A. Fagal.
8. Ushers. T. E. Lucas, L. A. Skinner, H. F. Brown, A. A. Esteb, W. J. Harris, F. L. Peterson, D. A. McAdams, L. R. Rasmussen, G. M. Mathews, T. R. Flaiz, Paul Wickman, E. R. Walde, Frank Knight, C. E. Moseley.
9. Bible Conference Secretaries-1). E. Rebok, F. H. Yost, L. E. Froom, R. A. Anderson.
10. Stenographers and Reporters-Mary Paul, Evelyn Wells, Marion Nyman, Grace Sampson, Frances Maiden, Mildred Dumas, Leona Running.

A program booklet placed in the hands of all in attendance gave complete information on the organization of the conference. On page 2 of that program were two very significant statements which greatly impressed and influenced all who attended those thirteen days of meetings. We include them here in our permanent printed report:

The Bible Conference of 1948

Great truths were revealed to the pioneers in the Advent movement through diligent study of the Bible. Such men as Joseph Bates, Hiram Edson, James White, Father Pierce, and others-about fifty in number -came together in a series of Bible conferences at Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20-24, 1848, in Albert Belden's house; in Volney, New York, beginning August 18, in Brother Arnold's barn. In Port Gibson, New York, August 27, 28, in Hiram Edson's barn; again at Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8, 9; and in Topsham, Maine, October 20-22 in Brother Howland's house. Concerning these meetings Ellen G. White wrote:

"I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word."

“Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more,’ the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.” [3] In 1854 she described that experience in these words:

“We had to search and wait the opening of truth, receiving a ray of light here and ray there, laboring and pleading for God to reveal truth to us. But now the truth is plain; its rays are brought together.” [4]

As early as March, 1849, Mrs. White wrote in a letter, “Our position looks very clear; we know we have the truth.” About the same time James White declared, “It seems that those who come into the whole truth now will stand.” May we at the close of the 1952 Bible Conference be able to affirm with Mrs. White, “We have the truth, we know it.” [5]

The Bible Conference of 1952

We meet at our world headquarters in Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., not to find new and untried ways or teachings, but rather to build on the solid foundations laid so well in the Bible conferences of 1848 and later. We are here at this conference to dig deeper, to look higher, and to strengthen our faith and confidence in the great fundamental teachings of the Bible that have made us a people and that will preserve and hold us as a people in the trying days ahead.

We do well to keep the following words in mind as we begin this Bible Conference:

“We must beware lest, under cover of searching for new truth, Satan shall divert our minds from Christ and the special truths for this time. I have been shown that it is the device of the enemy to lead minds to dwell upon some obscure or unimportant point, something that is not fully revealed or is not essential to our salvation.” [6]

At this conference we do well to focus our attention on the work yet to be done, the great message for the closing hours of this world’s history. Two lines of thought demand our undivided attention. They are set forth in these words:

“At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.” [7]

“The days in which we live are times that call for constant vigilance, times in which God’s people should be awake to do a great work in presenting the light on the Sabbath question. So plainly is the truth to be presented, that no transgressor, hearing it, shall fail to discern the importance of the Sabbath commandment.” [8]

May this Bible Conference send us forth with a clearer conception of our message and our duty in this crisis hour. W. H. BRANSON, President of the General Conference. The message on the last page of the program booklet was frequently quoted and presented several challenging thoughts under the caption:

Meditate Upon These

“On the Day of Pentecost the Infinite One revealed Himself in power to the church. By His Holy Spirit He descended from the heights of heaven as a rushing, mighty wind, to the room in which the disciples were assembled. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now heaven rejoiced in being able to pour upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s power. And, under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession were mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles and disciples exclaimed: ‘Herein is love.’ 1 John 4:10. They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? Thousands were converted in a day. The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightning of heaven, cut its way through unbelief.

“The hearts of the disciples were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth testifying; God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to add to the church of such as should be saved. They called on the believers to arouse and do their part, that all nations might hear the truth and the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord.

“By the grace of Christ the apostles were made what they were. It was sincere devotion and humble earnest prayer that brought them into close communion with Him. They sat together with Him in heavenly places. They realized the greatness of their debt to Him. By earnest, persevering prayer they obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and then they went forth, weighted with the burden of saving souls, filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. And under their labors many souls were brought from darkness to light, and many churches were raised up.” [9]

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” [10]

One of the outstanding and long-to-be-remembered features of the Bible Conference was the music. Bradford Braley at the console of the Connsonata cathedral electronic organ lent to the conference by the Conn Instrument Company, and Charles Keymer, as chairman of the Music Committee, gave to the delegates some of the finest music we have ever heard in one of our conference sessions.” The Music of the Bible Conference” is the title under which several reels of tape recordings may be purchased by those who wish to use such music in connection with radio programs or evangelistic meetings.

In planning for the Bible Conference a number of the men urged that the meetings be climaxed in a communion service to be conducted by the newly appointed pastor of the Sligo church, Taylor G. Bunch, and assisted by the former pastor, Merle Mills. Seldom do four or five hundred Seventh day Adventist ministers and their wives have the privilege of sitting down together quietly to partake of the Lord’s Supper.

It was a solemn occasion, and one of deep heart searching. The Spirit of God was present, and everyone was drawn nearer to God and to one another than ever before. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit became a reality.

The experiences of Pentecost were better understood. God blessed the plans made for the Bible Conference,

and the conference goes down in Seventh-day Adventist history as one of our most significant and precious events.

2. Objectives Of The Bible Conference

It is many years since we have held a Bible Conference such as this. The last one was held in Columbia Hall thirty-three years ago. There are a few here this morning, I believe, who were in attendance at that meeting. Of course, it was a very small meeting compared with the delegation attending this conference.

Since that time our Working staff has been almost completely changed. Those who were on the stage of action at that time have largely passed off, either to retirement or to rest, and so we practically have a new working staff in our work around the world. Also, since then thousands of youth have been trained in our colleges and have accepted a call into the ministry or some other phase of missionary service, and are now in our work. In many of the mission lands there are today thousands of nationals gathered from among the tribes and peoples of earth, who are numbered with our ministers and who are preaching this message to the people of their own races.

With the tremendous advance that has been made in recent years, it seems almost imperative, therefore, that a conference such as this should be called for the particular purpose of reaffirming those great and fundamental truths that have most certainly been believed among us throughout all our history.

If there ever was a time when the church needed to preach a united and positive message to the world, that time is now. I am sure we all recognize that fact. We who are here this morning realize that we are living through the closing hours of probationary time. We ‘stand on the very threshold of eternity. In such a time as this the church of God must give its most potent and powerful message to the world. Its preachers should be mighty in the Scriptures. The times demand it. The urgency of the message for this hour, this time, demands a new type of preaching. I believe that the preachers of the Advent message ought to be the most powerful exponents of the truth that have ever come upon the stage of action since the fall of man. A group of men whose hearts, God has touched, who are filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, must go out to give God’s last appeal to the nations of the earth and to make ready a people prepared for their Lord.

We realize, of course, that the hour is growing late, very, very late, and that the plan of redemption, if it has ever been made clear and plain to men, ought to be made plain to them now, so that no man will be left in any doubt as to how he can be saved.

There is also need, as we all realize, of unity in our preaching. I think one of the things that have made this church strong and have resulted in its great growth through the years has been the fact that there has been a unity of belief and of preaching such as is seldom

found in any religious organization. It has often been said, and rightly so, that if one of our ministers begins a series of meetings and gets halfway through, and perhaps through failing health or for other reasons has to lay down the burden, almost any other minister of the church could be called upon to come in and take up the work where he laid it down and go right on and give a series of studies that would link up perfectly with what has been given before.

The message is one message, and the fact that there has been the voice of authority in the church through the gift of the Spirit of prophecy has resulted in bringing about a unity of this faith that has seldom been paralleled. And I believe that this unity should be strengthened, for we are told in 1 Corinthians 1:10 that the Lord desires that we should all be united fully in our preaching and teaching, so that there may be no division among us. I want to read that to you because Paul expresses it here so graphically:

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” - he puts great earnestness into this statement and strong emphasis.

“I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions [“schisms,” margin] among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

Surely to this end we ought all to pray. As we enter into this Bible Conference may it be with a prayer in our hearts that this may have a unifying influence throughout this whole world as our workers learn of what was said and done at this meeting, and that the unity that has been seen among us all through the years may be greatly strengthened.

Paul says, “I beseech you. . . by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing. Of course that doesn’t mean, I am sure, that there will never be any slight divergences of opinion over this or that interpretation of some text of Scripture, but I believe it does mean that on the great lines of fundamental teaching there is to be absolute unity among the people of God.

We have not gathered here from the ends of the earth to debate or to discuss a lot of side issues that have no direct bearing on the plan of salvation. There are many who would like to have us do that. We are told that when it was learned that we were not going to conduct an open forum here and discuss certain moot questions, some who had planned to attend, decided they wouldn’t come. They lost all interest in the conference. Hundreds of individuals have had suggestions as to what should be considered at this meeting. And had we followed all these suggestions we would have had a wonderful conference in some respects. But I am afraid the results would not have been very desirable. Every man who has some theory of his own about some obscure text or interpretation desires very much that that question be aired at this meeting and be settled here by the church. But I believe, brethren, that we have greater things to consider here than questions that are somewhat or entirely unrelated to the great plan of redemption. Our success in this mighty effort to prepare a people from among all nations to meet the Lord will be in proportion to the understanding of those truths that made us a people, and to our personal conviction that those messages constitute God’s appeal to the nations of this generation.

We have great verities to preach. Our message, brethren and sisters, is the everlasting gospel. It is an explanation of how God undertakes to save sinners. This gospel, of course, is placed in a different setting at this time from that which it has ever been in before, and a new urgency has come into the gospel, because today we are proclaiming that the hour of God’s judgment is come. We are proclaiming that now Christ in His second appearing is near, even at the door. The kingdom of heaven is actually at hand. This part of the gospel message has never been preached before. It was never present truth before, but now it is present truth that the hour of His judgment is come. It is present truth that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, that the appearing of Christ is about to be witnessed; and therefore it is present truth that probation is closing and that men and women who desire to be saved must hasten to bring about their salvation by surrendering to the Lord Jesus Christ, or it will be forever too late.

These things constitute a new setting for the everlasting gospel. It is a great mistake when we preach only the setting of the gospel and leave out the core. Let us remember all through this conference that our great message to the world is how men are saved, what Jesus did and is doing now to bring about the salvation of the human family. And anything short of the great proclamation, a powerful proclamation of the everlasting gospel, will cause us to fall short of the accomplishment of the task that God has given us to do.

We are told in 2 Timothy, the fourth chapter, verses 1, 2, where Paul is speaking to the young preacher Timothy (but of course it applies as well to us), that those who undertake to preach the gospel are to preach it from the Word of God.” I charge thee therefore before God.” These are familiar words, because most of you here this morning are ordained ministers. When you stood before the church, the body of Christians, and one in authority stood before you and read to you the charge at the time of your ordination, these are the words you heard, aren’t they?

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom; Preach the word.” And I believe that that message is needed as much today as it was when Paul wrote to this young preacher Timothy.” Preach the Word!” The reason for that is that God’s messages are contained in the Bible. That is where we find His message. Our preachers should be mighty in the Scriptures. We are known in some parts of the world, at least, as Bible preachers, Bible Christians. And I hope we shall always retain that name, that designation, and that we shall never drift away from the preaching

of the Word of God to the place where we shall begin to weaken in our proclamation of the gospel. I believe that the fact that God's messages are contained only in His Word needs great emphasis in this conference or any other conference similar to this. The Word of God, we are told, is different from the words of men. The Word of God is quick, or living, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. It can pierce right into the hearts of men. In the Word of God there is a regenerating power, salvation power. The Word of God is powerful enough to place a fallen character on his feet again; to reach down to the very lowest of the low, to those who are living in sin, lift them up and place their feet on the solid rock of truth, put them in contact with Heaven, and make it possible for them to have an inheritance among all them who are sanctified. No other words will accomplish anything of this nature. No message of man will ever bring a soul to the new birth or lift a man or woman out of sin. You may read Shakespeare all your life and find no change taking place in the spiritual man. You may read the words of other great men of earth, or of all the great men of earth together. Many wise sayings will be found, much education will be gained, but as far as a new life, an inner life, being born in the soul, a transformation of character taking place in the life, that would not be experienced as a result of the word of others as it is experienced as a result of reading the Word of the living God.

The Word of God is quick and powerful so powerful that men who read it and believe it are absolutely changed from the fallen nature that we now have because of Adam's transgression and our own sins to the nature of the living God. The promise is that those who are finally taken into the kingdom of God shall see Him as He is and be like Him when He comes. It is God's purpose to transform men and women here, now, in this life, and to make them exactly what they are to be when they step over the line into eternity. The time for preparation for the kingdom of God is now, and God has laid upon us the burden of preparing men and women for the coming of Christ and for eternity.

Any preparation that is left unfinished until the appearing of Jesus will mean that those who are thus unprepared will be lost. Therefore, if we are serious about our task, we must become mighty exponents of the Word of God. We must hear the words at His mouth and warn men from Him. We must recognize always, brethren, that we are ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ and that it is God's message that the people must hear. We must get this Book open and read its messages to the people in their hearing, and expound those messages, and appeal to the people over and over again to accept those messages because of the power of redemption that is found therein.

We are told that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. It is the arsenal of heaven; it is sharper than any two-edged sword. It accomplishes what nothing else in all the world can possibly accomplish, the salvation of men and women from the power of sin. No preaching of fables to tickle itching ears will save men. We have noticed that the spiritual power of the popular churches has waned just in proportion as their ministers have substituted the preaching of human theories for the plain living Word of God.

There is a statement in Special Testimonies, Series A, Number 8, page 24, that to my mind is very pertinent: "Let the preacher be full of the word of the Lord. Now, there are many preachers who are full of practically everything else. They are very oratorical, full of words. I remember once I was sitting with Brother Spicer on a platform, and a man was preaching in front of us. Brother Spicer leaned over to me as the man was about to finish his talk and said, "He is full of words." That was his only remark just full of words, but not full of the Word of God. We can very easily cover over the message of salvation if we substitute our own words for the reading of the Word of the living God.

Then again from Special Testimonies, Series A, Number 81 page 26, I read:

"The word is the preacher's light, and as the golden oil flows from the heavenly olive tree into the bowl, it makes the lamp of life flash with a clearness and power that all will discern. Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry, if their hearts are susceptible to the Holy Spirit's influence, will feel an inner life."

Brethren, that is the goal that every one of us should work toward, so that when we preach, the people sitting in the pews will feel something. What will they feel? They will feel a new life being born in the heart. Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry will feel a stirring in the inner life; they will hear the voice of the Holy Spirit whispering to them, "This is the way, walk you in it." It is when the Word of God is proclaimed before men that a new life is born in the soul.

"Those who claim to preach the word should preach the word. Rather a pertinent statement, isn't it? I read that from Special Testimonies, Series A, Number 7, Page 45." Those who claim to preach the word should preach the word. And brethren of the Adventist ministry, let me appeal to you to be among that number. It is high time that we give to the people everywhere a plain "Thus said the Lord" for the things we ask them to accept. Human theories are just as weak today as they were in the days of the apostle Paul when he determined that he would not preach in the "words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," and that he was not going "to know any thing among" his hearers "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (2 Corinthians 2:2, 4) He had lost all confidence in the wisdom of men's words, but he had gained great confidence in the power of the words of the living God.

“As a people, we are to stand firm on the platform of eternal truth that has withstood test and trial. We are to hold to the sure pillars of our faith. The principles of truth that God has revealed to us are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value.” [1]

That is because the fundamentals of this great Advent message were founded on the Word of God. It was in small Bible conferences that our brethren met in the early days of this message, and there they worked out a great system of truth, helped and blessed, of course, by the voice of authority that God had placed among them in the church. They worked out a system of truth, we are told, that will carry us right through to the coming of Christ. And therefore the appeal that comes to us here is that we are to stand firm on the platform that has been worked out.

In another place we are told, “We are to stand firmly in defense of our principles, in full view of the world.” [2] And then again:

“I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps, the first, second, and third angel’s messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Woe to him that shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.’” [3]

Now, that brings us to the very heart of the question. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which our listeners receive these great fundamentals of the gospel that have been revealed to us as a people.

Someone asked a question just yesterday about new light. Did we hope to receive any new light at this meeting? Well, personally, speaking for one individual, I hope we shall. I hope there will be many new rays of light flashing from this platform during this conference. And I believe we should expect to receive new and additional light until the very coming of Christ, or at least until the close of probation. As we work and study we should be receiving from God’s throne new revelations of the plan of redemption that will help us in our ministry. However, I believe we are safe in saying that any revelation of really new light will only confirm, and will not destroy, light that God has sent us hitherto. God’s kingdom is not divided against itself. If it were, it would not stand.

Any revelation of truth that has come to this people in past years is still truth. We were told long years ago, “It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives.” [4] I think there is certainty in that, isn’t there? I am sure that God lives, and it is just as certain that we have the truth. But that doesn’t say that we have all the truth. And I do not believe that we have all the truth yet. I think that as soon as any church comes to the place where it feels it knows everything there is to know about the plan of redemption, that church has started on the road of retrogression. We must continually expect and search for new rays of light and truth that will brighten the light that has already come to us, causing it to become more and more brilliant and more apparent to those who hear the truth. That is just what we should seek for in this conference. I read from the Spirit of prophecy:

“New light will be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God.” [5]

I hope, brethren, that many of those gems will be brought forth here at this meeting. Why should we not expect that God would illuminate the pathway, make it brighter to us, make the truth more clear, brilliant, in our own hearts, so that we may go out with a new inspiration and power to proclaim the truth to those who are lost?

“Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end.” [6]

So brethren and sisters, right down to the very end of time new light, new flashes of truth, will be coming to the church of God. But, as I have already indicated, these new flashes of truth will only serve to illuminate the truth that we have already had; that is, to make it shine more brightly. It will only confirm in our minds the great fundamentals of the gospel that we have known all along. I read again:

“The old truths, given us at the beginning, are to be heralded far and near. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who with clear vision will discern the intrigues of Satan and will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God.” [7]

God calls upon us to hold firmly with the grip of faith to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority. Then Mrs. White tells us in a letter (Number 179) written in 1902 about certain individuals who “quibbled about matters of no special importance which were not given by the Lord as tests, and dwelled upon their differences of opinion till these differences became as

mountains, separating them from Christ and from one another, destroying unity and love. We are in danger of falling into similar errors. Quibbling about matters of no special importance! Another statement here says: "Christ desires us to break up all vacant reveries, and He points us to the fields ripe for the harvest. Unless we work earnestly, eternity will overwhelm us with its burden of responsibility." [8] Then the appeal is, "Dwell upon questions that concern our eternal welfare." [9]

Brethren, there is a burden of responsibility that rests upon us according to these words, and unless we recognize that fact and unless we hew to the great lines of Bible teaching in our explanations of the plan of redemption, and get out to men as quickly as possible the message as to how they can be saved, eternity will overwhelm us with its great burden of responsibility. Brethren, when Jesus comes I do not want to have to be told that I have failed in my ministry because I was preaching a lot of things that were unessential and very loosely related, at least, to the plan of redemption when I should have been preaching a great message of salvation to lost men. And that is the thing that we are warned against. We are to search for new light, but we are not to indulge in quibbling over a lot of nonessentials. We are to dwell upon questions that concern our eternal welfare." Those things that we cannot clearly comprehend are not a tenth as important to us as are the truths of God's word that we can clearly comprehend and bring into our daily life." [10] Every truth that is essential for us to bring into our practical lives, which concerns the salvation of the soul, is made very clear and positive.

Then the admonition comes: "Dwell upon the rich truths of the Scriptures. You have no time to engage in controversy. Side issues which arise are as hay, wood, and stubble as compared with the truths for these last days. Those who leave the great truths of God's word to speak of such matters are not preaching the gospel." [11]

Brethren, I want us to preach the gospel. My appeal to this people in the opening hours of this great Bible Conference is that we should be Bible Christians and Bible preachers. In our preaching of the Bible let us set before the people the great plan of redemption and urge them to accept the gospel, because the hour of God's judgment is come and Jesus is about to return to the earth. I read in this little book Gospel Workers: "Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world." [12]

There are many things we could be uplifting before the world—a lot of theories and pet ideas and fanciful interpretations of prophecy—but it is God's desire that the Seventh day Adventist preacher should be foremost in lifting up Christ before the world. Brethren, let us seek God for power and wisdom and understanding to do just that.

And then let us understand too that we are prophetic preachers—not prophets. I think it is very essential for those whose message is largely built upon prophecy to understand that their chief responsibility as prophetic preachers is to deal with prophecy already fulfilled. When we do that we are always safe. But when we try to prophesy and to fill in what the prophets didn't put into certain prophecies, filling in the details as to how these prophecies yet unfulfilled are going to come to pass, we always get into great difficulty.

James White said: "Fulfilled prophecy may be understood by Bible students. Prophecy is history in advance. He can compare history with prophecy and find a complete fit as the glove to the hand, it having been made for it. But in exposition of unfulfilled prophecy, where the history is not written, the student should put forth his propositions with not too much positiveness, lest he find himself straying in the field of fancy. There are those who think more of future truth than of present truth." [13]

And isn't that so? There are those, and we find many of them, who think more of future truth that is not yet actually revealed than of present truth that is as clear as the noonday sun. Jesus said, "I have told you before it come to pass that when it is come to pass, you might believe." So I believe that our great safety as prophetic preachers is to preach fulfilled prophecy. There is enough of it, brethren, to keep us busy until the Lord comes. And as prophecy fulfills more and more, and we receive an understanding of exactly how history has fulfilled the prophecy, then we can add that fulfilled prophecy to our preaching.

There are, of course, some things in unfulfilled prophecy that are made very clear. And where the detail is given as to what is to take place, then we have a right to preach that, because we do not thus become prophets; but where the detail is not filled in, where the prophets have been silent on certain points, then we too should be silent until we know from history exactly what the fulfillment of that prophecy is to be like. We have asked the brethren who are to do the speaking at this conference to try to hold themselves to these principles.

And may I say on behalf of those who have been chosen to speak, that we are just as frightened as you would be if you were up here in our place. We had a meeting of these men last night, and I know how they feel. They feel that they have had laid upon them a tremendous responsibility. And, brethren, you might just as well have been the ones to be chosen in our places. We want to appeal to you at this first hour to pray for us. Do not condemn us for a word we might say that might not be just exactly the right word. Possibly you would make some mistakes too if you were here in our places and were as frightened as we are. This is the hardest job that I know of that has ever been given to preachers, to stand before theologians, brethren from all over the earth, Bible teachers from our colleges, evangelists, and men who are mighty in the Scriptures, and undertake to set before you anew the great verities of this message. So we

beg you to pray for us. We beg you to help us in every possible way, and let us seek God that this conference may not be a failure and may not prove to be a disappointment to Him or to His people, but that it may be all that God would have it be.

At this point I want to present one more statement that was written by Mrs. White when she was preparing the manuscript for the book *The Desire of Ages*. It expresses the feeling, I am sure, of every man who has been chosen to act a leading part in this Bible Conference. She says as she wrote about her work in connection with *The Desire of Ages*:

“I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subjects of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear, lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God, and say, Who is sufficient for these things?” [14]

That is our attitude and that is our feeling, and that is why we crave your prayers, your sympathy, and your cooperation in this great conference.

3. Recent Discoveries Confirm The Bible

SIEGFRIED H. HORN

For many centuries Christians believed in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Theologians quarreled about the nature of Christ, the meaning of certain texts, and whether divinely given requirements of the Old and New Testaments were still binding under changing conditions and circumstances. The popular church of the Middle Ages almost replaced the Bible with substitutional books and traditions, but never dared to challenge its inspiration or veracity. The Reformation, on the other hand, turned to the Bible as basis for its teachings and doctrines. The Reformers themselves were great students and translators of the Bible, promoted fervently a wide distribution of the Scriptures, and built the Protestant churches upon the Word of God.

This whole attitude toward the Bible was changed during the latter part of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century. An age of rationalism and reasoning began, and man tried to find proofs for everything that had been held as truth. People were no longer satisfied with traditional beliefs. A spirit of inquiry and search after the unknown led to marvelous discoveries and inventions. Unknown regions on this globe were explored, new ways of transportation found, and many new laws of nature discovered. Men also became inquisitive about the past and tried to reconstruct ancient history. Theologians trained in this way of thinking applied the same reasoning to Bible history, and wanted to know whether the beliefs of their ancestors would stand the test of reasoning and exploration. Inasmuch as so little of the Bible story could be proved by actual ancient documents, critically inclined scholars became doubtful about the veracity of the Bible records and began to look upon them as ancient legends, myths, and folklore.

Driven by this inner urge to explore the past, men went to the countries around the Mediterranean, where most of the ancient civilizations had flourished, and dug up ruins of cities covered by the sand and debris of centuries. They found the remains of long-forgotten cultures, the archives of royal palaces, state departments, and temples; they deciphered previously unknown scripts and recovered lost languages. Archaeological and literary treasures found during the last hundred years in the dust heaps of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Palestine-Syria contain valuable information which enables us today to reconstruct much of the history of nations in whose midst the people of God lived. While there are still very long and serious gaps in our knowledge of ancient history, we know today infinitely more than our grandparents did.

Much of this information has been extremely useful in elucidating the history of the Bible, and has given us a tremendous amount of material that supports the Bible story, solves seeming contradictions, or gives us the background material necessary to a better understanding of the historical parts of God's Word. One needs only to read through a conservatively written Bible commentary published one hundred years ago to see how great the progress has been in our knowledge. At that time fundamentalists struggled hard to explain difficult and apparently contradictory texts in the Bible that were used by the critically inclined scholars to discredit God's Word. Very many of these difficulties have entirely vanished since discoveries have given us background material that helps us to see the reasons for statements that seemed unintelligible or contradictory. Many critical scholars admit today that the Bible has to be treated with greater respect since the archaeological evidence has shown how accurate its records are. [1]

Archaeological discoveries are usually not of such a sensational character as many Christians think, and sensational discoveries have very frequently no direct bearing on the Bible. This is one of the reasons why archaeological discoveries have very often been distorted by well-meaning but ill-advised conservative writers to make them say something which supports the Bible, whereas they actually have no bearing on the Bible at all. Much harm has been done, and is all the time being done, in books and articles by giving credit to archaeologists for finding material that actually never was found. The well-informed reader loses confidence in the book or periodical in which he reads untrue or distorted reports, and is deprived of the benefit which other parts of that book or periodical, with its spiritual message, might have brought to him.

I shall mention only a few sensational reports that have appeared in various periodicals during the last three or four years. One report stated that Abraham's private library, consisting of many cuneiform tablets, had been found in Egypt. He had reportedly brought it from his Mesopotamian home to Egypt and left it there to be picked up by the modern excavator. Another report mentions an inscription found on Mount Sinai, in which Moses tells how he was recovered from the Nile by Pharaoh's daughter and had been made chief overseer over Pharaoh's mines. Some writers have mentioned that inscriptions have been found which originate from before the Flood, others that the Babylonian fiery furnace out of which the three worthies were saved, has been discovered. One story tells of inscriptions found in the ruins of Jericho, mentioning the Israelites; another article states that an Egyptian king fought against King Asa of Judah, then returned and recorded his defeat on the temple walls. It is superfluous to add the frequently repeated story about the discovery of Noah's ark on Mount Ararat. All these reputed discoveries, to which I could add many more from my files, have never been made and many of them never will be. Every well-informed person reads such reports with a smile if not with disgust.

The student of the Bible does not need to take recourse to fanciful stories of discoveries. He has much material with which he can defend the inspired Word of God, although his source material may not be so sensational as the supposed discoveries just mentioned. Every discovery has helped to round out the picture of the political, cultural, or religious history of the nations with which the children of Israel had to deal, whether it was the tomb of Tutankhamen or the royal archive in the Hittite capital at Boghazkoy, the political correspondence of a Mesopotamian king who lived in the time of Jacob or the submarine explorations of the harbor installations of old Tyre. Although in some cases these discoveries have no direct bearing on the Bible story, they give us much information to widen our knowledge with regard to the religious and cultural conditions and the political history of the times in which the events of the Bible story took place.

Many discoveries, however, have an actual and very important bearing on the Bible. One of the first cuneiform tablets, deciphered by Rawlinson and his fellow laborers in the middle of the nineteenth century, brought to light the name of the Assyrian king Sargon, a king known from the Bible (Isaiah 20:1), but from no other ancient source whatsoever. Therefore Bible critics had doubted the existence of such a king. The students of the Bible were very happy when the recently discovered ancient records, which were just in the process of successfully being deciphered, provided them with factual evidence to defend the Bible against the higher critics. When in 1872 George Smith found the Babylonian story of the Flood among the tablets that had come into the British Museum, a tremendous enthusiasm swept through Christian circles. Here was a text which showed for the first time that the ancient writers of Mesopotamia were well acquainted with this great catastrophe. Then came to light Assyrian royal inscriptions mentioning a number of kings of Judah and Israel who had either fought against the Assyrians or paid tribute.

The finding of the famous Mesha stone in the land of Moab in 1868 clarified the story of Mesha's rebellion and military activity against his Israelite overlord.

In 1887 the archive of King Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton), the famous Tell el-Amarna tablets, was found in Egypt. This archive, consisting of hundreds of letters, in the form of clay tablets, written to the Egyptian overlord by Palestinian and other rulers, revolutionized our knowledge of Canaan's cultural and political conditions during the fourteenth century BC, when the Hebrews had just entered the country, as no other single discovery has ever done. To many students of the Bible it seemed that the invading Habiru described in them were the Hebrews themselves, and that the Amarna Letters gave us part of the account of Israel's invasion as seen from the viewpoint of the Canaanites.

The stela of the Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah, found in 1897 by Petrie, containing the name of Israel, confirmed that the Israelites were known to the Egyptians during the thirteenth century, and that an Egyptian king had fought against them during the period of the judges. Critical scholars who do not believe that the Exodus took place earlier than the thirteenth century BC have had a hard time to explain how Merneptah could have fought in Palestine against the Israelites, while they were—according to their theory—still in Egypt or in the desert of Sinai. They took recourse, therefore, to the explanation that some of the Israelite tribes had not gone down to Egypt at all, and that the king encountered those in Palestine who had remained behind.

The winter of 1901-02 saw the discovery of the famous Code of Hammurabi, which disproved the view held by many critical scholars of that day, that in the time of Moses a highly developed judiciary system did not exist. [2]

Excavations carried out in such famous cities as Nineveh, Babylon, Jerusalem, Gezer, Megiddo, Taarlach, Memphis, Thebes, and numerous other places added many details of significance to the background of ancient history. It is, however, my task to present to you the more recent discoveries which support the Bible, for which reason I confine myself to evidences that either have come to light or have been published during the last twenty-five or thirty years.

There are two ways of presenting archaeological material supporting the Bible to an interested audience. One is to discuss a few isolated but impressive discoveries which verify the Bible story in a remarkable way, as, for instance, the fallen walls of Jericho. Another, is to give a more complete picture about the range of discoveries which deal with a variety of Bible subjects and show in how many directions ancient remains have corroborated the veracity of the Bible.

I have chosen the latter procedure to impress you as theologians, Bible teachers, evangelists, and religious leaders with the wealth of trustworthy material that has recently come to light. The hand of Providence has preserved this material, that we who live in these last days may defend the Bible successfully and legitimately in a way that will demand the respect of people who are at home in this field, and who either hear us or read our articles and books.

Today and tomorrow I want to present some of the material that has shed light on the time of the patriarchs, the Exodus, and the judges, also some discoveries that deal with the period of the kings of Israel and Judah and with the time of the Exile and the Restoration. The last hour allotted to me will be spent in a discussion of the most sensational discoveries made in recent years, to which belongs the discovery of a number of Bible manuscripts that have shown us on how sure a foundation our Bible text rests.

The Patriarchal Age

The stories of the patriarchs were a favorite hunting ground of critical scholars. They considered them unreliable and legendary, and could not see in the patriarchs men of flesh and blood. This situation has changed considerably since the discoveries of the Code of Hammurabi and the excavations of Ur of the Chaldees and the Horite city of Nuzi in Mesopotamia. Evidence found there shows that the social and cultural conditions of the first half of the second millennium BC were exactly those that are reflected in the patriarchal stories of the Bible.

It is not my task to defend or accuse Abraham for marrying his slave and later sending her and the child away, nor do I need to approve or disapprove of the various activities of Isaac, Jacob, and other men of the patriarchal age. I only want to tell you that the recent discoveries have revealed in a very striking way that these men and women followed the practices and customs of their time. For instance, it was customary for a man to marry his slave girl when his wife was barren, and it was customary to let her mistress punish her, if she became overbearing because of the honor she had received. [3]

The many documents from Nuzi dealing with the social conditions of the patriarchal age have presented such striking parallels to these stories that some critical scholars have expressed their surprise concerning the accuracy of the picture of the patriarchal world we gain from the Bible. The following statement from the pen of one of the foremost living orientalists, Prof. W. F. Albright, may be quoted in this connection:

“Eminent names among scholars can be cited for regarding every item of Genesis 11-50 as reflecting late invention, or at least retrojection of events and conditions under the Monarchy into the remote past, about which nothing was thought to have been really known to the writers of later days. The archaeological discoveries of the past generation have changed all this. Aside from a few die-hards among older scholars, there is scarcely a single biblical historian who has not been impressed by the rapid accumulation of data supporting the substantial historicity of patriarchal tradition.” [4]

One example from Nuzi will show clearly how the ancient records elucidate Biblical stories. A certain adoption contract informs us about the existing rules of adoption. A rich man by the name of Nashwi adopted a young man called Wullu. Provision was made that the adopted young man should marry the daughter, but would have to support his foster father as long as he lived. After Nashwi's death Wullu would inherit the parental property, including the household gods, if no sons would be born to Nashwi in the meantime. Should sons be born, the adopted son would share the property equally with the real sons, but the household gods would be retained by the sons. [5]

Other texts from Nuzi tell us that the children of an adopted son who had married the daughter of the foster parent, remained the children of their grandfather during his lifetime. [6] If this situation is applied to Jacob and Laban, we find an almost complete harmony between these Biblical stories and the conditions as reflected in the Nuzi texts. Laban apparently had no sons when Jacob came into his family, and therefore he adopted him. Jacob married Laban's daughters, but Jacob's sons remained his father-in-law's children as long as he lived. (Genesis 31:28,43) Later on sons must have been born to Laban (Genesis 31:1), which development changed the legal situation for Jacob and his wives. Therefore they had no right to take the household gods of Laban when they left him, a fact which was recognized by Jacob as well as by Laban. (Genesis 31:30-32)

It was also customary, according to the Nuzi texts, to give a handmaid as part of the dowry to each daughter that was given in marriage, [7] in the same way as Jacob received a handmaid with each one of his wives as Laban's gift. (Genesis 29:24, 29) Other texts have revealed how accurately the stories of the patriarchs fit into the period in which they lived. This led Alfred Jeremias, a very critical scholar, to make the following statement:

“We have shown how the milieu of the stories of the Patriarchs agrees in every detail with the circumstances of Ancient-Oriental civilization of the period in question, as borne witness to by the monuments. The actual existence of Abraham is not historically proved by them. It might be objected: it is included in the picture. In any case, it must be allowed, the tradition is ancient. It cannot possibly be a poem with a purpose of later time. In view of the situations described, we might say the story could more easily have

been composed by an intellectual writer of the twentieth century after Christ, knowing Oriental antiquity by means of the excavations, rather than by a contemporary of Hezekiah, who would have used the civilization of his own time in descriptions, and certainly would not have any excavated antiquities. Wellhausen worked out from the opinion that the stories of the Patriarchs are historically impossible. It is now proved that they are possible. If Abraham lived at all, it could only have been in surroundings and under conditions such as the Bible describes. Historical research must be content with this. And Wellhausen may be reminded of his own words (Komposition des Hexateuch 346): If it (the Israelite tradition) were only possible, it would be folly to prefer any other possibility.” [8]

The excavations of Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham, was born and reared as a young man, show also that he was the citizen of a highly civilized and cultured metropolis. In Ur’s schools the children were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography. The houses of ordinary citizens were better built at the time of Abraham than are the present-day houses of the lower-class people in Baghdad. The excavator Sir Leonard Woolley expresses his astonishment when making these discoveries by saying:

“We must revise considerably our ideas of the Hebrew patriarch when we learn that his earlier years were spent in such sophisticated surroundings; he was the citizen of a great city and inherited the traditions of an ancient and highly organized civilization.” [9]

The Bible tells us that the population of Palestine at the time of Abraham consisted of Amorites (Genesis 15:16) and that also Hittites lived in south Palestine (Genesis 15:20; 23:3). Light on these texts was thrown from an unexpected source. Some years ago numerous clay figurines were found in Egypt representing in a very crude way bound prisoners of foreign countries. On them were written magical spells to curse Egypt’s enemies, who are mentioned by name, with the places where they lived. These figurines come from the eighteenth century BC and another very similar series of texts from the nineteenth, hence from the patriarchal age. They contain the names of about one hundred of the local rulers of Palestinian and Syrian cities and tribes. Many of the names can be identified. Such names show us that the rulers of Palestine and Syria during the time of the patriarchs were Amorites. It is interesting to notice that we possess now from extra-Biblical sources the names of three kings who ruled over Jerusalem before the Hebrews came into the country. Two of them bore the Amorite names Yaqar-Aarmi and Sasa-Anu, [10] and one had the Hittite name Puti-Hepa. [11] This agrees in a remarkable way with a statement made twice by Ezekiel (16:3,45). Speaking about Jerusalem, Ezekiel says: “Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.” The fact that the only kings of Jerusalem known from outside sources bore Amorite and Hittite names is a wonderful corroboration of the above quoted statements of Genesis and Ezekiel.

The Bible mentions iron in the patriarchal period. (Genesis 4:22; Deuteronomy 3:11, etc.) These texts are often taken as anachronistic, because many scholars will not admit any extensive use of iron before the twelfth century BC. However, iron tools have been found recently embedded in the masonry of two pyramids of the 4th dynasty. Iron objects were found in tombs of the 6th, 11th, and 18th dynasties in Egypt. In Mesopotamia the ruins of Tell Chagar Bazar, Tell Asmar, and Mari have produced iron implements made in the third millennium, thus furnishing evidence that iron was produced in the earliest periods of history. Texts of the time of Hammurabi (eighteenth century BC) and the Amarna Letters (fourteenth century BC) give literary evidence for the use of iron in the patriarchal and Mosaic age in Mesopotamia and Egypt. [12]

The same can be said of the camel. Abraham possessed camels, according to the Bible (Genesis 24:10), and they were also found in Egypt during his time (Genesis 12:16), but modern scholars tell us that “the assumption that camels were used in Egypt in ancient times” belongs to “the most obvious errors” of the books containing the passages of Genesis 12:16 and Exodus 9:3.” [13] It is true that according to our present evidence the domesticated camel cannot have been widely used in the third and second millennia BC. But we have abundant evidence that it was sporadically used throughout the patriarchal period, and before, as a beast of burden in Egypt, Syria-Palestine, and Mesopotamia.” [14]

That the patriarchs were no legendary figures is proved by their names. The names of Terah, Nahor, Haran, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Pinehas, et cetera, [15] have all been found in extra-Biblical sources. The names of the earlier patriarchs are mentioned in cuneiform texts of Mesopotamia, whence these men came, while the names of

men connected with the Exodus movement have been found in Egyptian records. This does not mean that we have documents mentioning the individuals who are so well known to us through the Bible, but their occurrence in outside texts of this period reveals to us that their names were real and commonly used names and that their bearers fit into the society in which they lived.

For a long time the Egyptian name Zaphnath-paaneah (Genesis 41:45), given to Joseph by Pharaoh, was a puzzle. One of the many recent discoveries made in Egypt brought this very name to light and has given us one more proof that the Bible names are not fictitious. [16]

Bible critics claimed emphatically during the nineteenth century that the Hebrew script had not existed in the time of Moses. They considered this argument one of the strongest points of their reasoning that the Pentateuch was written many centuries later. This view was, of course, refuted long ago, even before World War 1, but more material has come to light in recent years which shows that Hebrew writing was more widespread during the Mosaic period than was thought possible some years ago. A number of inscriptions

originating from the first half of the second millennium BC and written in alphabetic script have been found in Palestinian cities; also numerous alphabetic inscriptions showing that Hebrew alphabetic writing was widely used in the very area where Moses wrote his book of Genesis and the other books of the Pentateuch, have been discovered on the Sinai peninsula. [17] A little tablet discovered three years ago at Ras-Shamra (Ugarit) in Northern Syria, contained the complete alphabet in the Canaanite script. This proved that the Hebrew alphabet had existed in the same sequence in the fifteenth century BC as we have it today, something which no one hitherto believed to be possible. [18] Nothing could better refute the old theory of the critics that writing was not sufficiently known in Moses' time to make possible the writing of the Pentateuch than this discovery.

The Exodus and the Invasion of Canaan

No archaeological evidence has been found that has a direct bearing on the Exodus. The Egyptians were loath to admit any defeats and never recorded national catastrophes. Therefore we can never expect to find any references to the Exodus in Egyptian documents. Furthermore, the Israelites naturally left no traces of their forty years' wanderings through the deserts of Sinai and Trans Jordan. Therefore we cannot expect to find much archaeological evidence from this very important period.

However, the fall of Jericho was an event that left its marks not only on the minds of the contemporary Canaanites but also on the remains of the city itself. From the ruins of that city come our strongest proof for the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan. Extensive excavations carried out from 1930 to 1936 by Prof. John Garstang laid bare great parts of the city walls, which had been destroyed in Joshua's time by supernatural causes. Garstang found that the city of Joshua's time had been surrounded by two walls, which had both fallen down the slopes of the mound on which Jericho had been built. He attributed this event to an earthquake, which proves that the city was not conquered through an attack in Joshua's time, but fell through divine intervention. He also found that the city had been so congested that private houses had been built on top of the city wall. Beams had been laid across the two walls and houses built on them. [19] In no other excavated city of Palestine has any evidence been found that houses were built on top of the city wall. The story of Rahab, who lowered the spies through a window of her house, mentions the fact that "her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall." (Joshua 2:15) This fact must have been something extraordinary to the inspired author, who had never seen houses built on top of city walls, for which reason he explained it to his readers, who otherwise could not have understood how she had been able to let the spies down through a window, which act placed them at the same time outside of the locked city walls.

The excavations of Garstang showed, furthermore, that a tremendous fire had been deliberately kindled and intensified by additional fuel." The layer of ashes was so thick and the signs of intense heat so vivid, that it gave the impression of having been contrived, that fuel had been added to the fire. Amongst the embers were traces of charred reeds and bits of wood: it is true that such materials were employed locally to roof the houses, but here was ten times more than was necessary for that purpose, and traces were equally abundant outside the house areas as within. It was the same between the city walls, where in places the pile of burnt matter was as much as five feet high, and the inner face of the main wall still showed clear signs of the conflagration for several years after it had been exposed. It looks, in short, as though Jericho was finally burnt after deliberate preparation; that it was in fact devoted as a holocaust, precisely in the manner described in the Book of Joshua: "They burnt the city with fire and all that was therein (6:24)." [20]

That the people of Jericho were cut off in full activity was clearly seen from the mass of household objects which were found in the ruined houses, together with the last meals, all charred but unmistakable." Family provisions of dates, barley, oats, olives, an onion and peppercorns" were found with some bread, and "a quantity of unbaked dough which had been laid aside as the leaven for the morrow's baking. [21] All this shows how unaware of the approach of this great catastrophe were the population of Jericho, and how true the Bible story is.

Even though the story of the fall of Jericho has been wonderfully indicated by modern excavations, the date of the fall of the city is still somewhat disputed. The excavators date it at about 1400 BC, which, if correct, gives us an extra Biblical date for the Exodus and the invasion of Canaan. Other competent excavators have not accepted this date, but lowered it as much as one hundred years. In order to clear up the uncertainty about the date of the fall of Jericho the Palestine Exploration Fund and the American Schools of Oriental Research reopened the excavations of Jericho under the leadership of one of the most competent archaeologists, Miss Kathleen Kenyon. The first excavation took place last winter but provided no evidence to settle this very important problem. The area of excavation brought to light the remains of earlier cities, but all traces of Joshua's city in that particular section had been completely wiped out. We still have to wait for other campaigns to give us the information we are looking for.

For many years scholars have debated whether the Habiru, who appear in the Amarna tablets as invaders of Palestine from across the Jordan during the fourteenth century, were the Hebrews or not. Recent discoveries have strengthened the equation. A stela found several years ago at Beth-Shan inscribed by Ramses II mentions the Habiru as living in the same section of Palestine where the Hebrews lived during the period of the judges in the thirteenth century BC. [22] A new tablet from the Amarna archive mentions a certain chief of the Habiru in Palestine without revealing his name, [23] and the recently discovered Memphis stela of Amenhotep II speaks of the Habiru prisoners he made in Palestine. [24] More and more scholars have recently accepted the thesis that the Habiru were the Hebrews. Professor Albright gave up his neutrality a few months ago and stated:

“There is in general such extraordinary resemblance between the role of the Habiru and that of the Hebrews in the earliest biblical sources that it is scarcely possible to doubt some relation.” [25]

If this equation is correct, as I have personally believed it to be for many years, we have stronger evidence than before that the Hebrews invaded Palestine during the fourteenth century, and that the Amarna tablets and other contemporary documents describe the plight of the Canaanites as they saw it.

This is also illustrated in a fragmentary relief of the tomb of King Haremhab (reigning about 1349-1319 BC), which had been built when he was still a general, before he became king. It depicts Canaanites humbly requesting to be admitted to Egypt. The broken inscription explaining the pictures states that “foreigners, and others have been put into their places. . . . destroying them, as well as desolating their towns.” [26] This inscription also tells us that these unfortunate people had been starving and living like beasts of the deserts before they reached Egypt, where they tried to get a haven of refuge. The inscription is from the middle of the fourteenth century BC, and seems to refer to the Canaanites, who had been defeated by Joshua and the Hebrews and driven from their cities and their country.

The Bible story depicts the Canaanite religion as one of idolatry and moral degeneration. God had shown much mercy to the Canaanites for centuries before He finally destroyed them. But when the measure of His indignation was full, He charged the Hebrews to show no mercy to those people who would only corrupt their morals if they should have any dealings with them. Very little was known about the Canaanite religion outside of the Bible until a few years ago. In 1929 the excavation of Ras Shamra, the ancient Ugarit, began, and brought to light hundreds of mythological texts written by Canaanite scribes in the fifteenth century BC in an unknown alphabetic cuneiform script on clay tablets. The script was deciphered in an incredibly short time, and through these tablets we have been able to get a clear picture of the Canaanite religion. We know now their gods, beliefs, and religious rituals. One of their ritual practices consisted in boiling sacrificial kids in the milk of their mothers, [27] a practice which was therefore prohibited to the Israelites. (Exodus 23:19) These texts also give us a clear picture concerning the perverted morals of the Canaanites. The stories they told about their gods were extremely immoral. They tell repeatedly how the god Baal raped his sister Anath, and how she, the goddess, delighted in bloodshed, unspeakable cruelties, and atrocities. [28] They reveal that snake worship and human sacrifices were rife and that ritual prostitution of both sexes were rampant in the temples. These few remarks may suffice to show how repelling the religious concepts and practices must have been at the time when Moses ordered the Israelites to destroy their Canaanite enemies, and by no means have any dealings with them. Few discoveries have shed so much light on Biblical and Canaanite customs during the middle of the second millennium BC as these texts from ancient Ugarit.

Other discoveries have acquainted us with the Horites, a nation of which very little was known up to a few years ago. Today we know that Horites were found throughout Western Asia in the middle of the second millennium. Numerous texts have revealed their history, language, and customs, and elucidated the statements made about them in the Pentateuch. [29]

Another discovery is worth mentioning here. An inscribed statue discovered at the outset of the last war at Alalakh in northern Syria, which was published only two years ago, has enabled us to identify now the home of the renegade prophet Balaam. It describes, furthermore, how the king of this Syrian town once had been driven from his throne and spent some years with the Habiru in Palestine before he was allowed to return to Alalakh. [30] All these discoveries coming from the time when the Hebrews settled in Canaan are most welcome to the student of the Old

Testament. They lighten up for us the background of this very important period, and may in due time allow us to picture clearly the events that took place in the time of Joshua and the early judges, concerning which the Bible record is brief.

Although most modern scholars are still inclined to date the Exodus in the thirteenth century, or to assume that two Exoduses had occurred (a theory totally unacceptable to fundamentalists), one in the fifteenth century BC and a second one in the thirteenth, an increasing number of discoveries have been made in recent years which support a fifteenth-century Exodus. I do not deny that some historical problems connected with an Exodus during the fifteenth century are still awaiting a solution, but this date satisfies the Biblical chronological statements as well as all those made in Ellen G. White’s writings. [31]

The Kingdoms of Judah and Israel

Solomon is described in the Bible as a wise man, a great builder, and a trader of international fame. The numerous destruction of Jerusalem and the inaccessibility of the Temple area to excavators have provided us with little evidence of the tremendous building activities in his capital. In Megiddo, however, the remains of the Solomonic level brought to light great stables providing room for five hundred horses, with the official residences of the governor and the commander of the chariots of Solomon in that section of the country. [32] Megiddo is one of the cities mentioned in the Bible in connection with Solomon’s extensive building activities to provide fortified cities for his chariots. (1 Kings 9:15; 10: 26; 2 Chronicles 1: 14.)

The Bible tells us also that Solomon built his ships at Ezion-geber, from where they were sent out to bring in the wealth of Ophir, with which country he had active trading connections. (1 Kings 9:26; 2 Chronicles 8:17.) It states furthermore that gold, silver, and bronze were more plentiful during his reign than ever before or later. (2 Chronicles 9:13,14, 27; 4:17,18; 1 Kings 7:46,47.) The explorations of Nelson Glueck made in Edom before the last war, discovered Solomon's copper mines, and a great copper production center at Eziongeber at the northeastern head of the Red Sea. In excavating this town a large number of extraordinarily large smelters, with modern-looking flues, were discovered. It was found that a great part of Solomon's wealth came through the production of copper implements, tools and weapons that he apparently used in trading with the neighboring nations. All these objects were fabricated in this (Treat industrial center, in Solomon's Pittsburgh, as Ezion-geber was called by Nelson Glueck. [33]

Shortly after Solomon's death King Shishak of Egypt invaded Palestine and carried away from Jerusalem much of the treasure which Solomon had accumulated. (1 Kings 14:25,26) The list of Palestinian cities Shishak claimed to have conquered, and which he had inscribed on the temple walls of Karnak in Egypt, had been known for many years, but only a few years ago a fragment was found of a stela which King Shishak had erected at Megiddo, in the country of the invasion itself. [34]

Professor P. Montet, excavating the ancient city of Tanis in Egypt, discovered at the beginning of the last war some royal tombs of the same dynasty to which King Shishak belonged. Among them was the tomb of King Shishak II, the grandson of the invader of Palestine. Some of the gold ornaments which were found in that tomb and of which the inscriptions state that they had been given to the deceased by his grandfather Shishak I, may have actually been made of the gold that was taken from Jerusalem. [35] It is the hope of all Egyptologists and students of the Bible that the tomb of King Shishak I may be found also, because the possibility exists that it will contain objects that he brought back from Jerusalem and information concerning his military campaign, which is described in great brevity in the Bible. (1 Kings 14:25, 26)

The American excavations of Samaria uncovered the ruins of Omri's and Ahab's palaces, storehouses, and city walls. For a long time it was not known how one was to understand the text that Ahab had built an ivory house. (1 Kings 22:39) It could hardly be imagined that ivory had been so plentiful as to be used as building material for a palace. Some commentators thought that Ahab's palace had been painted an ivory color, which had given rise to the name "ivory palace"; others thought that it had been decorated with pieces of ivory. This last suggestion has proved to be correct. Numerous beautiful ivory plates were found in the debris of Ahab's palace. They show us the high artistic craftsmanship of Ahab's time, and that his furniture and walls had been overlaid with carved ivory panels, which were also painted in bright colors, as the fragments clearly show. [36] They are the remnants of the spoil the Assyrians took when they conquered Samaria in 722 BC. In cutting down the ivory panels from that palace they left the broken pieces behind in the buildings they burned down. These ivory fragments, preserved by the debris of the ancient palace until they were brought to light again in our days, are now mute witnesses for the veracity of another text of Scripture. Various other ivory panels have been found in an Assyrian palace at Nimrud, the ancient Calah, one of the royal Assyrian residence cities. They are very similar in design to those found in Samaria, and either came from that same palace or were carved after the design that the Assyrians had seen in Samaria. [37]

From Ahab's storehouse came almost one hundred inscribed potsherds. They present tax notes concerning the receipt of oil and wine by the royal treasury. These unpretentious documents are nevertheless of great value in acquainting us with the vocabulary, orthography, and script of the Hebrew language in the ninth century BC. The personal names also reveal the religious mixture existing in Ahab's time, because there were just as many people whose names were connected with Baal as there were people whose names were connected with Jehovah. [38] Among them we find such well-known names as Abibaal, Baalzamar, Baalazakar, Baalmeoni, Meribaal, and Baala, to give a few examples of names that were connected with Baal. Names containing the divine name Jehovah were, Jedalah, Jelioiadah, Shemariah, and others.

These personal names are an indication of the religious conditions prevailing in Ahab's time, when Elijah fought so vigorously against the worship of Baal, but they also show the truth of the divine statement made to Elijah that many had not bowed their knees to Baal (1 Kings 19:18), a fact Elijah had not realized before, thinking that he was the only one left of the true worshipers of God. The Samarian ostraca however show us that there were still just as many parents who gave to their children names connected with Jehovah as there were parents who gave to their children Baal names.

One name of the Samarian ostraca, Egeliu, also connected with Jehovah, is of special interest because of its meaning, "Jehovah is a calf." Jeroboam I had set up two calves in Bethel and Dan, where Jehovah was worshiped as were the idol gods of Israel's pagan neighbors. This became known as "Jeroboam's sin" (1 Kings 12:18-30; 15:34, et cetera), and was one of the main reasons for the downfall of the northern kingdom. Although the golden calves have disappeared long ago, the name of a lowly citizen of Ahab's time bears witness to the fact that the people in his time considered Jehovah to be a calf, as the images of Bethel and Dan taught them.

Documents concerning the fall of Samaria have been known for a long time. The Assyrian king Sargon II claimed in his inscriptions, with which we have been familiar for many years, that he took the city of Samaria at the beginning of his reign and carried away 27,290 captives, besides 50 chariots. [39] For a long time it was believed that he must have been the conqueror of Samaria, although the Bible states that Shalmaneser, Sargon's predecessor, was the king who besieged the capital of the northern kingdom. More recent evidence shows that Sargon attributed to himself something that really his predecessor had accomplished. Of Shalmaneser, the

conqueror of Samaria, all inscriptions have vanished. They were probably willfully destroyed by the usurper Sargon, who followed him on the throne. During the first seven years of his reign he did not claim to have been the conqueror of Samaria, but suddenly, in his eighth year, he started to tell in his inscriptions that he had conquered that city. [40]

The Bible tells us that after the fall of Samaria the Israelites were transplanted into different parts of the Assyrian Empire, to Halah, Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (2 Kings 17:6.) This is the last report we have of them. After they were led into exile the Israelites vanished from history. Some may later have joined the Jews who were carried into the Babylonian captivity, and either returned with them to Palestine under Cyrus or remained in Babylon, where a strong Jewish diaspora was developed. The great majority of the Israelites, being idolatrous and hardly different from other pagans, may have lost their individuality and been absorbed by the people among whom they were settled. Only a few texts that mention some of these captive Israelites have been found in Mesopotamia. One text coming from Tell Halaf, the ancient Gozan, mentioned in 2 Kings 17:6, records the transfer of an Israelite slave girl by the name of Dinah. Other men mentioned in that same text are a certain Ishmael and a slave by the name of Hoshea. [41] One of the Assyrian royal letters found in the capital of Nineveh deals with affairs at Gozan, mentioning two officials with Hebrew names and a certain "Halbishti of the city of Samaria." A number of other texts come from the Chabur region, also mentioned in 2 Kings 17:6 (under the name Habor), which contain a number of Israelite names. [42] These are the only traces we can find of the defeated citizens of the northern kingdom. From that time on they simply disappear, and are not traceable any more by the historian. Everything that is said contrary to this fact by the advocates of the Anglo-Israelite movement, which finds the descendants of the "Ten Lost Tribes" among the present population of the British Isles, is historically unfounded and complete nonsense.

The last years of the Assyrian Empire were shrouded in mystery. With Ashurbanipal (668-639? BC.) our Assyrian sources stop. Many of our history books give us the date 606 BC as the year of the fall of Nineveh. It was only in 1923 that a tablet found among the treasures of the British Museum revealed that this date was wrong. This tablet, published by C. J. Gadd, contains an account of the military campaigns that Nabopolassar of Babylon and Cyaxares of Media conducted against Assyria during the years 616-609 BC. They conquered one city after another and destroyed the Assyrian Empire. This tablet clearly shows that Nineveh was destroyed in the year 612 BC, and that the Assyrian Empire was divided between the two conquering powers during that year. [43] The whole complicated history of Egypt, Babylon, and Judah during this period, for which the Bible is our main source, has been clarified immensely by this one historical text. A number of problems were solved in this way, and there is hardly any period of Old Testament history that we reconstruct with so much certainty and accuracy as the period of Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and their Jewish contemporaries from Josiah to Zedekiah.

Astronomical and other texts written on cuneiform tablets have fixed the reigning years of Nebuchadnezzar so clearly that the synchronisms given in the Bible between his reign and the rule of his Jewish contemporaries allows us to date the beginning of Daniel's captivity (Daniel 1:1) with absolute certainty in the year 605 BC. In the same way Jehoiachin's captivity is dated at 597 BC, and the fall of Jerusalem in July, 586 BC. Since these dates can be fixed astronomically, there is not the least doubt about their accuracy, although many scholars are reluctant to accept them and change from the previously accepted date 598 BC for the captivity of Jehoiachin and 587 BC for the fall of Jerusalem.

The Exile

In recent years critical scholars have paid much attention to the books that were written during and immediately after the Exile, i. e., Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These books were seriously attacked and considered to stand almost on the same level of unreliability as the books of Daniel and Esther, which had been considered to be unhistorical and fictitious for a long time.

When G. H1scher wrote his book on Ezekiel in 1924 he said that the knife of criticism had been put to almost all prophetic books, only Ezekiel had remained untouched, and that it was high time that someone attacked Ezekiel. [44] The most revolutionary theory in regard to Ezekiel was advocated by Prof. C. C. Torrey, of Yale University, who declared it to be a late fiction and historically very unreliable. [45] In the same way he had previously treated the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. He and his followers even went so far as to doubt the historicity of the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar. When the destruction of Jerusalem was questioned, the Babylonian captivity was doubted, and eventually also the return under Cyrus. The discoveries of recent years have made all these critical views untenable and have supported the Bible records in a remarkable way.

The excavations of Lachish, Debir, and other Judean towns show that these cities had been thoroughly destroyed in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that not one case is known in which a town of Judah was continuously occupied through the exilic period." Seals inscribed with the name of King Jehoiachin found in Debir and Beth-shemesh prove the existence of this ephemeral king. [47] Furthermore, a number of tablets had been found in the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace at Babylon, which were deciphered just before the last war. Prof. Ernst F. Weidner found them to be records of provisions handed out by the imperial storehouse to foreign employees and to exiled royalties of Nebuchadnezzar. Among them Jeholachin, king of Judah, his five sons, and their Jewish tutor

appear as recipients of oil and wine. [48] This proves that Jehoiachin was a captive in Babylon during the time when these tablets were written (592 BC and later), a fact that had been doubted very much by a number of critical scholars. Albright, referring to the various discoveries which prove that the events connected with the Exile as recorded by the books of Chronicles and Ezekiel are correct, says that "every pertinent recent find has increased the evidence both for the early date of the Book of Chronicles (about 400 BC or a little later) and for the care with which the Chronicler excerpted and compiled from older books, documents and oral traditions which were at his disposal. The new documentation brings other confirmations of the authenticity of the Book of Ezekiel." [49]

Palestine, which has never favored us with many ancient inscriptions, brought to light twenty-one letters written on potsherds (broken pieces of pottery). They are the dispatches of an army commander who fought against Nebuchadnezzar's army in the last days of Judah's existence as a kingdom. [50] One of these letters contains the message that the writer and his soldiers were still watching the signals of Lachish although they could no longer see those of Azekah. [51] This letter was written during those tragic days of which Jeremiah spoke in chapter 34, verse 7, "When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for these defended cities remained of the cities of Judah."

The same letters also refer to a prophet who seems to have been well known, because he is simply called "the prophet" without his name's being given. [52] A number of scholars think that Jeremiah is referred to, especially since the army commander who wrote the letters leaves the impression in his dispatches that he was a faithful servant of Jehovah.

An interesting parallel to Jeremiah 38. 4 is also found in one of these letters which speak of the princes almost in the same way as the princes spoke of Jeremiah according to the Bible. The princes accused Jeremiah of weakening "the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them," when Jeremiah advised them to surrender to the Babylonians and stop the useless resistance. In this letter, written on a piece of pottery, the army commander wrote to his superior officer concerning a letter sent by the princes: " 'Pray, read them!' And behold the words of the princes are not good, (but) to weaken our hands and to slacken the hands of the men who are informed about them. [53]

These Lachish letters have given us much information concerning the language and script of Jeremiah's time. The similarity of the Hebrew language used in these letters is so close to the language found in the books of Kings, Jeremiah, and of other contemporaries, that there can be no question that we have in these books the actual

writings of their authors, and that no changes have been made in their writings.

Furthermore, these twenty-one letters contain many personal names of men who lived in the last few months of Judah's existence. The great majority of these names are connected with the name of Jehovah, just as the last part of Jeremiah's name is an abbreviation of the divine name Jehovah. They show clearly the influence of Josiah's reform. Idolatry had been stamped out, and all pagan gods had been removed from the country. These letters written some forty years after Josiah's reform clearly reflect the great change that had come over Judah in a religious way. They stand in a marked contrast to the documents that come from Samaria of Ahab's time, showing that there were just as many names connected with Baal as names connected with Jehovah. On the other hand, not one of the names found in the Lachish letters contained the name of a foreign deity. Only the names of Judah's true God, Elohim and Jehovah, are found in these documents. [54]

From the same period comes an Aramaic letter written on a sheet of papyrus that was found a few years ago in Egypt. The letter was written by King Adon of Ascalon (?) and was addressed to Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt, the same king who unsuccessfully tried to come to the help of besieged Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 37:5) In this letter King Adon told the Pharaoh that the Babylonian army was marching along the coast of Palestine toward the south, and that it had advanced as far as Aphek. He requested immediate help from Egypt in order to resist. [55]

The pathetic plea of a Palestinian ruler, who, like King Zedekiah, had listened to the false inducements of Egypt and rebelled against the Babylonian overlord, helps us to understand the terrible disappointment the people of Jeremiah's time must have felt when all their hopes were shattered with the inactivity of the Egyptian army or the little or insufficient help it gave them in their fight against the Babylonians. This letter demonstrates how truly Jeremiah's prophecies were being fulfilled by which he had exhorted the nations surrounding Judah to serve Nebuchadnezzar faithfully, and warned them of the terrible consequences if they rebelled against him. (Jeremiah 27:2-11)

Furthermore, this document is an early example of a diplomatic letter written in Aramaic, which came as a great surprise to the scholarly world. No one had thought that a Philistine king of the late seventh century BC would have used the Aramaic language in addressing an Egyptian king. Inasmuch as this letter comes from the same period in which the Aramaic chapters of the book of Daniel were written, the letter is of great importance to the student of the Bible. There was a time when the books of Daniel and Ezra were vehemently attacked as being late and fictitious productions, because of the Aramaic parts and documents inserted. Today no one knowing the facts can consistently use the Aramaic argument any more to support a later date for these books. The many Aramaic

documents of the fifth century found in different parts of Egypt have furnished us with an abundance of material with which we can refute the claims of these critical scholars. [56]

The rediscovery of Belshazzar forms another glorious chapter in the history of Bible archaeology. Belshazzar was known only from the fifth chapter of the book of Daniel. He was never mentioned by a Greek author, or in any extra-Biblical source of the pre-Christian period, with the exception of the apocryphal book of Baruch, which is based on Daniel. Fundamentalist commentators who defended the book of Daniel a century ago had a hard time to explain the identity of this Belshazzar of Daniel 5. Some thought he was Nabonidus, others that it was another name for Nebuchadnezzar's son Evil-Merodach. When the Babylonian cuneiform texts of the last years of the Babylonian Empire became known, the long-lost name of Belshazzar as crown prince of the last king of Babylon came to light. But it was only when Prof. R. P. Dougherty collected the numerous texts which mention Belshazzar and Nabonidus that the real function of this man became known. Dougherty's book *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, published in 1929, contains a wealth of useful material which supports the historical parts of Daniel. He showed that Nabonidus in his third reigning year had transferred the kingship to his son Belshazzar when he himself left for Tema in Arabia, where he spent many years of his life, and that Belshazzar had exercised the kingship over the Babylonian Empire during the last years of its existence. His investigations led Dougherty to the conclusion that the fifth chapter of Daniel is next to the actual cuneiform tablets the most accurate source of our knowledge of the last days of Babylon. [57]

Prof. R. H. Pfeiffer, who does not believe that the book of Daniel was written in the sixth century BC, but who declares it to be a product of the Maccabean era, is puzzled. He cannot understand how an accurate information about Belshazzar came into the book of Daniel at a time when this king had been completely forgotten in the ancient world, so that none of the Greek authors mention him. Therefore he makes the following statement:

“We shall presumably never know how our author learned . . . that Belshazzar, mentioned only in Babylonian records, in Daniel, and in Bar. 1: 11, which is based on Daniel, was functioning as king when Cyrus took Babylon in 538.” [58]

For us who believe that the book of Daniel was written in the sixth century BC, there is no problem, but a scholar who does not want to give up his critical attitude cannot understand how a man of the Maccabean age could be so accurately informed about the historical events that took place three hundred years earlier, when no reliable source material of that period existed any more.

With all other historians we are still unable to prove the existence of Darius the Mede (Daniel 5:3 1; 6:1 ff. ; 9:1; 11:1) from contemporary records, or to ascertain from extra-Biblical sources of that time the role he played in the days after Babylon's fall. However, since so many obscure and seemingly unhistorical details of the book of Daniel have recently been elucidated and proved to be correct, there is no doubt in my mind that we can trust this book completely and shun any doubts regarding its historical veracity. The unsolved problem in connection with Darius the Mede does not disturb me in the least. A few decades ago our spiritual forebears had the same difficulty with regard to Belshazzar, which problem has now been solved in a wonderful way. New discoveries may at any time throw light on this remaining problem of the book of Daniel.

The Post Exilic Period

Most of the problems connected with the post exilic period are of a minor nature, and so are the archaeological discoveries shedding light on the period of Judah's return from exile and its restoration. The following discoveries may seem to be insignificant in themselves, but each one of them has broken down arguments used by critical scholars against the authenticity of the Scriptures, and has supported seemingly anachronistic or fictitious statements of the Bible.

The use of the dram as a monetary unit in the time of Cyrus as stated in Ezra 2:69 was always difficult to explain. Historians had told us that this word “dram” could not refer to anything except the Dareikos, a gold coin that was introduced by Darius I. If this explanation of the “drams” of Ezra 2:69 were correct, we would have to assume that the author of the book of Ezra was badly informed about the time of Cyrus, and made the Jews use a monetary system that actually did not exist yet. This problem, which seems small to some, was serious in the eyes of those who believed that the book of Ezra records actual facts and not fictitious stories. The difficulty has been solved in recent years. In 1931 W. F. Albright and O. R. Sellers excavated the ancient city of Beth-zur in Palestine, and found that Greek silver coins, the so-called Attic drachma, had been used in Palestine during the early Persian period, [59] a fact which no one would have held possible before this discovery. Once more a small detail of the Scripture narrative was proved to be correct.

There have been very few scholars who were willing to attach any historical value to the book of Esther. Even many fundamentalists were not so sure that this book recorded actual historical facts. It is still not possible to prove the historicity of the story of Esther, but it is a fact that the excavations of Susa (Biblical Shushan) have shown that the writer of Esther must have been very well acquainted with the palace of Susa itself, as well as with the Persian court customs and regulations, since the conditions reflected in Esther agree with the results of recent archaeological investigations in a remarkable way. Some scholars have been much impressed by this fact and

admit that only someone who was intimately acquainted with the royal palace could have written the story in such an accurate setting. [60]

The story implies, furthermore, that the Jews living during the latter part of the reign of Xerxes I received favorable treatment from the Persians. This conclusion gained from the book of Esther is supported by a business archive found in Nippur by the University of Pennsylvania expedition many years ago. The great business house of Murashu & Sons at Nippur was a concern of bankers, real estate agents, brokers, and traders. Their extensive business archive of many thousands of documents covering the time of Artaxerxes I and Darius II has been preserved. These business documents contain numerous names of Jews who had been connected with this famous house of lower Mesopotamia. We find these Jews as moneylenders of considerable amounts, as landlords of great estates, as businessmen dealing with commodities running into great sums of money, and as tax collectors and governors of districts. [61] These documents show clearly that the Jews in the time of Artaxerxes had become rich and had gained much favor with the Persians, implying that something had happened previously that had procured them this favored position in the country of their former exile. They explain at the same time why Ezra found among the Jews who were still living in Mesopotamia little enthusiasm to return to their old but ruined homeland. In this way the story of Esther is indirectly shown to be correct.

The most important support for the historicity of the book of Esther, however, came through the recent discovery of a cuneiform tablet in the Berlin Museum. Prof. A. Ungnad, working on the tablets of the Berlin Museum during the last war, found a text mentioning a certain man by the name of Marduka, the Babylonian transliteration for Mordecai, as one of the high state officials in Shushan during the reign of Xerxes. His title, sipir, indicates that he was an influential counselor. Professor Albright, who brought this discovery to my attention in 1948, said at that time that he had never believed in the historicity of the book of Esther, but this discovery convinced him that a historical kernel must underlie the story of this book. [62] If the story were fictitious, how could we find a man in an influential position bearing the same name the Bible gives Mordecai, in the same city Shushan, and at the right time in which he should have lived according to the Bible.

There is no evidence from the Bible record, nor from outside sources, that any other Jew than the one individual mentioned in the book of Esther was known by the name of Mordecai in the time of Xerxes (486-465 BC). When this man had become "great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren" in the Persian Empire (Esther 10:3), his name became a household word in Jewish circles, and many parents gave their children the name Mordecai. The documents of the business house Murashu & Sons, of Artaxerxes I reigning time (465-424 BC) contain sixty-one personal names of Jews. It is extremely interesting to see that although sixty of the sixty-one names refer only to one individual each, six different Jews had the name Mordecai. [63] All of them apparently had been born shortly after the events recorded in the book of Esther had taken place. A little later the name fell into disuse again, as is seen from the fact that among the forty-six names of Jews mentioned in the documents of the same firm from the time of Darius II (424-405 BC) the name Mordecai does not appear. [64] Many more conclusions can be drawn from these business documents, but the few observations given here should suffice to show how much direct and indirect evidence we have for one of the most hotly contested books of the Bible.

From the first two chapters of Nehemiah we are led to conclude that the Jews used their own calendar system. Although accepting the Babylonian month names, they retained their own civil year, which began in the fall, and did not adopt the Babylonian civil year, which began in the spring. From Nehemiah 1:1 and 2:1 we learn that according to the Jewish reckoning the month of Kislev preceded the month of Nisan in a given reigning year of a Persian king.

Before the cuneiform sources had revealed to us the true calendar system of the Babylonian and Persian kings, scholars depended on Ptolemy's canon in order to arrive at exact dates for these kings. Taking the canon of Ptolemy and the statements of Nehemiah 1 and 2 together, scholars came to the conclusion that the events described in Ezra 7 during Artaxerxes I's seventh year took place in 457 BC. [65] One hundred years ago no one challenged this date. However, the situation has changed since the ancient records revealed the Persian system of computing the reigning years of their rulers. Since, it has been found that the first year of Artaxerxes began in the spring of 464 and ended in the spring of 463, and his seventh year began in the spring of 458 and ended in the spring of 457 BC, the events described in Ezra 7 have been put in the year 458 by most scholars who have written on this subject in recent years. [66] We have been practically the only ones who still hold tenaciously to 457 BC as the year in which the decree of Artaxerxes I went into effect, basing our argument mainly on Nehemiah's statements (Nehemiah 1:1; 2:1), which show that the Jewish reckoning differed from the Persian system.

To reconstruct the Jewish calendar as used during the fifth century has been a difficult task. Fortunately, a great number of Aramaic papyri were found on the Nile island of Elephantine in Upper Egypt, more than forty years ago. [67] These papyri, all written in a Jewish colony during the fifth century, give us much information concerning the religious and civil conditions under which the Jews lived. They furthermore prove that the similar documents interspersed into the books of Ezra and Esther were not fictitious but authentic records. A number of papyri are dated, and some bear double dates, the official Egyptian date and the Aramaic one used by the Jews. By making the double dates agree with each other, a number of scholars have worked on the dates given without being able to solve all the difficulties that arose. Many of them believe that the Jews applied the Babylonian calendar system, but cannot explain why so many of the dates do not agree with the Babylonian dates. [68]

It is to the incontestable merit of Dr. Lynn H. Wood that he has attempted to bring agreement in these double-dated papyri by assuming that the Jews in Elephantine followed their own system of calendar system just as Nehemiah did, although it was not in harmony with the Babylonian calendar, which the Persians had adopted. In this way almost perfect agreement can be achieved, and the evidence points in the direction that we are correct in maintaining that the Jews counted the seventh reigning year of Artaxerxes I from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 BC and not from the spring to the spring.

The material available so far was, however, not precise enough to prove that the Jews actually began their calendar year with the fall during the fifth century, since all dates of the Elephantine papyri were from a part of the year when both possibilities would work, i. e., the spring-to-spring and fall-to-fall calendar system. Recently another fourteen papyri from the same Jewish colony were discovered. They are now in the Brooklyn Museum and will be published in a few months. Eleven of them bear double dates, and one gives us the long sought proof that the Jews of Elephantine began their civil calendar with the fall and counted the reigning years of a Persian king according to their own fall-to-fall calendar. [69] An expression of gratitude is due to Prof. Emil G. Kraeling and Mr. John D. Cooney, of the Brooklyn Museum, who permitted me to announce this discovery prior to the publication of the texts themselves.

This discovery virtually gives us the evidence that we are correct in dating the events described in Ezra 7 as having taken place in 457 BC. If Nehemiah counted the reigning years of a Persian king according to a fall-to-fall calendar system, and the Jews did the same in Egypt, it is only reasonable to assume that Ezra followed the same system.

Other recent discoveries have made us better acquainted with the three great enemies of Nehemiah who frustrated his work so much: Sanballat of Samaria, Tobiah of Ammon, and Geshem the Arabian. (Nehemiah 2:19) All three of them are mentioned in different ancient documents. Sanballat appears in one of the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine as governor of the Persian province of Samaria in the time of Darius II. [70] This explains why he was such a prominent and dangerous antagonist of the Jews, whose opposition Nehemiah could not easily ignore. From the Bible record it was not known that he was the official governor of Judah's neighboring province. To the contemporary readers of Nehemiah's memoirs this fact was common knowledge and needed no extra mentioning, but we were ignorant of this fact. Since we know what an influential person he was, we can better understand that Nehemiah had to use diplomacy as well as determination in order to continue his work and finish it in the face of such a formidable foe.

Tobiah the Ammonite was the head of a very famous Ammonite family, whose palace ruins are still visible in Transjordan. The Zenon papyri found in the Faiyum region of Egypt, which come from the Ptolemaic age, mention the Tobiah family as having extensive trade connections with Egypt. [71] Again we see that another of Nehemiah's opponents did not belong to the ordinary citizens of a neighboring country, but to a very influential circle that did not like to see Judah become a strong nation again.

Geshem the Arabian has also recently been identified in a Midianite inscription from Arabia of the fifth century BC. [72] The foregoing discoveries, which have shed light on the Bible, seem to be of insignificant value, if each one is taken by itself, and most of them elucidate only isolated points of the Bible narrative or support certain phases of the Inspired Word. Everyone working in the field of Biblical archaeology realizes that we are still far removed from the day when we can write an archaeological commentary to every verse of the Bible. It is evident, however, to everyone who has followed the wealth of material that has come to light in recent years, that much has been discovered which supports the historical parts of the Old Testament in a remarkable way. This increased evidence has resulted in more respect being shown to the Old Testament today than some decades ago. Scholars have learned that many phases of the Bible narrative, which they considered to be fictitious, have been proved to be correct, and with the exception of a few die-hards one finds today a modified conservative attitude among many Old Testament scholars. This does not mean that they have given up their critical attitude, and that they have begun to accept the stories of the Bible part and parcel as being true, but they have reached the point of granting a historical basis to many of the Old Testament stories.

The student of the Bible who believes in the inspired Word of God is delighted with this development. He sees that the work of the Biblical archaeologist has resulted in proving the accuracy and veracity of many Old Testament stories, and his confidence in God's Word has been strengthened tremendously. This should embolden him to proclaim the truth of historically unproved parts of the Scriptures with greater force than before, being certain that they are based on just as trustworthy historical evidence as those parts of the Old Testament that can be proved to be correct.

Manuscript Discoveries Support the Bible Text

Christ said in His great speech concerning the last events preceding His Second Coming: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35. These words have stood the test of centuries. The archaeological discoveries have not only given us evidence that reveals the accuracy of the historical events narrated in the Bible but also furnished us with ancient manuscripts of the New and Old Testaments that have proved that the Bible text as we have it today has not been changed or tampered with since the time it came forth from the hands of its original authors.

When Bible criticism flourished a little more than fifty years ago, most scholars indulged in emendating the Bible text, which they considered as highly corrupt. With the help of the Septuagint and other ancient versions, and by taking recourse to much ingenuity and skill, these scholars worked the Bible text over in such a way that in many instances one could hardly recognize the original.

Every theologian considered it the main task of his scholarly activity to separate sources, and to discover the different authors and editors that each one of the books of the Old Testament was supposed to have had. It is common knowledge that the higher critics do not attribute the Pentateuch to Moses. In fact, they believe that most of the books of the Old Testament were written just before, during, or after the Exile. Bibles were printed in the heyday of Bible criticism in which the different authorships in each book were indicated by different colors. Several editions of this so-called Polychrome Bible, or "Rainbow Bible," were published during the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth.

It is well known that Isaiah was cut into sections by the knife of the Bible critics who differentiated between two or three Isaiahs. The book of Daniel, of course, was declared to have been written in the time of the Maccabees, the book of Ecclesiastes even later than that time. Very few books of the Old Testament escaped this process of scholarly dissection. How arbitrarily all this work was done, everyone can see who compares two or three critical works on a given Old Testament book. He will find that all the authors of those books declare parts of the text as corrupt, and emend and "purify" the text according to their ideas, but without agreeing with one another as to which parts are corrupt or late additions. Passages that one scholar declares to be late editorial additions, another one will accept as part of the original text, and wherever two scholars emend the same text, they come to different conclusions. The result is confusion and bewilderment on the part of the reader who thinks he has to accept the verdict of scholars because of their educational background and scholastic standing in the world of higher learning. Instead of doubting the validity of this kind of scholarly activity, he finds his faith shaken in the reliability of the Bible text, and questions the merits of basing one's trust on any part of the Old Testament.

New Testament scholars did not want to be left behind their Old Testament colleagues, and although they came later into the fold of Bible critics, they worked nevertheless with the same zeal and determination. Setting aside all traditional views about an apostolic authorship of the New Testament books, they set out to find the real authors. The high lights of this critical scholarship are found in the books of Ernest Renan and D. Friedrich Strauss, who considered the life story of Christ a romance. Even the historicity of Christ was doubted by some. The only books of the New Testament which retained their traditional authorship during this period were three letters of Paul. All the other books, Gospels, Epistles, and the Revelation were declared to be apocryphal writings which sailed under false flags.

This was the condition that prevailed in most of the European Protestant universities in 1840. At that time Constantin Tischendorf, a young conservative scholar, became professor at the University of Leipzig. During the years of his preparation he had felt that the greatest need in the field of New Testament studies was a text based on older manuscripts than the Textus Receptus, which had been in use since the time of the Reformation, but which was based on rather late and inaccurate manuscripts. He considered it his life task to hunt up the oldest still-existing New Testament manuscripts and publish them, feeling that in this way it could be shown that the text of the Bible had been transmitted without major alterations since the time of Christ and the apostles. Tischendorf as a New Testament scholar carried out this plan and actually did more for the text of the New Testament during his lifetime than any other man has done since the time of the apostles. When he began his work only one New Testament manuscript of the fifth century, the Codex Alexandrinus, was known. All other New Testament manuscripts were much younger. Hence there was a gap of more than three hundred years between the death of the last apostle and this earliest New Testament manuscript. Tischendorf wanted to reduce this gap by all means, and started out to copy the almost illegible Codex Ephraemi of Paris. He did what no man had been able to do before. Diligently and patiently working for two years over this manuscript, and without sparing his eyesight, which became seriously impaired during this period, he copied and published that text, which was of about the same age as the Codex Alexandrinus. Inasmuch as the Vatican was not willing at that time to release its precious Bible manuscript, the so-called Codex Vaticanus, Tischendorf went to the Near East in search of ancient manuscripts. He made several journeys through the Orient, searching through old monasteries and church libraries for ancient Bibles. The story is well known and does not need to be repeated, how he saved the Codex Sinaiticus from a wastepaper basket, to be burned as a worthless old book in the monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai. He made three trips to that place between the years 1844 and 1859 before he was able to bring that famous manuscript to Europe.

Tischendorf published more than one hundred books during his lifetime, many of them being text publications, and he had the satisfaction of seeing his work and that of scholars of like faith succeed in convincing the critical theologians of his time that the New Testament text deserved more confidence than they had been willing to have in it. When he died as a blind man in 1874, the apostolic authorship of only three of the New Testament books was seriously questioned any longer. All other books were generally accepted by students of the Bible, with the exception of a few die-hards. [73]

Through the work of Tischendorf the gap between the apostles and the early manuscripts had been narrowed to a little more than two hundred years. Then came the era when Egypt provided hundreds and thousands of Greek papyri, among which were many remains of early Bible manuscripts, some of them of the third century. They have provided us with a wealth of linguistic material that helps us to understand the Greek New Testament text better than before. [74]

The greatest discovery with regard to the New Testament was made, however, in 1931, when the so-called Chester Beatty papyri were discovered in Egypt, containing parts of all the four Gospels and Acts, ten almost complete epistles of Paul, and Revelation. They were written in the early third century AD, and have preserved for us a New Testament text which was one hundred years closer to the original manuscripts than we had possessed before. [75] The gap between the originals and these manuscripts had shrunk to a little more than one hundred years, and brought us very close to the books that had come out of the hands of the apostles. They only confirmed what conservative scholars had believed all the time, that no changes of any significance had been made in the Bible text, and that the many variations which are found between the different Bible manuscripts concerned only details of spelling, grammar, and little scribal mistakes so commonly made when books had to be copied by hand during many centuries.

One of the books that had not generally been accepted as yet was the Gospel According to John. The majority of New Testament scholars were inclined to ascribe this Gospel to someone who lived in the middle of the second century AD, but not to the apostle John. The first evidence to shake this wrong assumption came to light when a fragment of an unknown gospel written in the first half of the second century was found to contain quotations from the fourth Gospel. This discovery proved that the Gospel According to John was known in Egypt during the first half of the second century AD. When this fragment was published in 1935, scholars realized that they might have to revise their opinion regarding the Gospel According to John. [76]

Only a few weeks later another even more sensational find furnished the evidence that John was written in the apostolic age. A little scrap of papyrus containing only a few verses of John 18 was discovered in the John Rylands' Library at Manchester, England, into whose possession it had come several years previously. The importance of this little fragment lay in its date. The papyrologists agreed that this leaf from the Gospel According to John had been written in Egypt, where it was found, in the beginning of the second century, hence was the earliest manuscript of the New Testament in existence. [77] If the Gospel According to John was already known and copied shortly after the beginning of the second century AD in Egypt, it must have been in circulation for some time. To find its way to the Nile country from Asia Minor, where it was written, according to the early tradition, must have taken some time. Therefore, it is only reasonable to conclude that John was written before the turn of the first century AD, i. e., in the apostolic age. Since that time a number of famous scholars like Deissmann, Dibelius, Kenyon, and Goodspeed have declared themselves in favor of an apostolic date of the fourth Gospel.

It is certainly providential that this earliest document of any New Testament book in our possession at the present time came from a disputed Bible book and not from one that was accepted by the scholarly world. If this fragment had contained a portion of the letter to the Romans, it would have had only sentimental value, and would have proved merely what everyone believed anyway, since no critic questions the Pauline authorship of the epistle to the Romans. There is only one other discovery that would equal the finding of the John Rylands' fragment of the Gospel of John, and that would be an early manuscript containing the second epistle of Peter, or portions of it, since its apostolic authorship is still very much doubted by New Testament scholars.

Five years ago one could say that the manuscript discoveries of the last hundred years had done much to put the higher critic to shame as far as the New Testament was concerned, but no ancient Old Testament manuscripts had come to light. It was known that the Jews had practiced the habit of burying worn-out and defective Bible scrolls for many centuries; hence not much hope could be entertained of ever finding anything older in the field of Old Testament manuscripts than what we already possessed.

Five years ago the oldest Hebrew manuscript containing any part of the Old Testament was not older than one thousand years, which fact leaves a gap of almost fifteen hundred years between the originals and those then available. Old Testament scholars had been resigned for a long time to the fact that they would never be so fortunate as their New Testament colleagues were. They envied their New Testament friends for their luck in possessing manuscripts that were so close to the originals, but knew that they could not expect similar discoveries that would support the Old Testament text, since the discoveries that had provided so much proof for the accuracy of the New Testament text had failed completely to furnish anything similar to prove the authenticity of the Old Testament text.

Critics contended that much had happened to the Old Testament text during the many centuries lying between the time when the original books were written and the period from which our oldest manuscripts came, a time interval of 1400-2500 years, depending on which book one referred to. Critical scholars emended the text, therefore, to restore it according to their opinions, while conservative theologians maintained that God had preserved the text uncorrupted up to the present day. The scholars of one class built their arguments on reasoning; the others, on faith. None had scientific proofs for their views.

A great discovery, made during the year 1947, changed this situation completely. This discovery, held by Prof. W. F. Albright to be the greatest manuscript find of all time, took place in the following way:

Goatherds tending their flocks in the bare and rocky mountain desert of Judea near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, noticed a new hole in the otherwise familiar mountainside, and guessed rightly that one of the many hidden caves had been opened up by the frequent earthquakes occurring in that region. They threw a stone into the cave, and upon hearing the sound of shattering pottery concealed inside, they fled in fear. Later they gained enough courage to return and examine the contents of the new cave. They found

a few well-preserved jars and a number of leather scrolls wrapped in linen. They took the scrolls to Bethlehem and showed them to their Mohammedan priest, who, thinking that they were Syriac manuscripts, advised the finders to sell them to the Syrian

monastery in Jerusalem. In this way four of the scrolls came into the hands of the metropolitan of Saint Mark's Monastery. The rest, some four or five more scrolls, were bought by Prof. E. L. Sukenik, of the Hebrew University.

Several scholars who saw these manuscripts in the Syrian monastery did not believe in their authenticity, and declared them to be forgeries, until they were shown to Dr. John C. Trever, the acting director of the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem in February, 1948. Trever, when seeing the manuscripts, was impressed by their apparent antiquity and believed in their authenticity when he compared them with the Nash papyrus, a Hebrew document of the first or second century BC, containing the Ten Commandments. He took photographs of all manuscripts immediately, since the danger existed that they might be destroyed in the battle for Jerusalem at that time, and persuaded the Syrians to take the manuscripts to a safe place, out of the country. Before releasing this discovery to the press, Trever sent photographs to Professor Albright of Baltimore, one of the greatest authorities in ancient Semitic texts. [78] I was a student of Albright at that time, and shall never forget the excitement when he confidently showed us students these pictures in March, 1948. His trained eye had immediately recognized that these manuscripts were genuine, a judgment which in the meantime has proved to be correct, although a few stubborn scholars are still unconvinced that the scrolls are authentic. [79]

When this find became known to the government of the Kingdom of Jordan, in whose territory the cave lies, a search was made to find the cave and excavate it. As soon as it was found, G. Lankester Harding and Pere R. de Vaux, two very able archaeologists, excavated the cave with much care. They found that a clandestine excavation by natives had already taken place, but were nevertheless able to recover hundreds of broken pieces of the jars that originally had contained the manuscripts, including their lids, and many pieces of linen in which the documents had been wrapped. Some hundreds of little manuscript fragments were also recovered. [80] Palestine's humid climate is ill suited to the preservation of perishable material like manuscripts, but the cave in which these manuscripts came to light is situated in the rainless desert of Judea, which is absolutely dry. This fact accounts for the good preservation in which several of the scrolls were found.

Professor de Vaux has succeeded in restoring many of the forty big jars of which fragments have been recovered. Each one is large enough to contain four or five scrolls. Two of the jars, taken out of the cave undamaged by the original discoverers, are now in the possession of Professor Sukenik. One of the jars reconstructed from numerous fragments into which it was broken, is now in the possession of the University of Chicago. All these jars, archaeologists tell us, were made either during the Hellenistic period, which ended in 61 BC, when Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans or during the early Roman period. [81]

The great number of jars found in the cave is an indication that originally about two hundred different scrolls had been stored away in this hiding place. Inasmuch as only about ten were found in different stages of preservation, the question immediately arises: What has become of the others, since they were deposited in the cave, perhaps during the first century AD? The condition in which the cave was found has given the answer to this question. A Roman cooking pot and a lamp also found in the cave showed that intruders had visited it during the Roman period and removed the greatest part of this ancient library. Furthermore, the hundreds of scroll fragments brought to light by the excavation of the cave, which originally had belonged to many different Biblical and extra-Biblical books, prove that a great library had once been stored away in this cave.

We shall probably never know who the people were who deposited their library in this hiding place, most likely during a period of national emergency during one of the Roman wars. But we have a little more evidence concerning the intruder of a later age who removed some of these manuscripts. Eusebius tells us that the church father Origen used for his monumental work, the Hexapla, an ancient manuscript of the Psalms that recently had been discovered in a jar near Jericho. The first excavators of the cave thought, therefore, that Origen or some of his contemporaries had discovered the cave and removed its contents for the most part.

It is, however, more probable that the cave was robbed of its precious contents during the eighth century, as pointed out by Prof. Otto Eissfeldt, who drew the attention of scholars to a letter of the Nestorian Patriarch Timotheus of Seleucia. He states, about the discovery of Hebrew manuscripts in a rock house near Jericho, that the Jews removed and studied these books, and he had wanted very much to know whether the recently discovered scrolls supported the Old Testament quotations given in the New Testament better than the known Hebrew text did. Saying that this problem burned as fire in his heart, he states that he had no suitable person to make inquiries for him concerning the problems in which he was interested. This discovery of which Timotheus had heard, was presumably responsible for the disappearance of the majority of scrolls which originally had been hidden in the cave. [83]

Although we deplore the fact that so many of the manuscripts once stored away in the cave have been lost, we are most grateful that so much has been preserved. The dating of these manuscripts is one of the most important items of scholarly investigation. Some of the best paleographers of ancient Semitic texts, Albright, Birnbaum, Sukenik, and others, have dated these scrolls from the fourth to the first centuries BC on the basis of the script employed. The archaeologists dated them according to the age of the jars, which led them to the conclusion that they

are not later than the first century AD, as was mentioned above. Some scholars, however, were doubtful about the early date of these scrolls, and dated them into the Christian or medieval periods. One declared them to be forgeries. [84]

In the meantime the scientific method of dating ancient organic material by its radiocarbon contents has been perfected, so that material up to 2000 BC can be dated by this process with a great measure of accuracy. Lankester Harding, the director of the Department of Antiquities of the Kingdom of Jordan, one of the excavators of the cave, sent enough of the linen wrapping material to America to subject it to the scientific dating process by the "Carbon 14" method. The date of the linen wrappings obtained by the Nuclear Institute of the University of Chicago is AD 33, with a margin of error on either side up to two hundred years, which gives us a range for the manufacture of the linen wrappers from 168 BC to AD 233. [85] This evidence shows that the scholars who dated the scrolls in the pre-Christian period seem to be correct, and more and more scholars have given up their doubts about the early date of these manuscripts. Today there are less than a handful who doubt any longer either their genuineness or their early dates.

Now that we have a history of the discovery of the manuscripts and their dates, and the history of the cave itself, a description of the now-famous scrolls is in place.

The first scroll that was recognized by Dr. Trever when the manuscripts were brought to him by the Syrians was one containing the complete book of Isaiah. This scroll has since those spring days in 1948 become very famous. It is in an almost perfect state of preservation and gives us the complete text of Isaiah from the first to the last verse. It was published two years ago in photographic reproduction, with a transliteration into modern Hebrew characters, giving to the Bible scholars this precious manuscript in a form worthy of its importance. [86]

Another scroll contained a commentary on the first and second chapters of Habakkuk, quoting each passage of this minor prophet and then explaining it. In this way we have two thirds of this prophet also in a text form of the pre Christian period. One scroll contains a manual of discipline in force among the Jewish sect or community to which this library once belonged. Whether the owners of the books were Essenes or belonged to an unknown sect has not definitely been established. One book contains a collection of hymns similar to the book of Psalms. Another one describes a "war Between the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness." Again, it is not known to which historical war this manuscript refers. One very battered scroll contains the last half of Isaiah, giving us in this way two manuscripts of the same Biblical book.

One scroll is in such a precarious state of preservation that all efforts to unroll it have so far been unsuccessful. A few scraps of the outer layer have been peeled off. It is written in Aramaic, whereas all the other scrolls are written in Hebrew. The few words that could be read on these peeled-off pieces seem to show that the manuscript contains the long lost apocryphal book of Lamech. [87]

Besides these more-or-less-well-preserved scrolls, many fragments of other books were recovered from the cave, as mentioned before. They are the remnants of books that had once been stored away in the cave, but had been removed in Roman times. We have several fragments of the book of Daniel, including the verses in which the Hebrew switches over to Aramaic. The Daniel fragments are very important, because scholars have maintained that Daniel was not written before the second century BC, although we have here the remains of a scroll of Daniel which comes from that very period if the dating of the specialists is accepted.

Fragments of the books of Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Judges have also been found, and of many books that have not yet been identified. The few fragments from the book of Leviticus are of the utmost importance, since they are written in the Hebrew pre-exilic script. We know that the Hebrews switched from their ancient script over to the Aramaic square script shortly after the Exile; according to Jewish tradition, during the time of Ezra. For a time the two kinds of scripts were used side by side, until the Aramaic square script completely replaced the pre-exilic script, which was only used on Hebrew coins in later times. For this reason Professor de Vaux dated the Leviticus fragments into the fourth or fifth century BC, although other scholars, among them Albright, think that they come from a more recent copy made during the second century BC, reasoning that the scribe had an ancient copy before him and wanted to retain the old venerable script. It will be difficult to decide who is correct, but it is nevertheless very important to have a few fragments of a Bible manuscript written in a form in which it must have appeared in the period before the Exile. A comparison between the text preserved on these fragments and the present day Hebrew text shows that it is exactly the same text.

The piece de resistance of the whole collection of manuscripts preserved is the Isaiah scroll. The material is leather; the length of the scroll is about twenty-four feet, and the width eleven inches. The sixty-six chapters of the book are written on fifty-four columns in a very even and beautiful hand. With the exception of the last column, which has suffered much through heavy use of the book in ancient times and whose script has therefore been partly re-inked, the writing is easily readable and presents few difficulties of decipherment. There are only a few gaps in the first few columns, where part of the lower edge has been torn away. The scribe made a number of mistakes and omissions. When he discovered them he wrote the missing parts between the lines and sometimes into the margin. In a number of places the omissions escaped him, especially in portions where he skipped a phrase or a group of words which lay between two identical words. Isaiah 16:8, 9 is one example. In each of the verses-8 and 9-the word "Sibmah" appears. After the scribe had written the first "Sibmah," his eye skipped all the remaining phrases between the first and the second "Sibmah" and

continued after the second one, recording the word “Sibmah” only once. This scribal error, known to every ancient and modern copyist, is the so-called homoeoteleuton.

Since the photographic reproduction of this very valuable document has appeared, numerous articles and even a few books have been written on the Isaiah scroll. I have made a careful study of this text myself, and have compared every verse with the currently recognized Hebrew text of Isaiah. When the scroll was exhibited in the University of Chicago in 1950, I had the opportunity of checking doubtful cases with the original text, and am therefore able to base my judgment on a personal detailed study. The text of the Isaiah scroll proves that since the time it was written, i. e., probably in the second century BC or in the first, the book of Isaiah as we have it in a modern Hebrew Bible and in translation in any English Bible has not been changed in any way to the present day. The scribe was certainly not a very careful copyist, and made numerous orthographic mistakes. It is also possible that he wrote his copy down as it was dictated to him by a reader. This would explain the very many instances in which he confused similar sounding words that he hardly would have confused if he had seen the manuscript from which he was copying. The confusion can be compared with an interchanging of the English words “to rain” and “to reign” or “see” and sea.

Furthermore, the Isaiah scroll reflects a period when spelling was somewhat different from the one in use during the time of the Masoretes, who added to the text its vowels several centuries later and gave it its standard orthographical form. This fact accounts for several thousand additional consonants, which, however, have no bearing at all on the meaning of the text. Everyone who has worked with this scroll has been profoundly impressed by the unmistakable fact that this two-thousand-year-old Bible manuscript contains exactly the same text we possess today. Passages that present difficulties of interpretation in our known Hebrew Bible, like Isaiah 65:20, have the same difficult text in the Isaiah scroll. A few testimonies from recognized scholars will show how much impressed they have been with the fact that our present Hebrew text shows so few differences from a text that is more than two thousand years old.

Prof. Millar Burrows, the editor of the Isaiah scroll, has given us several studies on this text, and because of his intimate knowledge of the Isaiah manuscript, his judgment is of great importance. I quote:

“With the exception of . . . relatively unimportant omissions to be noted below, the whole book is here, and it is substantially the book preserved in the Masoretic text. Differing notably in orthography and somewhat in morphology, it agrees with the Masoretic text to a remarkable degree in wording. Herein lies its chief importance, supporting the fidelity of the Masoretic tradition. There are minor omissions, but nothing comparable with those found in the Septuagint of some of the books of the Old Testament.” [88]

Professor Albright, who was one of the first to recognize the great importance of this manuscript, and through whom I saw the first photographs before this discovery was released in the public press, made the following remark about the importance of this text with regard to the faithfulness with which the ancient text has been handed down to us through the centuries:

“It cannot be insisted too strongly that the Isaiah Scroll proves the great antiquity of the text of the Masoretic Book, warning us against the light-hearted emendation in which we used to indulge.” [89]

Another strong statement comes from the hand of the Jewish Septuagint expert, Prof. Harry M. Orlinsky, who advises his fellow scholars to treat the Hebrew Bible with greater respect than has been done before:

“Regardless of the date of the St. Mark’s Isaiah Scroll, I doubt that its value for the textual critic will amount to very much, except insofar as it will help to convince more biblical scholars that the traditionally preserved text of the Hebrew Bible should be treated with far greater respect than it has been, even as the archeologist has taught us to regard that text as constituting far more reliable historical source material than the generations preceding our own realized.” [90]

Prof. John Bright, referring to this scroll, is convinced that very few of the textual emendations that have been made in the course of the last century can be seriously accepted any longer after the Isaiah scroll has proved how accurately the ancient text has been handed down to us. He advises the present generation of Bible scholars to learn how to develop a critical attitude toward commentaries written in the past, and states that if no critical attitude toward these scholarly works were exercised, their users would find themselves interpreting a text that never had existed except in the commentator’s mind.” [91]

I consider it providential that God has preserved for us these texts and given them to us at this crucial time in this world’s history. Fifty years ago it was unthinkable that critical scholars, holding honored chairs in our leading universities, like the men quoted in the previous paragraphs, would have defended the Old Testament text as it is

being done today. No scholar of name would have dared to discourage critical emendations. He would immediately have been ostracized by his colleagues all over the world for undermining one of the most important phases of all their scholarly activities. We are living now in another day, and thank God for that.

The Isaiah scrolls, the Habakkuk commentary, and the fragments of the other Biblical books have provided us with texts of some Old Testament books from the time of Christ and the apostles. No book of Scripture, with the exception of Psalms, was quoted so much as Isaiah by Christ and the New Testament authors. They accepted every part of it as God's Word, and as written by Isaiah, the prophet, making no differences between any sections of it. Their judgment should be sufficiently authoritative for us to accept what they accepted.

Inasmuch as the Isaiah scroll reveals that the text, which was accepted as part of God's inspired word in the time of the New Testament authors, is the same text we, have in our Bible, our confidence in the Scriptures has been deeply strengthened.

The study of the Isaiah scroll and the other extant ancient texts entitles us to conclude by analogy that the books of the Old Testament of which no ancient copies have yet been found, were handed down to us in just as pure a form, and just as faithfully, as those for which we have some old texts now.

I expect to see even stronger statements concerning the accuracy of our Hebrew text from the pen of competent scholars in the next few years. As soon as the other Isaiah scroll, which is in a very fragmentary condition, has been published, the faithfulness with which our Hebrew text has been transmitted to us will become evident in a much stronger way. I have seen only two columns in a photographic reproduction, but they show that the scribe who wrote this other Isaiah scroll was an extremely careful copyist. In the text of the two columns which I have been able to compare with the present-day Hebrew text, no scribal mistakes are evident. The only differences consist in small orthographic variances.

I think that you will agree with me that we can be very grateful that these discoveries have been made in our time, and that we are most fortunate to have this material at our disposal to defend the Word of God in a very positive way.

You might be interested to learn that several more caves have recently been discovered in the Judean desert by natives who have found out that it is more profitable to make money by finding manuscripts in hidden caves than by raising flocks. Other caves were found during an exploratory survey made by the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Ecole Biblique at Jerusalem. Last spring this expedition carefully examined the whole region in which the Dead Sea scrolls were found and made some remarkable discoveries. The preliminary reports that have been published so far say that two letters of Bar Kokhba, the leader of the Jewish rebellion under Emperor Hadrian, were found, as also a marriage contract of that period. Other textual fragments, some Biblical, discovered in these caves originate from the first and second centuries AD. The most sensational find consisted of two tightly rolled sheets of bronze, each about four feet long. They are engraved with an inscription in Hebrew characters. Nothing of the contents of the sheets is known as yet, since, owing to the precarious nature of the material, they have not been unrolled." [92]

The foregoing survey shows that there is much archaeological evidence at our disposal that we can use in support of the authenticity of the Biblical text and the veracity of the historical parts of the Bible. This material used in the right way can give tremendous strength to our fundamentalist position of accepting the whole Bible as God's inspired word. The years of study in this field have profoundly strengthened my confidence in the sure foundation on which our faith is built. We do not need to be afraid to proclaim Bible truths that we cannot prove yet by outside sources, as long as we remain on that sure foundation that has never failed us yet, the infallible Word of God.

4. Christ The Center Of All True Preaching

M. K. ECKENROTH

Introduction

The preparation of these special addresses for this Bible Conference has been a most refreshing and gloriously satisfying personal experience. Here we will compress in a few hours the burning passion and desires, tears and convictions, of one who with you longs for a richer and more rewarding preaching ministry.

In these addresses I shall attempt to present some of the lessons gained while in actual combat with the enemy of every man—an enemy whose work is revealed in the tragic lives of those to whom we take our appeal to accept salvation. These lessons are often hard to learn. They leave deep impressions not easily erased or quickly forgotten.

In order to establish the fundamental truth of the correctness and basic soundness of these procedures in preaching the message of God for this hour, I shall call frequently upon the written counsel of the messenger of the Lord. Thus I believe we shall be led to see the counsel of Heaven and not of men. Human words and phraseologies are treacherous and inadequate. Varying experiences may lead men in different places to speak with corresponding variables. But the words of God, which are revealed to His messengers both in Holy Scriptures and in the Spirit of prophecy, are unerring, unchangeable, and fundamentally applicable to all men. The application of

these principles may vary, logically enough, according to the existing local conditions. However, the fundamental truths that constitute the third angel's message and the basic principles for their presentation to the world are universal.

In these addresses, entitled "Christ the Center of All True Preaching," will be found a humble but deliberate attempt to hide in Christ and present His wisdom. Thus I sincerely hope that our horizons will be broadened. It is the hope that these addresses will make our preaching far more spiritual than spirited. It is not sufficient to do our work in a spirited way. It must be overwhelmingly spiritual.

The pages of history, both sacred and profane, reveal how frequently the counsel of the prophets and messengers of God was neglected, or even worse, rejected. Sometimes men chose to interpret these counsels, often succeeding only in discoloring or dimming the luster of God's will. I therefore pray for the understanding and indulgence of all here assembled for the frequent reference to and quotations from the divine messengers.

These addresses will not attempt to invent a new gospel or a new approach or a new method but rather to lead us to capture fully the understanding of the divine blueprint for proper and wise preaching of the message in this terrible hour of human tragedy. Here we shall see, by God's beneficent grace, the truth that the whole message, including every strong and difficult doctrine and truth, can be presented far more winsomely, effectively, and convincingly than we have yet seen. This must be true! How dare we expect the copious outpouring of the latter rain upon our ministry if we continue to work and preach as we have heretofore?

It is possible to preach the gospel fully, completely, and without any muffling or alteration of the message that God has given us and still make it more appealing, more beautiful, and more winsome. By the application of certain well-defined universal principles, which may demand certain reforms of procedure but not reforms in the fundamental message, we can see a rewarding acceleration of larger harvests and continuing possibilities for further reaping.

Therefore with these introductory thoughts before us, let us turn to God for guidance. Let us go to His messengers, seeking wisdom. Then let us heed the counsel without wavering and go on to the great heights before us. Why should we hesitate and require of God that He raise up another generation to complete His work?

The Appeal of Peter

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly. Not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away!" 1 Peter 5:1-5.

Pre-eminent in the abiding classics on preaching in the writings of the apostles is the fundamental conviction that preachers must be "ensamples to the flock." It is a mere truism to say that a living example is far more dynamic, is much more invincible under scrutiny, and therefore requires infinitely more genuineness, than any form of vicarious indoctrination or hortatory effusion. The apostle Peter evidently learned this fundamental lesson of the ministry well. The instruction came from Christ Himself as He pleaded so dramatically with Peter.

"Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, love thou me more than these? He said unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knows that I love thee. He said unto him, Feed my lambs. He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, love thou me? He said unto him, Yea, Lord; Thou knows that I love thee. He said unto him, Feed my sheep. He I said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, love thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Love thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knows all things; thou knows that I love thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep." John 21:15-17.

It was a fundamental lesson Christ wished His ministers to learn at the very beginning in order to be successful in rescuing souls from hell. Later' Peter himself became a trainer of men. The years of conflict for Christ drew from the crucible of experience one supreme lesson. It was the one he had learned from the Master. He too exhorted, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint. . . . but being ensamples to the flock."

A short while ago I was participating in a ministerial institute in one of our great Western unions. We were discussing this matter of the relationship of the minister to the flock. Many of the usual diagnoses were given as to the cause of spiritual anemia, lack of vitality, inertia, present in some congregations today. Some men suggested that the danger lay in an overemphasis on "sheep shearing" and finances. At that point one of our veteran workers, wise through years of service in Christ, arose and said, "Brethren, I used to raise sheep before I entered the ministry. They taught me many lessons. Among those lessons, I learned that a good wool crop can be produced only on the backs of a well-fed flock; and I further learned that shearing feels good when they are well fed. We must just be sure they are well fed." The application of the lesson to the ministry is obvious. Christ instilled that in Peter's soul. He never forgot it.

What Is Preaching?

A definition of preaching can be stated much more easily in the negative than in the affirmative; hence the question, “What is preaching?” rather than “What preaching is.” This does not infer that preaching has no definition. I believe we shall discover a satisfactory definition of what constitutes real preaching. This will probably be in sharp contradiction to that which is frequently and improperly called preaching.

In this first of three addresses on “Christ the Center of All True Preaching” we shall not have sufficient time to develop even one third of the vast potential in this tremendous subject. One may look at the title of this subject and remark that it is a truism of the first magnitude that “Christ is the center of all true preaching” and with a superficial shrug dismiss the matter. But there are many aspects of it to which a searching analysis will yield rich rewards. Thus we shall limit our study to only three phases.

First: What is true preaching?

Second: How can Christ actually be kept central in the proclamation of such a distinctive message as ours, which calls people back to the “commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”?

Third: Is not our message so distinct, and a revival of lost practices so essential, that the “softer” gospel aspects are left to other churches while in the name of “preaching” we proclaim a message of warning and exhortation against ancient sophistries, subtle subterfuges, false doctrines, and pretenses?

It will take the full scope of these three addresses to examine even ever so briefly these three questions.

We now come face to face with the question of what constitutes preaching. There are innumerable definitions of “preaching” and “sermons” in our textbooks on homiletics and books on the general subject. Austin Phelps, in his work on *The Theory of Preaching*, defines a sermon as “an oral address to the popular mind, on religious truth contained in the Scriptures, and elaborately treated with a view to persuasion.” [1] This, of course, is true, but, even so, only partially; for it restricts a sermon to a “religious truth- without a statement of definition concerning the author of truth. Gerald Kennedy, in his celebrated work *His Word Through Preaching*, more adequately defines the Christian preacher as one who “is the proclaimer of an occurrence which was nothing less than God breaking into the processes of life to reveal Himself supremely in a Person.” [2] To enlarge the horizon of this definition we might note the further observation that “our danger is that we shall see ourselves as mere agents of an institution of promoters of” a vested interest, In the final analysis, we are not employees at all, but unworthy voices of the living God.” [3] Bishop Quailey is quoted as saying, “The elemental business in preaching is not with the preaching, but with the preacher. . . . It is no trouble to preach, but a vast trouble to construct a preacher.” [4]

Therefore, it is obviously much easier to show what is not a sermon than what is. A sermon is more than informative. There are countless sources of information. Information is not at a premium. A sermon is more than a mere segregation or evaluation of some information. It is more than an interesting essay or the skillful elucidation of a challenging biography. Even philosophy standing alone is devoid of the mighty moving, transforming expectancies of a sermon. In spite of our colorful and frequent advertising extravagances in which we lay claim to some exalted achievements, we say confidently that to style the meetings as lectures is far too low a level for an Adventist preacher. A lecture informs; a real sermon transforms.

The Personality of Preaching

The apostle Paul possessed an absolutely amazing concept of Jesus Christ and the full work of the gospel. These were his credentials:

“Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom. That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.” Colossians 1:25-29.

How can we read these words without sensing the moving passion of Paul as he stood forth unashamed, speaking of the experience of “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Sense the throb of his appeal that the minister might “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Here is the magnificence of the doctrine of righteousness by faith. This does not come about by ordinary “lecturing” or beautiful orations and essays or pleasing philosophies. Pious platitudes do not extricate men from the webs of their own creations. Such changes are only wrought out as men fulfill their divine call to “make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery.” Ephesians 3:9.

Neither was it an accident by which the apostle could say, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. -Philippians 1:21. It was not sufficient for him to say that he would be content to confess Christ or to beseech people to merely live like Christ. But rather, he said, they were to possess Christ. He had learned that to “live is Christ, and to die is gain. ’ This was indeed an intriguing concept! Men

might be attracted to Aristotle and try to pattern after Plato; they might soar to the heights with Socrates, and yet never say as did Paul, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain!" Paul considered himself to be a part and parcel with Christ. Christ was no mere abstraction! Christ was a part of him! "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

Lest this seem to be too far removed from us, and lest we be tempted to feel that Paul was called to fill a post more exalted than ours, let us now listen to the appeal of God's messenger: "Christian worth does not depend on brilliant talents, lofty birth, wonderful powers, but on a clean heart -a heart purified and refined, that does not exalt self, but, by beholding Christ, reflects the long lost image of divinity." [5] How shall we otherwise say it but that the preacher speaks for God as His ambassador when he is completely identified with his Lord and "reflects the long lost image of divinity"? What a challenge this is to preaching! "But the hearts of those who do this work must throb in unison with the heart of Christ. They must be wholly consecrated to the service of God, ready to do His bidding, to go where so ever His providence leads them, and speak the words He gives them. And if they are what God desires they shall be, if they are imbued with His Holy Spirit, they co-operate with the heavenly agencies and are indeed 'laborers together with God.' " [6]

It is impossible for true preaching to be divested of personality. It is true that much which passes for preaching is devoid of all personality, but what is the fruitage of such a work after a few short years? Churches grow restive; the preacher himself grows weary; he and the congregation both long for a change; sermons of a set pattern that are given with the idea of "perfecting the saints" are delivered, and nothing happens! There is no joy in the hearts of the people or in the heart of the worker. Many a man dies prematurely, not of overwork, but of a broken heart.

True preaching that flows forth from lips of clay, charged by the power of the supreme Personality, enriches all and brings a flow of life-giving power and a dynamic transformation. It is said of Philip that "there was great joy in that city." Acts 8:8. Of course this was the city of Samaria. It was not noted for its good will toward Christian believers. The preaching of Christ's name in those stormy days following the crucifixion was not an easy task. The hostility of the times was only heightened by the recent murder of the young preacher Stephen. It was not the popular thing to become openly allied with Christ or to be associated with His followers. The social, economic, political, and religious tempo of the times forbade any real enthusiasm for Christianity. Great difficulties pressed in upon the believer on every hand. The history of those times is well known by all of us here today.

Yet here is a layman possessing some dynamic quality that equips him to enter a city and bring joy to it. And it was a joy born out of the preaching of Christ! "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Verse 5. So impressed were some who heard Philip preach that they wished to purchase the secret. A purpose still identified as "simony" has become a synonym of that which is to be avoided. What a great day it will be for the world when the contemporary Adventist preacher of an unpopular message can and will so couch his words and so perfectly reflect the divine image that the entrance of his ministry into a sin-hardened city will bring joy, real joy, wholehearted joy! Oh, I long for the day when my ministry-Christ's possession of me and thus my concept of Him-will bring such an abounding presence of joy!

But it will be immediately argued that the temper of our times precludes any such reception of the Advent message. A fatalistic concept has settled in upon many that seems to preclude in their thinking the thought of the possibility of any friendly reception of the message by the people of the world. Some are all too ready to contend that opposition, persecution, bitterness, prejudice, misunderstanding, is the accepted lot of the Adventist ministry. Some are even tempted to feel that opposition arising from their preaching is a sign of complete divine approbation of their methods! I fervently hope that these studies will unmask the fallacy of such a conception.

The Great Reconciliation

Going to the very heart of this thesis, we immediately come into possession of many beautiful and assuring statements from both the Scriptures and the Spirit of prophecy.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.

Here St. Paul is telling us this magnificent truth: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ. -There is a strengthening assurance in this affirmation that makes the heart beat faster and gladdens the soul of the man called to the gospel ministry. But Paul does not stop there." As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God." And Paul concludes with the blessed promise that it was all done "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Call it a mystery if you will, but at least here is a mystery that is to be translated into flesh and blood.

“The Savior knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts, or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that His disciples must receive the heavenly endowment; that the gospel would be effective only as it was proclaimed by hearts made warm and lips made eloquent by a living knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.” [7]

A Unique Transaction

To tell that story properly requires a devotion, a peculiar possession, not expected of men in any other work on earth. The preaching of a sermon is a unique transaction. The importance of the preacher’s connection with Christ is emphasized by the words of God to us:

“Arouse every spiritual energy to action. Tell those whom you visit that the end of all things is at hand. The Lord Jesus Christ will open the door of their hearts and will make upon their minds lasting impressions. Strive to arouse men and women from their spiritual insensibility. Tell them how you found Jesus and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His Word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream.” [8]

After the conference of Minneapolis in 1888, through the clear voice of the Spirit of prophecy this cause received its finest instruction regarding evangelistic technique. The messenger of God was most keenly aware of our quite natural tendencies toward legalism in contradistinction to our high privileges of preaching Christ more fully and more perfectly than any other people in the world. The first point of importance is that a possession of Christ personally by the minister is the center of true preaching.

“Talk to souls in peril, and get them to behold Jesus upon the cross, dying to make it possible for Him to pardon. Talk to the sinner with your own heart overflowing with the tender, pitying love of Christ. Let there be deep earnestness, but not a harsh, loud note should be heard in the voice of one who is trying to win the soul to look and live. First have your own soul consecrated to God. As you look upon our Intercessor in heaven, let your heart be broken. Then, softened and subdued, you can address repenting sinners as one who realizes the power of redeeming love. Pray with these souls, by faith laying them at the foot of the cross; carry their minds up with your mind, and fix the eye of faith where you look, upon Jesus, the Sin Bearer. Get them to look away from their poor sinful selves to the Savior, and the victory is won.” [9]

As if to emphasize this even more beautifully we have this fine counsel:

“Let us gather together that which our own experience has revealed to us of the preciousness of Christ, and present it to others as a precious gem that sparkles and shines. Thus will the sinner be attracted to Him who is represented as the chief among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. The cross of Calvary is a pledge to us of everlasting life. Faith in Christ means everything to the sincere believer.” [10]

No Bible conference, no college, no theological seminary, can give a man this. Only on the anvil of daily living, in the white heat of the fierce conflict of daily experiences, can such qualities be forged! Only by and through the most intimate secret closeting with Christ can such fellowships be formed. Indeed, there can be no true profession without first a true possession.

Preaching Defined

The definition of true preaching now comes into sharper focus. It is clear that real preaching is personality incarnate in life and word. The preacher gives himself. His words express his very life.

“What is the work of the minister of the gospel? It is to rightly divide the word of truth; not to invent a new gospel, but to rightly divide the gospel already committed to them. They cannot rely upon old sermons to present to their congregations; for these set discourses may not be appropriate to meet the occasion, or the wants of the people. There are subjects that are sadly neglected, that should be largely dwelt upon. The burden of our message should be the mission and life of Jesus Christ. Let there be a dwelling upon the humiliation, self-denial, meekness, and lowliness of Christ, that proud and selfish hearts may see the difference between themselves and the Pattern, and may be humbled. Show to your hearers Jesus in His condescension to save fallen man. Show them that He who was their surety had to take human nature, and carry it through the darkness and the fearfulness of the malediction of His Father, because of man’s transgression of His law; for the Savior was found in fashion as a man.”

“Describe, if human language can, the humiliation of the Son of God, and think not that you have reached the climax, when you see Him exchanging the throne of light and glory which He had with the Father, for humanity. He came forth from heaven to earth; and while on earth, He bore the curse of God as surety for the fallen race. He was not obliged to do this. He chose to bear the wrath of God, which man had incurred through disobedience to the divine law. He chose to endure the cruel mocking, the deriding, the

scourging, and the crucifixion. 'And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death'; but the manner of His death was an astonishment to the universe; for it was even the death of the cross. Christ was not insensible to ignominy and disgrace. He felt it all most bitterly. He felt it as much more deeply and acutely than we can feel suffering, as His nature was more exalted, and pure, and holy than that of the sinful race for whom He suffered. He was the majesty of heaven, He was equal with the Father, He was the commander of the hosts of angels, yet He died for man the death that was, above all others, clothed with ignominy and reproach. O that the haughty hearts of men might realize this! O that they might enter into the meaning of redemption, and seek to learn the meekness and lowliness of Jesus!" [11]

This, then, is the secret of preaching Christ! Here is the finest definition of true preaching. Oh, wondrous story! Our viewpoints are sharpened and our personalities made winsome by the contemplation of Christ.

"It is not enough to be familiar with the arguments of the truth alone. You must meet the people through the life that is in Jesus. Your work will be made wholly successful, if Jesus is abiding with you; for He has said, 'Without me, you can do nothing.'" [12]

There is no other way. True preaching allows of no other concept. It has ever been true that-

"Without the presence of Jesus in the heart, religious service is only dead, cold formalism. The longing desire for communion with God soon ceases when the Spirit of God is grieved from us; but when Christ is in us the hope of glory, we are constantly directed to think and act in reference to the glory of God." [13]

The Wooing Power of Christ

A touching incident during the recent war points up the eternal truth that "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

An airman was severely wounded in combat. He was returned to the field hospital for immediate medical help. After the doctor had done his best he went on to the next man. The wounded airman turned to the one in the next bed and asked, "Say, fellow, can you help a mate with a bit of religion?"

"Sorry, pal, I'm afraid I can't; but a lady comes through here each Thursday. She'll put you right."

"Well, I may not be here next Thursday." Saying that, he turned to the one in the bed next to him on the other side." I've been thinking. I don't know whether it's a bit out of the Bible or not, but some words keep coming through my mind, 'Suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

"Yes, that's in the Bible all right."

"Well, if Jesus Christ wanted the children to come to Him, do you think He'd have me? For I know I need Him. Anyway, I'm going to ask Him." He pulled the sheet up over his head. That sheet never came down.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth." Yes, high above the din and confusion, contradictions, frustrations, and delusions of this sick, pitiable, poor world, comes the plea:

"Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to 'the Lamb of God.' Lift Him up, the risen Savior, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who 'bath loved us, and hath given himself for us.' Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God. Hold forth the word of life, presenting Jesus as the hope of the penitent and the stronghold of every believer. Reveal the way of peace to the troubled and the despondent, and show forth the grace and completeness of the Savior." [14]

Gaines S. Dobbins, professor of evangelism at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, gives us this sparkling thought:

"Christ is the center and circumference of disciple winning. This is the supreme lesson which John learned and which he would share with us. All the plans and purposes of Christianity gather about a Person. Unless Christ is at the center, all theology and ecclesiology eventually become false and futile. Men are not to be made champions of a Cause, or protagonists of a Doctrine, or Saviors of society, or builders of a Church, or prophets of a Millennium, or snatchers of brands from the burning, or teachers of a philosophy of life, or proclaimers of ethical standards, or any such thing, primarily. Those who are in ignorance and unbelief concerning Christ, whatever their status, can and must be made disciples (learners) of him who is the Way, the Truth, the Life, else the individual and society are without hope." [15]

A Cruciform Message

Christ centric preaching cannot avoid the moving, impelling domination of the cruciform, message. This is the heartthrob, the very life, of true Christianity. It is the heart, the center, the core of the Seventh-day Adventist message. In the preaching of this mighty truth we are to be foremost.

“Many of our ministers have merely sermonized, presenting subjects in an argumentative way, and scarcely mentioning the saving power of the Redeemer. Their testimony was destitute of the saving blood of Christ. Their offering resembled the offering of Cain. He brought to the Lord the fruit of the ground, which in itself was acceptable in God’s sight. Very good indeed was the fruit; but the virtue of the offering—the blood of the slain lamb, representing the blood of Christ was lacking. So it is with Christless sermons. By them men are not pricked to the heart; they are not led to inquire, What must I do to be saved? Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world!” [16]

Herein lies the fundamental challenge today in proclaiming a saving, winsome, dynamic, and warning message.” Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ.” Seventh-day Adventist ministers are to be more capable of preaching a powerful, soul-stirring sermon on the great themes of Christ than any minister of other churches or religious bodies. Our preaching is never to be eclipsed by others when it comes to a practical revelation of the Savior. We should be noted in the world as outstanding expositors of the blessed Savior! This is our destiny.

There are other religious bodies that observe Saturday as a day of rest. Others also teach the truth as to the nature of man in death; there are others who preach the imminent Second Coming of Christ, there are others who stoutly resist the Catholic Church and expose her machinations. Still others practice vegetarianism; there are some who practice chastity in daily life, simplicity of dress, and condemn worldly pleasures; there are those who pay tithes and so we could multiply the list. Wherein, then, lies our distinctiveness, the authority for our existence?

Is it not true that in the great providence of the mighty God He has ordained the Adventist people to go forth to the world with a balanced, perfectly correlated message of truths that are all exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. And that in the bold and unexcelled preaching of Him the world shall again see incarnate God’s way of life? “How much more power would attend the preaching of the word today, if men dwelt less upon the theories and arguments of men, and far more upon the lessons of Christ, and upon practical godliness.” [17]

The preaching of a clear, cross-dominated message imparts an irresistible power to the truth.” The mystery of the incarnation of Christ, the account of His sufferings, His crucifixion, His resurrection, and His ascension, open to all humanity the marvelous love of God. This imparts a power to the truth.” [18]

In the past some have been tempted to believe that arguments, facts, proof, evidence, authority, debate, will so startle the world that it will capitulate before such incontrovertible truths! One hundred years has shown the complete fallacy of such an idea. There is only one method, only one power, that can subdue the stubborn will and enlighten the prejudiced mind.

“The theme that attracts the heart of the sinner is Christ, and Him crucified. On the cross of Calvary, Jesus stands revealed to the world in unparalleled love. Present Him thus to the hungering multitudes, and the light of His love will win men from darkness to light, from transgression to obedience and true holiness. Beholding Jesus upon the cross of Calvary arouses the conscience to the heinous character of sin as nothing else can do.” [19]

How long will it take for us to believe enthusiastically the divine blueprint and heed the instruction of the messenger of God for twentieth-century evangelism? In giving specific instructions to a worker as early as 1885, the messenger wrote:

“I told him that the best and wisest plan would be to dwell upon subjects that would arouse the conscience. He could talk to them upon practical godliness; devotion and piety; and present the self-denial, self sacrificing life of Jesus as our example until they will see the contrast in their self-indulgent life, and become dissatisfied with their unchristian lives.” [20]

The Secret of Winning Men

This is the secret of winning more men to the truth. A Christ centered message not only mightily moves other men but transforms the preacher also. And it is at this point that great preaching, great living, great ministries, must begin!

“Christ crucified—talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts. Set, formal phrases, the presentation of merely argumentative subjects, is productive of little good. The melting love of God in the hearts of the workers will be recognized by those for whom they

labor. Souls are thirsting for the water of life. Do not allow them to go from you empty. Reveal the love of Christ to them. Lead them to Jesus, and He will give them the bread of life and the water of salvation.” [21]

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel’s veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.
“Thou dying Lamb! Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved, to sin no more.
“Ever since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

“There in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Is ransomed from the grave.”

WILLIAM COWPER (1731-1800).

The Restrictions of Legalism

Contrasted with this truly thrilling pattern for the presentation of His truth is the narrow, limited, and completely inadequate concept of legalism. Is it not within the scope of this address to define the processes of salvation or the theology of salvation by grace alone. It is left to others to deal with this thrilling aspect of the subject. But the area of this address would be incomplete if passing reference were not made to the danger, the inadequacies, the utter futility, of attempting to present true Adventism in the narrow confines of cold, damp, dark, sunless, Christless legalism. Straight as an arrow piercing the very heart of legalism is this incisive statement:

“Legal religion will not answer for this age. We may perform all the outward acts of service, and yet be as destitute of the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit as the hills of Gilboa were destitute of dew and rain. We need spiritual moisture; and we need also the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness to soften and subdue our hearts.” [22]

This is in sharp contrast to the assurance of success on the other hand that comes when a proper approach is made.

“Here is the secret of success, in preaching a living personal Savior in so simple and earnest a manner that the people may be able to lay hold by faith of the power of the Word of life.” [23]

It is not by argument that the message is to be given. Argument is defensive. It also puts others on the defensive. It beclouds reason. It arouses baser emotions and reactions.

“We need far less controversy, and far more presentation of Christ. Our Redeemer is the center of all our faith and hope. Those who can present His matchless love, and inspire hearts to give Him their best and holiest affections, are doing work that is great and holy.” [24] (Italics supplied.)

Seventh-day Adventists utterly reject the thesis of salvation by works, or even by the slightest performance of works, be they ever so minute, as a means of salvation. We reject legalism. Yet that charge against us has stuck. Perhaps this is true to a large extent because of our own creation. The world still suspiciously views us as legalists. We can never win the world until that belief is utterly annihilated. That is why this point must be emphasized.

“Centuries, ages, can never diminish the efficacy of this atoning sacrifice. The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.” [25]

How important, then, that we really earnestly heed the following instruction:

“The apostle presents a solemn charge to every minister of the gospel. He arrays them before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, to preach the word, and they are not to show a partiality for merely the prophecies and the argumentative portions of the Scriptures, but the greatest and most important lessons that are given us are those given us by Jesus Christ Himself.” [26]

Well might we say with Dr. George W. Truett:

“The Man of God must have insight to things spiritual. He must be able to see the mountain filled with the horses and chariots of fire; he must be able to interpret that which is written by the finger of God upon the walls of conscience. He must be able to translate the signs of the times into terms of their spiritual meaning; he must be able to hear and tell of the footfalls of the Almighty as He walks in His garden at eventide. He must be able to draw aside, now and then, the curtain of things material and let mortals glimpse the spiritual glories which crown the Mercy-seat of God. Indeed, the Man of God must be an alchemist who changes the base metals of this world into the fine gold of heavenly values. The Man of God must declare the pattern that was given unto him in the Mount. He must utter the vision granted unto him upon his isle of revelation; he must roll away the stone from before the tomb of this world’s dead hopes and proclaim the resurrection of a new life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” [27]

All True Preaching

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner. But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who bath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day!” 2 Timothy 1:7-13.

In this wonderful testimony of Christian assurance the battle-worn apostle spoke triumphantly of an experimental fellowship with One able to disperse clouds of despair in every field of human endeavor. Political, social, economic, and spiritual unrest, and even moral collapse, brought no sense of fright or disturbance to the quiet calm in this deep reliance upon Christ.

It is equally noteworthy to observe how emphatically the apostle declares, “I know whom I have believed.” This is not to say it is unimportant to know what to believe or why we should believe it. But it does emphasize the fundamental truth that it is of first importance to know “whom” we believe.

It is said that when James Alexander, the well-known preacher, lay dying, a neighbor called upon him and began reading and discussing some of the great sermon texts employed by the minister during his fruitful years of service. This text was one of them. He quoted the words, “For I know in whom I have believed”; and the great preacher instantly gathered the feeble strength remaining and, raising himself up, cried out: “No, no, the text does not say ‘I know in whom,’ it says ‘I know whom I have believed’. Do not put a preposition between me and my Lord.” Such is the vital meaning of a true possession of Christ, without which it is impossible to truly profess Him.

The beloved apostle Paul invited Timothy to enter into a deeper and more profound personal experience with the Savior.” Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who bath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.” In all of the Scriptures He is known as:

“The Christ”-the Greek word.

“The Messiah”-the Hebrew word.

“The Anointed”-the English word.

“We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.” John 1:41.

It was after this glorious revelation that the next day Jesus found Philip, “and said unto him, Follow me.” John 1:43. Here is an excellent evangelistic and preaching pattern. Reveal the Christ first; experience personally the power of the gospel in the life. Then proceed to invite men to follow Him.

Three Facts of Importance

This introduces its to three basic elements to be found in true Christ-centered preaching. They must never be discounted or overlooked. They are, (1) the right words, (2) the right spirit, (3) at the right time. Here again is the blueprint:

“Tact and good judgment increase the usefulness of the laborer a hundred fold. If he will speak the right words at the right time, and show the right spirit, this will exert a melting power on the heart of the one he is trying to help.” [28]

The Right Spirit

This is a most important emphasis. It must ever be recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist preacher that the Spirit of Christ must be his own spirit if he would win men. Surely we should examine our approach to men when we consider the truth that - “there is a vast amount of rubbish brought forward by professed believers in Christ, which blocks up the way to the cross. Notwithstanding all this, there are some who are so deeply convicted that they will come through every discouragement and will surmount every obstacle in order to gain the truth. But had the believers in the truth purified their minds by obeying it, had they felt the importance of knowledge and of refinement of manners in Christ’s work, where one soul has been saved there might have been twenty.” [29]

I wish we could read and reread that dramatic statement until it is irrevocably impressed upon our minds and becomes a guide in our procedural planning. We have every right to rejoice exceedingly for the salvation of the one precious soul. Christ Himself taught us this in His parable of the one lost sheep; but, brethren, what of the other nineteen we might have won but who have been sacrificed on the altar of erroneous emphasis in our preaching and perhaps neglect of a true spiritual dynamic?

So pointed was this instruction as early as 1876 that we cannot overlook the pioneer appeal of the messenger. How intensified became this appeal after 1888! And yet, here we are, better than threescore years later, still aware that the dynamic, winsome, powerful note we desire is missing in our general ministry!

One of the most beautiful pictures of our Lord is given in The Desire of Ages, where we are told:

“His tender compassion fell with a touch of healing upon weary and troubled hearts. Even amid the turbulence of angry enemies He was surrounded with an atmosphere of peace. The beauty of His countenance, the loveliness of His character, above all, the love expressed in look and tone, drew to Him all who were not hardened in unbelief. Had it not been for the sweet, sympathetic spirit that shone out in every look and word, He would not have attracted the large congregations that He did. The afflicted ones who came to Him, felt that He linked His interest with theirs as a faithful and tender friend, and they desired to know more of the truths He taught. Heaven was brought near. They longed to abide in His presence, that the comfort of His love might be with them continually.” [30]

Here is the secret of Christ’s success: “Had it not been for the sweet, sympathetic spirit that shone out in every look and word, He would not have attracted the large congregations that He did.” A careful study of Christ’s life and ministry shows that this is not an oversimplification of the formula for His success. Contrast this with our frequent debate, polemic, defensive, quarrelsome, argumentative presentations until our diminishing attendance at the meetings forces us to abandon any further presentation of the message!

Behold how tenderly Jesus bade His followers to come unto Him. He took advantage of the innate longings of every heart. His spirit met theirs. By touching upon the things they recognized and sensed in their daily routine He succeeded in awakening within them a compatible spirit that produced a lasting rapport. His spirit awakened theirs by assuring them that He was:

1. The vine. John 15: 1.

2. The door. John 10: 7.

3. The good shepherd. John 10:4.

4. The light of the world. John 8:12.
5. The Alpha and Omega. Revelation 21:6.
6. The root and the offspring of David. Revelation 22:16.
7. The resurrection and the life. John 11:25.
8. The bread of life. John 6:35.
9. The water of life. John 4:14.
10. The bright and morning star. Revelation 22:16.
11. The way, the truth, and the life. John 14:6.

This marked the spirit of Jesus. We are to possess His spirit and proclaim Him anew in all of these fundamental aspects and needs. He who recognizes Him in these relationships immediately finds in Him the source of life, light, food, shelter, eternal hopes and destinies. By discovering Him the material of life assumes a subordinate proportion of time and interest.

Here is the secret of persuasive preaching power." The melting love of God in the hearts of the workers will be recognized by those for whom they labor." [31] No one need apply artificial devices to produce decisions for the Lord Jesus Christ. When the minister truly possesses Christ, he cannot possibly hide the indwelling Master. The natural consequence of this is that his work cannot and will not fail.

"Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit." [32]

"Approach the people in a persuasive, kindly manner, full of cheerfulness and love for Christ. . . . No human tongue can express the preciousness of the ministration of the word and the Holy Spirit. No human expression can portray to the finite mind the value of understanding and by living faith receiving the blessing that is given as Jesus of Nazareth passes by." [33]

What more need we then to do but follow this wonderful counsel and fitly represent our Lord through a perfect knowledge of Him?

To preach Christ fully is to make Him live anew in heart and life. The preacher must form a close kinship and show clearly how Christ identifies Himself with everyone who comes to Him for succor and fellowship. It must be clearly demonstrated that while Christ is God, yet He completely identified Himself with man." Christ had not ceased to be God when He became man." [34] And yet for all of this He became:

"The MAN Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5.

"A MAN of sorrows." Isaiah 53:1

"The MAN of Nazareth." -The Desire of Ages, p. 249.

"The MAN of Calvary." -The Desire of Ages, p. 391.

"In fashion as a MAN." Philippians 2:8.

"The Son of MAN hath power." Matthew 9:6.

He was both Son of God and Son of man.

The Son of God:

Matthew 2:15; 3:17; 4:3,6.

Luke 1:32, 35; 3:32; 4:3, 9; 4:34, 41.

John 1:34,49; 3:16,18,35,36; 5:22,23; 6:40,69; 12:26; 13:3; 14:13; 15:23; 16:27, 30; 17:1; 19:7.

Romans 1:9; 5:10; 8:3,29,32.

1 Corinthians 1: 9.

Galatians 1: 16; 4:4, 6.

Colossians 1: 13.

1 Thessalonians 1:10.

Hebrews 1:2,5,8; 3:6; 4:14; 5:5,8; 6:6; 7:3.

1 John 1:3, 7; 3:23; 4:9,10; 5:9.

The Son of man:

Matthew 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8,32,40; 13:37,41; 16:13; 17:9,22; 24:27,30,44; 25:31; 26:2,24,45.

Mark 8:38; 9:12,31; 10:33; 13:34.

Luke 5:24; 6:22; 9:22, 26; 11:30; 12:8; 17:22; 18:8; 19:10; 21:36; 22:48.

John 1:51; 3:13; 5:27; 6:27,53,62; 8:28; 12:23, 34; 13:31.

Acts 7:56.

Revelation 1:13.

Here are numerous references and sermon texts showing how this wonderful mystery will aid in crystallizing the dynamic ministry of our blessed Lord. With His spirit in the life no preacher need lament an empty, frustrated, unsatisfactory ministry. As Christ Jesus walks about through our cities and villages again, incarnate within His earthly ministers, His influence will be reflected in their service. God never intended ordinariness to characterize the remnant ministry. One rich paragraph epitomizes all we have said thus far:

“Let every minister learn to wear the gospel shoes. He who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace will walk as Christ walked. He will be able to speak right words, and to speak them in love. He will not try to drive home God’s message of truth. He will deal tenderly with every heart, realizing that the Spirit will impress the truth on those who are susceptible to divine impressions. Never will he be vehement in his manner. Every word spoken will have a softening, subduing influence. . . . In speaking words of reproof, let us put all the Christ like tenderness and love possible into the voice. The higher a minister’s position, the more circumspect should he be in word and act.” [35]

The Right Words

As Christ’s ambassadors we have a solemn responsibility in the fact that we are held accountable for every single word, written or spoken. Our words may lead some soul to a needless misunderstanding of the truth or quench the spirit to desire further investigation.” It should ever be manifest that we are reformers, but not bigots.” [36] It is quite obvious, then, that there must be a sharp line drawn between the presentation of true reforms and sharp, debative, critical bigotry. Bigotry, of course, is one of the basest forms of self-conceit, pharisaism, and self-aggrandizement.

In this matter, as well as in all others, Christ has set before us His own noble example.

“Christ carried out in His life His own divine teachings. His zeal never led Him to become passionate. He manifested consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and sympathy without sentimentalism. He was highly social, yet He possessed a reserved dignity that did not encourage undue familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity.” [37]

Here was the wonderful example of the Master in drawing a proper balance and correct proportion of these principles as He taught and lived the truth before men. Sometimes a man’s personal position in temperance leads him to be critical, sharp, self-effusive, or he may

even attempt to classify the believers into groups of first-class or second-class followers of Jesus. But not so with Christ.” His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity.” Another may be troubled about the matter of dress. In this it is easy to fail to represent fully the spirit of Jesus Christ. In setting forth a false procedure along argumentative, legalistic lines, the minister violates the very foundational concept of the third angel’s message. Said the messenger of God:

“There are many who try to correct the life of others by attacking what they consider are wrong habits. They go to those whom they think are in error, and point out their defects. They say, ‘You don’t dress as you should.’ They try to pick off the ornaments, or whatever seems offensive, but they do not seek to fasten the mind to the truth. Those who seek to correct others should present the attractions of Jesus. They should talk of His love and compassion, present His example and sacrifice, reveal His Spirit, and they need not touch the subject of dress at all. There is no need to make the dress question the main point of your religion. There is something richer to speak of. Talk of Christ, and when the heart is converted, everything that is out of harmony with the word of God will drop off. It is only labor in vain to pick leaves off a living tree. The leaves will reappear. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree, and then the leaves will fall off, never to return!” [38]

Here is a technique far more perfect than the approach that is used many times by pastors, evangelists, and personal workers. Many of the rank and file of our church membership have never been directed to catch the full impact of such a presentation of difficult truths with “right” words concerning our Lord Himself.” Cleanse the fountain, and the streams will be pure. If the heart is right, your words, your dress, your acts, will all be right.” [39] This is the surest way of all to differentiate between a true reformer and a narrow, legalistic, cold, austere, religious bigot. The time is at hand to present the truth powerfully as it is in Jesus. By placing Christ before men on the high and lofty plane which it is our privilege to do, His perfect life will become a challenging contrast to those whose knowledge of Him is dwarfed or imperfect. Let the world clearly see that-

He is BEFORE all things.

Colossians 1: 17-”He is before all things.”

Proverbs 8:23 – “I was. . . from the beginning.”

Micah 5:2, margin - “Whose goings. . . from the days of eternity.”

Hebrews 1:10 – “Thou, Lord, in the beginning. . . laid the foundation of the earth.”

John 1:1-3 – “All things were made by him.”

Titus 1:2 – “Which God promised before the world began.”

He is ABOVE all things.

Hebrews 1:9 – “Anointed . . . above thy fellows.”

Philippians 2:9 – “A name which is above every name.” Ephesians 1:20,21 – “Set him. . . far above all principality.”

He is OVER all things.

Matthew 11:27-”All things are delivered unto me.”

John 3:35 – “The Father. . . hath given ALL things into his hand.” Romans 9:5 – “Christ. . . who is over all, God bless forever.”

The Master’s Way

Preaching in the abstract accomplishes little, but preaching with personality brings power, vitality, and conviction in the message.

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be you reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.

The way that Christ worked among men is the perfect pattern for His laborers today. He excelled in all phases of human relationships. In every situation He was the Master. In breaking down prejudice and winning the confidence of men He put into operation the most perfect of all laws.

“Satan is constantly seeking to produce effects by rude and violent thrusts; but Jesus found access to minds by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He disturbed as little as possible their accustomed train of thought, by abrupt actions or prescribed rules. He honored man with His confidence, and thus placed him on his honor. He introduced old truths in a new and precious light. Thus, when only twelve years old, He astonished the doctors of the law by His questions in the temple.

“Jesus assumed humanity, that He might meet humanity. He brings men under the transforming power of truth by meeting them where they are. He gains access to the heart by securing sympathy and confidence, making all feel that His identification with their nature and interest is complete. The truth came from His lips beautiful in its simplicity, yet clothed with dignity and power.” [40]

Dealing With Prejudice

Prejudice is the result of insufficient information or the improper correlation of a few known facts. The problem of prejudice is serious in every form of human behavior or relationships. But the worst of all prejudices frequently finds its most violent eruption within the scope of spiritual or religious controversies. This question, therefore, is of vital interest to us here assembled.

Happily, a formula for greatly resolving prejudice has likewise been given to us. Procedures and guiding principles have been provided in abundance. And, naturally enough, preaching the Christ centric message assumes utmost importance.” It will be difficult to create prejudice in the hearts of those who are seeking for truth as for hidden treasure, if the speaker will hide himself in Christ; for he will then reveal Christ, not himself.” [41]

When to speak or when to keep silent during a discussion of a religious character is most important. It is the unadvised word, the poorly chosen adjective, the improper inflection in tone or voice, that frequently starts a tragic trail of prejudice, bitterness, and conflict. But happily there is an area in which the religious worker can move about with perfect freedom. Again we find this to be in the name of Christ.

“We are in constant need of wisdom to know when to speak and when to keep silent. But there is always perfect safety in talking of the hope of eternal life. And when the heart is all melted and subdued by the love of Jesus, the inquiry will be, ‘Lord, what must I do to be saved.’” [42] (Italics supplied.)

Lest you may think there is an improper overemphasis given to this aspect of preaching, let us note this striking, imperative instruction:

“God and His beloved Son must be presented before the people in the wealth of the love they have evidenced for man. In order to break down the barriers of prejudice and impenitence the love of Christ must have a part in every discourse. Make men to know how much Jesus loves them, and what evidences He has given them of His love. What love can equal that which God has manifested for man by the death of Christ on the cross? When the heart is filled with the love of Jesus, this can be presented to the people and it will affect hearts.” [43]

But this grand revelation of Christ need not, and will not, overwhelm the struggling soul if he can be led to see the sublime truth that Christ seeks to live again in His people. AS they clearly see His divinity, and yet how in the flesh He set the pattern for daily living, they will, in the deepest sense of awe, acclaim Him as their Savior. The brilliance of His life, the grandeur of His charm, will completely capture and captivate them. Let us see the tremendous expanse opened to the preacher of Christ as he begins to contrast these great principles of the Savior’s life.

The Divine-Human Nature of Christ

The DIVINE Nature

As Jehovah:

Genesis 22:14 Jehovah JIREH: Jehovah will provide.

Exodus 17:15 Jehovah NISSI: Jehovah my banner.

Judges 6:24 Jehovah SHALOM: Jehovah send peace.

Jeremiah 23:6 Jehovah TZIDKENU: Jehovah our righteousness. Ezekiel 48:35 Jehovah SHAMMAH: Jehovah is there.

Psalms 23:1 Jehovah. R'OI Jehovah my shepherd.

Exodus 15:26 Jehovah ROPHEKA: Jehovah my healer.

Isaiah 40:3-5 With Luke 3:4-6-Prepare you the way of Jehovah.

Isaiah 41:4 With Revelation 2:8-Jehovah, the first, and with the last.

Isaiah 42:6, 7 With Luke 2:32; 1:79 Jehovah . . . a light of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 6:1-3 With John 12:41.

Isaiah 8:13, 14 With 1 Peter 2:8. Isaiah 40:11; 44:6 With Revelation 1:17. Isaiah 48:12-16 With Revelation 22:13. Jeremiah 23:5, 6 With 1 Corinthians 1: 30.

Joel 2:32 With Acts 2:21; 1 Corinthians 1:2;

Malachi 3:1 With Mark 1:2. Hebrews 13:20; James 2:1.

Eternal God:

Psalms 45:6; 102:24-27 with Hebrews 1:8, 10-12; Isaiah 9:6.

Creator:

John 1:1-3; Romans 9:5; Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:21.

Judge:

Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Jeremiah 10:10; John 15:20;

2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1; John 5:20, 22.

Savior:

Hosea 1:7; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; Acts 20:28; John 20:28; 1 John 5:20;

Isaiah 9:6; Romans 9:5; John 5:25, 26.

Equal With God:

Zechariah 13:7; John 5:17, 23; 16:15; Philippians 2:6; 1 Thessalonians 3:11;

2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17; John 1: 1-3.

Lord From Heaven; Lord of Sabbath; Lord of All:

Genesis 2:3; Matthew 12:8; Acts 10:36; Romans 10:11-13; 1 Corinthians 15:47;

John 3:13,31; 6:32, 38, 41, 58; John 4:29; 8:23; 16: 28, 30.

One With God:

John 10:30; 17:11, 21, 22, 23; John 5:23; 8:54; 1:18; 14: 7-9; 8:19; John 12:44; 5:19; 5:21; 5:26.

Sends Spirit With God:

John 14:16; John 15:26.

Fullness of the Godhead:

Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3.

Eternal, Omnipotent:

Psalm 45:3; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 18:20; 28:20; John 16:30; 21:17; Philippians 3:21; 1 Tim. 1:17.

The HUMAN Nature

Conception:

Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:31; Matthew 1:16, 25; 2:2; Luke 2:7, 11; John 1: 14; Hebrews 2:14.

Human Soul:

Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46; Acts 2:31; Isaiah 53:10, 12.

Physical Characteristics:

Circumcision Luke 2:21.

Wept Luke 19:41; John 11:35.

Hunger Matthew 4:2; 21:18.

Thirst John 4:7; 19:28.

Sleep Matthew 8:24; Mark 4:38.

Weariness John 4:6.

Sorrow Isaiah 53:3, 4; Luke 22:44; John 11:33; 12:27.

Buffeted Matthew 26:67; Luke 22:64.

Felt indignities Luke 23:11.

Scourged Matthew 27:26; John 19:1.

Nailed to cross Luke 23:33 with Psalm 22:16.

Death John 19:30.

Pierced side John 19:34.

Buried Matthew 27:59, 60; Mark 15:46.

Resurrected Acts 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:8.

Like Us in All Things Except Sin:

Acts 3:22; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:17.

Without sin:

John 8:46; 18:38; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26-28; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5.

Senses Appealed to:

John 20:27; 1 John 1: 1, 2.

Essential to His Mediatorial Office:

Romans 6:15, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:21; Galatians 4:4, 5; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:17.

Was of One Seed of the Woman, Abraham, David:

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:4; Jeremiah 31:22; Luke 1:31; Galatians 4:4; Genesis 22:18 with Galatians 3:16; Hebrews 2:16; 2 Samuel 7:12, 16; Psalm 89:35, 36; Jeremiah 23:5; Matthew 22:42; Mark 10:47; Acts 2:30; 13:23; Romans

Thus the divine-human aspects of the Savior reveal to fallen man the depths to which the Lord descended to save him. This spirit of complete selflessness is in sharp contrast to the pride, stubbornness, and evil of the natural heart. The clearer one is led to see Jesus in all His humility, the more sharply and distinctly the extent of departure from God stands forth. There the promises of Christ and His covering righteousness become the sweetest of all assurances. This is Christ-centered preaching.

The Seven Elements in Christ Centric Preaching

We now turn our attention to seven basic truths that are the fundamental basis of every sermon that we preach. I trust that these seven points will come to full stature in our thinking in this necessarily brief but highly important phase of this discussion.

1. The Love of Christ

We have already learned that “in order to break down the barriers of prejudice and impenitence the love of Christ must have a part in every discourse.” [44] Therefore, in our preaching procedures it is important that we recognize the truth that people come to hear a religious speaker so they may discover the way to God.

“More people than we think are longing to find the way to Christ. Those who preach the last message of mercy should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner’s refuge. Some ministers think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith; they take it for granted that their hearers are acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. But many people are sadly ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation; they need more instruction upon this all-important subject than upon any other.

“Theoretical discourses are essential, that people may see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole; but no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel. Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness.” [45]

Here is the instruction that “no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel.” This is not a mere allusion to Him, not a casual reference to His name, not a belated mention of His name at the end of an hour-long series of arguments and recitation of facts, but rather a central presentation of Christ and the plan of salvation, which is the “all-important” subject upon which people need “more instruction” “than upon any other.”

How true it is that at times we have felt it to be necessary to discuss other themes or subjects of various sorts with the primary objective of securing a crowd! In this way some political leader becomes our theme, with the consequence of a repetitious recital of some prophetic outline through the simple device of simply substituting the name of the changing political figures as history marches on.

“Many of the ministers have departed from Christ’s plans. The praise of men is coveted, and they strain every faculty in an effort to hunt out and present wonderful things. The Lord bids me counsel them to walk humbly and prayerfully with Him. . . . Be willing to be little men handling great subjects.” [46]

This basic fact of preaching Christ therefore applies to every form of public presentation of the message. It is not merely an emphasis applied to certain subjects or some doctrines. It is to be absolutely fundamental that all our subjects are to be filled with Christ.

“Our words, our deportment, how we present the truth, may balance minds for or against the truth; and we want in every discourse, whether it is doctrinal or not, we want that Jesus Christ should be presented distinctly, as John declared, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world.’ [47]

2. The Cross

Closely associated with the presentation of the love of Christ is a major emphasis upon the thrilling demonstration of that love which is found in the cross of our Lord.

“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption, the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.” [48]

We should underline again the fact that “this is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.”

Is that true of our preaching? As we candidly view our sermonic materials, are they all gathered with the love of Christ and the telling of the story of the cross as the fundamental thesis? How can the Sabbath, the condition of man in death, the mark of the beast, Spiritualism, the seven last plagues, and all other subjects be centered in the love of Christ and the cross of our Lord? Yet this is to be our theme and thesis. A power not witnessed before by our ministry will attend the preaching of the Word if we will only remember these glorious truths of utmost importance. The power of preaching the Advent truth is resident in this cruciform presentation of truth.

“Centuries, ages, can never diminish the efficacy of this atoning sacrifice. The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.” [49]

“Let me look at the crowd as my Savior did,

Till my eyes with tears grow dim,

Let me look till I pity the scattered sheep,

And love them for love of Him.”

A Christ-centered presentation will recognize fully another technique employed by Jesus in order to reach the masses effectively.

“Christ drew the hearts of His hearers to Him by the manifestation of His love, and then, little by little, as they were able to bear it, He unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom. We also must learn to adapt our labors to the condition of the people, to meet men where they are. While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love-the love of Christ-is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience.

“All the great truths of the Scriptures center in Christ; rightly understood, all lead to Him. Let Christ be presented as the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, of the great plan of redemption. Present to the people such subjects as will strengthen their confidence in God and in His Word, and lead them to investigate its teachings for themselves. And as they go forward, step by step, in the study of the Bible, they will be better prepared to appreciate the beauty and harmony of its precious truths.” [50]

O that we might believe the truth of the words that love -the love of Christ-is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience-! A maximum number of victories are not achieved by argumentation. The piling of one fact upon another cannot do it. Only the love of Christ can soften the heart. The law cannot do it. The preaching of legalism, with its cold, heartless, bloodless argumentation, cannot do it. Will we repeat the 1890 experience when Mrs. White lamented the fact that - “you will meet with those who will say, ‘You are too much excited over this 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.” [51]

Here, then, is the secret: Christ in the law, Christ in the Sabbath, Christ in the plagues, Christ in the valley of death. This approach is vastly different from the cold, argumentative, debative approach of the law without Christ or the Sabbath apart from Him.

This is not to suggest even slightly that we should alter our Biblical and historical position that those who are living a saved experience will be found keeping all Christ's commandments. It will ever be true that "If you love me," you will "keep my commandments." But there is a vast difference between an attempt to "keep" the commandments for works' sake and actually keeping them because of a great love for Christ. Undoubtedly Christ here calls for a people who keep the commandments because they have first learned to love Him. He is calling for a ministry to lead people to love Him. Then in that love His commandments become promises of sweet assurance that His children will not even desire the things of sin. In His love they will eagerly "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," not from a sense of obligation but from an eagerness flowing forth from a heart truly born again.

3. Conversion

"There are many who want to know what they must do to be saved. They want a plain and clear explanation of the steps requisite in conversion, and there should not a sermon be given unless a portion of that discourse is to especially make plain the way that sinners may come to Christ and be saved. They should point them to Christ, as did John, and with touching simplicity, their hearts aglow with the love of Christ, say, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world.' Strong and earnest appeals should be made to the sinner to repent and be converted." [52] (Italics supplied.)

There is a big difference between exhorting people to come to Christ, or emphasizing their need of coming to Christ, and actually teaching them the simple steps requisite in conversion. The teaching of the way to Christ is to be woven into the fabric of every sermon.

Many times the preaching of conversion is looked upon in a secondary light. Perhaps it is viewed as a "filler" sermon between so-called "heavy truths," as a respite before the people can endure further points of "the message." Or, unfortunately, some may feel that the preaching of conversion is to be left to other religious organizations while we proceed to give the people "the truth." This psychology, of course, ignores completely the centrality of conversion, the cross, and the love of Christ in the third angel's message.

Nicodemus is one example. He was a religious leader in his day. He was highly respected as an observer of the law. And this was right and good. But note this observation concerning his life:

"When Nicodemus said unto Jesus, 'How can these things be?' Jesus said to him, 'Art thou a master of Israel, and knows not these things?' A teacher in Israel, a man among wise men, a man who supposed that he was able to comprehend the science of religion, and yet stumbling at the doctrine of conversion!"

Here was a great religious leader stumbling at the "doctrine of conversion." Is it possible that some of us today, in our preaching, likewise stumble along without making the dynamic appeal to conversion our central theme? Not a sermon is to be preached without attention's being given to conversion! "In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ." [54]

4. Practical Godliness

In this fourth principle we find the heart of how men can most effectively be influenced for Christ.

"It is harder to reach the hearts of men today than it was twenty years ago. The most convincing arguments may be presented, and yet sinners seem as far from salvation as ever. Ministers should not preach sermon after sermon on doctrinal subjects alone. Practical godliness should find a place in every discourse." [55]

If this was true in 1908, how true must it be in this year of our Lord. May we always remember that "no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel. Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness." [56] A typical example of this is found in the effective technique employed for the influencing of men of position for the truth." Every Sabbath they want to hear something definite explaining how they can be saved, how they are to become Christians." [57] In this way warmth, blood, life, and vitality are placed in the presentation of the truth. Not that each sermon must be an exhaustive discussion of all these various points, but rather that the entire message must find these truths woven in as threads in a beautiful tapestry.

"Remember that great care is to be exercised in regard to the presentation of truth. Carry the minds along guardedly. Dwell upon practical godliness, weaving the same into doctrinal discourses. The teachings and love of Christ will soften and subdue the soil of the heart for the good seed of truth." [58]

Clearly this is the way that the truth is made beautiful, and the cross then becomes central "around which all other truths cluster." "There should be interspersed with the prophecies practical lessons of the teachings of Christ." [59]

5. The Second Coming

“The truths of prophecy are bound up together, and as we study them, they form a beautiful cluster of practical Christian truth. All the discourses that we give are plainly to reveal that we are waiting, working, and praying for the coming of the Son of God. His coming is our hope. This hope is to be bound up with all our words and works, with all our associations and relationships.” [60]

What further word need we say concerning this most precious doctrine? We go forth almost alone to the world teaching the simple truth of the coming of Jesus, uninhibited by fanciful interpretations, false “raptures” and secret snatchings. The hope of our message should be kept burning brightly in our own hearts, and then it will shine forth brightly in the hearts of those who hear us.” The Second Coming of the Son of man is to be the wonderful theme kept before the people. Here is a subject that should not be left out of our discourses.” [61] O glorious hope! Let us tell it with all the fervor of our souls! Herein is the hope of the world!

“It is almost time for the Lord to come,

I hear the people say;

The stars of heaven are growing dim,

It must be the breaking of the day.

“It must be time for the waiting church

To cast her pride away,

With girded loins and burning lamps,

To look for the breaking of the day.

“Go quickly out in the streets and lanes

And in the broad highway,

And call the maimed the halt, and blind,

To be ready for the breaking of the day.”

G. W. SEDERQUIST

6. Corner for Children

We now come to one of the most frequently ignored points of all! How few of us really include even occasionally a corner for children in our homiletical structure. Yet here is the instruction:

“At every suitable opportunity let the story of Jesus’ love be repeated to the children. In every sermon let a little corner be left for their benefit. The servant of Christ may make lasting friends of these little ones. Then let him lose no opportunity of helping them to become more intelligent in a knowledge of the Scriptures. This will do more than we realize to bar the way against Satan’s devices. If children early become familiar with the truths of God’s word, a barrier against ungodliness will be erected, and they will be able to meet the foe with the words, ‘It is written.’” [62]

The wise minister will never lose sight of the inherent potential worth of the youth and the primary position that Christ should occupy in the hearts of young people. He who said, “Except you become as little children,” is the same One who expects His children to be remembered in every sermon.

Of course, this is difficult in the abstract, but not with a concrete, practical-godliness approach. For instance, a story, an illustration, a text, or a lesson drawn from contemporary experiences with children oftentimes provides this “corner” for children in our sermon. This technique tends to keep the sermon on a level of great simplicity, a level which is of course basically essential.

7. Close With an Appeal

“At the close of every meeting, decisions should be called for.” [63] “In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ.” [64] Here, then, we have the natural and appropriate manner of concluding a sermon that characterizes true Christ-centered preaching. A sermon without a response is like a farmer continually planting seed but never seeking a harvest.

And again, we see that the climax of the sermon, as in all other aspects of the sermon, is no more convincing, no more powerful, than is the experience of the minister.

“There are souls in every congregation who are hesitating, almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and for eternity; but it is too often the case that the minister has not the spirit and power of the message of truth in his own heart, hence no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance.” [65]

We wish that time could here be devoted to a presentation of those wonderful principles laid down and set forth by the Master in obtaining decisions for the kingdom. But suffice it to say that the technique grows out of an experience that gently leads from the known into the unknown. Because it is the difficult, taxing portion of the minister’s public ministry, many times this important factor is sadly neglected. It does not follow that an altar call or some other appeal of a demonstrative character must be made at every meeting. The call can be effectively alternated from service to service so as to maintain an element of freshness and originality. The fact is that experience has shown that many of the most permanent and enduring decisions were not made in a demonstrative public response, but rather in the calm, quiet, deep conviction born in a moment when a moving appeal by the preacher showed the way a sinner may come to Christ.

“God would draw minds from the conviction of logic to a conviction deeper, higher, purer, and more glorious. Often human logic has nearly quenched the light that God would have shine forth in clear rays to convince men that the Lord of nature is worthy of all praise and glory, because He is the Creator of all things.

“Some ministers err in making their sermons wholly argumentative. There are those who listen to the theory of the truth, and are impressed with the evidences brought out; then, if Christ is presented as the Savior of the world, the seed sown may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. But often the cross of Calvary is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and the golden opportunity lost, is lost forever. If in connection with the theory of the truth, Christ and His redeeming love had been proclaimed, these might have been won to His side.” [66]

Here, then, is God’s short course in homiletics. These are seven basic points that we are told must be in every sermon we preach. It is God’s way of giving us a technique that cannot fail to produce a Christ-centered message. In a quick recapitulation, we discover them to be:

1. The love of Christ.
2. The cross of Calvary.
3. The doctrine of conversion.
4. Practical godliness.
5. The Second Coming of our Lord.
6. A corner for children.
7. A moving appeal.

May we henceforth resolve deliberately to construct our sermons with these basic principles in mind. An amazing power will be manifest in our preaching. When these points are made central, there will be no room for argumentation. All irrelevancies will be gone. Is not our God good to grant us this blueprint, so that we may truly excel and thus fulfill the prophecy that “of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world.”

“Christ be with me, Christ within me,

Christ behind me, Christ before me,

Christ beside me, Christ to win me,

Christ to comfort and restore me.

“Christ beneath me, Christ above me,

Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,

Christ in hearts of all that love me,

Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.”

SAINT PATRICK

Christ the Center

To see the dominant place afforded Christ in every presentation of truth by the early apostles is an absorbing study. They went forth to preach in a most critical time of human history. Political, economic, and social problems were very severe. The world needed a clear voice to lead men from the darkness and despair that had settled upon so many. There were all sorts of mal adjustments, social and economic injustices, and there were moral depravities beyond description. A materialistic concept of might, with all its accompanying evils and false philosophy, had fastened itself upon humanity.

How was the commission of Jesus Christ to be carried out amid such universal need? Christ laid upon His disciples a tremendous task. The gospel was to go to all the world. They were to carry out His plan. By precept and example He had repeatedly demonstrated the principles and methods they were to follow. Fortunately for the church the cause of Christ was entrusted to men who learned those lessons well and applied them in a most vigorous and skillful way. How were they to point out the great political corruption, social inequalities, moral delinquencies, and economic injustices? Did they promptly proceed to attack the political leaders by unveiling the prophecy of Daniel 2, inserting the name of Caesar into the dominant headline? Did they attack the, social and economic inequalities by promptly denouncing the cruel system of slavery and the accompanying unfairness between capital and labor? They did not! That is they did not attack them in the Christless, legalistic fashion that others might who did not possess such an amazing concept of Jesus. They did attack them and vigorously enough, even at the cost of the sacrifice of their lives, but they emphasized the dominant issues in Christ and in His name.

A Few Suggestions

Philip

An exhaustive analysis of this phase of the Christ centric approach cannot here be made, but a few suggestive examples must suffice. Earlier we noted that Philip went to Samaria to preach.” And there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:8. This joy was not an accident. Neither was it the result of some expert technique other than the basic one of preaching Christ. (Verse 5) This same procedure was repeated by Philip in the Gaza desert experience. The same technique was used. The same result was forthcoming.” Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.” Verse 35. This was basic to the baptismal candidacy of the apostolic period. Let us here note the great fundamentals that were emphasized.” But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Verse 12. (Acts 19:1-5.) After their baptism these early believers found a wonderful joy.” And when they were come

up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.” Verse 39.

James

In James we find a strong champion of faith, courage, and patience by one who devoted his life to a precious ministry to the underprivileged. But let us witness the skill of his approach. Let us see the centrality of Christ in his technique for presenting a solution of these practical-godliness problems that touched so closely upon the lives of the great masses of people. He began his work at a time of terrible economic situations.

“From whence conic wars and fighting among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts. You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do you think that the scripture said in vain, The spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy? But he gives more grace. Wherefore he said, God resists the proud,

but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:1-10.

Undoubtedly there were those in James’s day who would rather attack the problem by unmasking the personalities inflicting the injustices. But James said, “Brethren, look to yourselves. How close are you to God?” To James it was not so much what happened but rather how to adjust oneself to the happening. His solution was centered in the Lord our Savior.” For that you ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.” Verse 15. We are all well acquainted with the solution for the capital and labor question as seen by James. (James 5:1-8) But the magnificence of it all reaches its apex, for after pointing out the inequities in a most careful and tactful manner, he declares to the suffering one, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be you also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.” Verses 7, 8. Here the vertical view became supreme. His concept of righteousness was extremely practical.” The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.” James 3:17, 18. It was this concept of the Lord, the Word of God, and grace that led him to define clearly the relation of faith and works.” Yea, a man may say, Thou has faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” James 2:18. The fruit of the life is the testimony of the depth of faith in Christ.

The Poor in the Scriptures

Always to be found: Deuteronomy 15: 11; Matthew 26: 11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8.

Their mental and physical condition: Job 24:4; Proverbs 13:8; 14:20; 18:23; 19:4; 30:9; Ecclesiastes 9:15;

James 2.

Their comfort: Job 31:19; Proverbs 31:6; 1 John 3:17.

Causes of poverty: Proverbs 6:9-11; 10: 4; 13:4; 19:13; 20:13; 23:21; 28:19.

Oppression condemned: Exodus 22:25; Deuteronomy 15:7; 24:12-15; Job 24:9; Psalm 12:5; 14:6; Proverbs

14:31; 17:5; 22:16, 22; 28:3; Ecclesiastes 5:8; Isaiah 3:14; Jeremiah 22:3; Amos 2:6; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4; Zechariah 7:10;

James 2:2-6.

Kindly treatment: Exodus 23:11; Leviticus 19:10; 23:22; 25:25; Deuteronomy 15:7; Psalm 41:1; 82:3;

Proverbs 14:21; Isaiah 58:7; Galatians 2:10.

Their right to justice: Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1: 17; 16:19; Proverbs 24:23; 28:21; James 2.

God’s consideration: Job 5:15; Psalm 9:18; 68:10; 69:33; 72:2; 102:17; 113:7; 132:15; Zechariah 11:7;

Matthew 6:26-34.

When blessed by God: Proverbs 15:16; 16:8; 19:1; 28:6, 11.

Cared for by the church: Acts 6: 1; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 8; 9; Galatians 2: 10.

“Blessed be you poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.” Luke 6:20. (See Matthew 5:3)

Paul’s Technique

We now turn our attention to the apostle Paul’s methods. We shall see how he worked with the Jews as contrasted with his approach to the Gentiles. We shall further see in some detail how he used the prophecies that

pointed out the Savior, and the life of Christ, to keep his message gospel centered, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” 1 Corinthians 2:2.

Paul had an amazing regard for Christ, the prophecies that pointed Him out, and the Holy Word. This basic trinity upon which he repeatedly relied for his message is remarkable in his defense of his ministry and even of his life.

“Wherefore I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:25-27.

There can be no doubt here as to the concept Paul had of his ministry. His work was to reveal the great mystery of the generations; he was to preach the Word more fully; he was to make known the glory of riches of this ministry! He had a profound regard for the Word.

In the Targums of the Old Testament we find the Hebrew “Word” used instead of “God,” “Lord,” over and over again. In the New Testament we find Christ clearly revealed as the “Word” made flesh.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” John 1:1-3.” And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” Verse 14.

The apostle John, in his great picture of Christ, also speaks of Him as the “Word” of God.” And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.” Revelation 19:13. The closeness, the oneness, of the Scriptures and the “Word” is revealed more perfectly in Christ’s own words, “Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39.

Jesus as the Word (Revelation 19:13; John 1:1-3, 14).

In the time of creation: God-Genesis 1:27. Lord God-Genesis 3:22.

In the time of the Flood: Lord-Genesis 7:16. God-Genesis 8: 1. Me-Genesis 9:12, 13.

In the time of Abraham: Lord-Genesis 15:6. Me-Genesis 17:2, 7.

In the time of Sinai: Lord-Exodus 19:3, 9. Me-Exodus 19:5. God-Exodus 19:17.

Lord thy God-Exodus 20:7.

In the time of the Red Sea: Lord-Exodus 12:23. Who-Exodus 12:27.

In the time of Sodom: Lord-Genesis 19:24.

In the time of Isaac: God-Genesis 22:8.

It is a most absorbing study to see how successfully Paul perfected his ministry in preaching Christ to the people of his day. And yet he preached Christ to one group of people differently from the way he did to another group.

“Our ministers need more of the wisdom that Paul had. When he went to labor for the Jews, he did not first make prominent the birth, betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ, notwithstanding these were the special truths for that time. He first brought them down step by step over the promises that had been made of a Savior, and over the prophecies that pointed Him out, After dwelling upon these until the specifications were distinct in the minds of all, and they knew that they were to have a Savior, he then presented the fact that this Savior had already come. Christ Jesus fulfilled every specification. This was the ‘guile’ with which Paul caught souls. He presented the truth in such a manner that their former prejudice did not arise to blind their eyes and pervert their judgment.” [67]

There are at least five distinct points in this quotation that stand out in sharp contrast with the other method employed by the great apostle. It is very interesting to note that in his zeal to present Christ. Paul was careful to apply all the judgment and skill gained in his field experiences.

Now let us examine a contrasting method used by the same evangelist:

“To the Gentiles, he [Paul] preached Christ as their only hope of salvation, but did not at first have anything definite to say upon the law. But after their hearts were warmed with the presentation of Christ as the gift of God to our world, and what was comprehended in the work of the Redeemer in the costly sacrifice to manifest the love of God to man, in the most eloquent simplicity he showed that love for all mankind, Jew and Gentile, that they might be saved by surrendering their hearts to Him. Thus when, melted and subdued, they gave themselves to the Lord, he presented the law of God as the test of their obedience. This was the manner of his working, adapting his methods to win souls.” [68]

It is apparent that the apostle adapted basic principles to different peoples, which would achieve the same ends but by different routes.

To the Jews

1. Emphasized promises.
2. Pointed out the prophecies.
3. Dwelt upon them some time.
4. People agreed a Savior was to come.
5. Pointed out the fact that the Savior had come in Jesus Christ.

To the Gentiles

1. Warmed hearts With presentation of Christ.
2. Pointed out what God’s gift meant.
3. Pointed to the cross.
4. People surrendered their hearts.
5. He presented the law as a test (not a means) of their salvation.

We should note in the foregoing outline and quotations that to the Jews, Paul said nothing about Christ at first, “notwithstanding these were the special truths for that time.” When speaking to the Gentiles he “did not at first have anything definite to say upon the law.” He did not consider that the adaptation of procedure for the presentation of the gospel, or the withholding of certain information until the proper time, was a violation of the gospel itself.

“There has been much lost through following the mistaken ideas of our good brethren whose plans were narrow, and they lowered the work to their peculiar ways and ideas, so that the higher classes were not reached. . . . Every effort should be made to give dignity and character to the work. Special efforts should be made to secure the good will of men in responsible positions, without sacrificing one principle of truth or righteousness, but by sacrificing our own ways and manner of approaching the people. Much more would be effected by using more tact and discretion in the presentation of the truth.” [69]

Here is a technique of preaching Christ which we can study with profit. We can skillfully adapt our methods without sacrificing one single principle of our distinctive truth. The method Paul employed was governed by the historical, religious, and political backgrounds of the people to whom he ministered.

The Law and the Gospel Together

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was raised up to lead out in a final worldwide appeal.

“This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. . . . The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.” [70]

Now, Paul showed that the law has a part in the message to be carried to the world as a test of obedience; he also showed that it need not be given the first place of emphasis in order to fulfill the claims of orthodoxy.

Once again the servant of God emphasizes the fact that Adventists are ordained, to preach Christ more perfectly, more winsomely, and more profoundly than any other people on earth. Let us feel the impact of the words, "Let the outsiders understand that we preach the gospel as well as the law, and they will feast upon these truths, and many will take their stand for the truth." [71] That which draws them to the feast is the understanding that we preach the gospel as well as the law.

"The law and the gospel, revealed in the Word, are to be preached to the people; for the law and the gospel, blended, will convict of sin. God's law, while condemning sin, points to the gospel, revealing Jesus Christ, in whom 'dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.' The glory of the gospel reflects light upon the Jewish age, giving significance to the whole Jewish economy of types and shadows. Thus both the law and the gospel are blended. In no discourse are they to be divorced." [72]

Here is a beautiful picture of the function of the law. It points to the gospel and reveals Jesus as the Savior. In the following words we find both a challenge and an indictment: "The religionist generally has divorced the law and the gospel, while we have on the other hand almost done the same from another standpoint. We have not held up before the people the righteousness of Christ and the full significance of His great plan of redemption. We have left out Christ and His matchless love, and brought in the theories and reasoning, preached arguments." [73]

Strong words, indeed! But they are words of inspiration. Our attention is again drawn to those historic words following the conference of 1888:

"You will meet with those who will say, 'You are too much excited over this 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." [74]

This is specific counsel as to what is comprehended in preaching the doctrines in a Christ-centered setting.

The Adaptation of the Message

We shall now examine a further fact concerning the presentation of the message as Christ and the apostles preached theirs. The centrality of a Christ-centered message must ever be found in Him. The expertness and skill of presenting such a message must likewise be found in Him. We have been given some instruction which makes the way very plain.

"Let our ministers bear in mind that the strongest meat is not to be given to babes who know not the first principles of the truth as we believe it. In every age the Lord has had a special message for the people of that time; so we have a message for the people in this age. But while we have many things to say, we may be compelled to withhold some of them for a time, because the people are not prepared to receive them now." [75]

It is a most significant truth that "We may be compelled" to adapt our method of presentation to the prevailing situation. Here the centrality of our Lord becomes apparent.

"The great Teacher held in His hand the entire map of truth, but He did not disclose it all to His disciples. He opened to them those subjects only which were essential to their advancement in the path of heaven. There were many things in regard to which His wisdom kept Him silent. As Christ withheld many things from His disciples, knowing that then it would be impossible for them to comprehend, so today He withholds many things from us, knowing the limited capacity of our understanding." [76]

We may further see the wisdom in this counsel by noting these serious words:

"Now the fact that God's people that know the truth have failed to do their duty according to the light given in the word of God, makes it a necessity for us to be more guarded, lest we offend unbelievers before they have heard the reasons of our faith in regard to the Sabbath and Sunday. . . . There is need now to give to the people patient, kind instruction; the education of a lifetime is not to be readily counteracted; great tact and patient effort are needed by those who shall present the truth in any manner." [77]

In this statement we are plainly told that existing contemporary conditions make-it a necessity for us to be more guarded."

This is valuable counsel. The apostle Paul passed through an identical situation in his time. Yet he sensed the burden of a world mission. This does not imply that the truth was abandoned, altered, or changed in the slightest degree. In one instance Paul was endeavoring to bring a people to full surrender to Christ. Ultimately they would testify to the world that their surrender to Christ was evidenced by their obedience to the law of God. Yet he withheld that objective from the people until the very last. He did this because

of the delicate situation that existed among the people for whom he was working. Thus we see a literal demonstration of Paul's being forced, or "compelled," by the facts of existing conditions to wait until the proper time before he could publicly present the fuller message. The Expertness of the "Easy Style" (Volume 3, Page 36)

1." We may be compelled to withhold some of them. Review and Herald, October 14, 1902.

2." He opened to them those subjects only which were essential to their advancement in the path of heaven." Evangelism, p. 57.

3." Makes it a necessity for us to be more guarded." Ibid., p. 228.

4." Little by little, as they were able to bear it, He unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom." - Review and Herald, June 13, 1912.

5." Truth presented in an easy style, backed up with a few strong proofs, is better." - Testimonies, Volume 3, p. 36.

6." All points of our faith are not to be borne to the front and presented before the prejudiced crowds." - Testimonies, Volume 3, p. 426.

7." Christ did not bring many things before them at once, lest He might confuse their minds." -Manuscript 25, 1890.

8." He sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations." - Ministry of Healing, p. 23.

9." He disturbed as little as possible their accustomed train of thought." - Manuscript 44, 1895.

10." You need not feel that all the truth is to be spoken to unbelievers on any and every occasion." - Letter 12, 1887.

11." The Divine mysteries of Godliness, which would have enabled them to grasp the truths necessary for that time, could not be spoken." - Review and Herald, December 11, 1900.

12." This message must be given; but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have." - Testimonies, Volume 9, Pages 243, 244. (Italics supplied in these excerpts.)

The Master's Method

"Christ drew the hearts of His hearers to Him by the manifestations of His love, and then, little by little, as they were able to bear it, He unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom. We also must learn to adapt our labors to the condition of the people,-to meet men where they are. While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love-the love of Christ is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience.

"All the great truths of the Scriptures center in Christ; rightly understood, all lead to Him. Let Christ be presented as the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, of the great plan of redemption. Present to the people such subjects as will strengthen their confidence in God and in His word, and lead them to investigate its teachings for themselves. And as they go forward, step by step, in the study of the Bible, they will be better prepared to appreciate the beauty and harmony of its precious truths." [78]

Here is the Christ-centered order and perspective. It is possible to preach doctrines, arguments, and all manner of facts without truly elevating Christ. All of truth rightly centers in Him, and it naturally follows that by presenting Him fully we cannot err in any part of doctrine. It is not argument alone that wins. It is not legalism that subdues stubborn hearts. The love of Christ "is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience."

First Things First

We have seen how the apostles brought their presentation of the truth to harmonize with the conditions that existed in the localities of their labor. They learned these lessons in the school of the great Master Teacher.

"In this age, when pleasing fables are drifting upon the surface and attracting the mind, truth presented in an easy style, backed up with a few strong proofs, is better than to search and bring forth an overwhelming array of evidence. For the point then does not stand so distinct in many minds as before the objections and evidences were brought before them. With many, assertions will go further than long arguments. They take many things for granted. Proof does not help the case in the minds of such." [79]

What valuable counsel and precedent for the presentation of the truth today is set forth here! We could well spend much time in evaluating this statement and suggesting practical methods for applying it in our day. All of this is basic to a true presentation of Christ. We cannot preach Christ without preaching as Christ did.

“All points of our faith are not to be borne to the front and presented before the prejudiced crowds. . . . The truths that we hold in common should be dwelt upon first and the confidence of the hearers obtained.” [80]

This statement, of course, points us to a specific technique which was one result of a much broader psychological concept for presenting a difficult subject and message. This does not remotely suggest that the truth is to be ignored or altered. It does show that those hard sayings are to be presented at other times than before a public audience that is biased, prejudiced, or ill-prepared to receive the message. Here the easy style becomes practical and the truths of agreement in Christ make a strong appeal before the public. Then after proper and adequate preparation the minister leads them from the known into the unknown through Bible studies, after meetings, and personal interviews. It is not within the purview of this address to discuss the techniques of the after meeting, Bible classes, and other methods, but all are outlined in the Spirit of prophecy.

Striking, indeed, was the Savior’s method of approaching the people and presenting the truth. It was completely opposite from the methods of the priests. He identified Himself with the people. He won them by being one with them. This led even His enemies to confess, “Never man spoke like this man.

“The Prince of teachers, He sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He presented the truth in such a way that ever after it was to His hearers intertwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. He taught in a way that made them feel the completeness of His identification with their interests and happiness. His instruction was so direct, His illustrations were so appropriate, His words so sympathetic and cheerful, that His hearers were charmed.” [81]

This is indeed exalting Christ in the center of all true preaching. This is the way He taught. We are to follow Him more perfectly. We cannot separate the method from the message. The gentleness of the Savior is the secret that unlocks the mystery to a winsome and powerful ministry. This is how preaching Christ becomes the secret of all true and great preaching.

“He disturbed as little as possible their accustomed train of thought, by abrupt actions or prescribed rules. He honored man with His confidence, and thus placed him on his honor. He introduced old truths in a new and precious light. Thus, when only twelve years old, He astonished the doctors of the law by His questions in the temple.

“Jesus assumed humanity, that He might meet humanity. He brings men under the transforming power of truth by meeting them where they are. He gains access to the heart by securing sympathy and confidence, making all feel that His identification with their nature and interest is complete. The truth came from His lips beautiful in its simplicity, yet clothed with dignity and power.” [82]

Christ is the greatest evidence that gentleness, tact, kindness, patience, are not weakness, uncertainty, or a powerless ministry. It was this concept that led Paul to adopt such an effective approach in evangelizing the world. We are to grasp that same technique.

“You need not feel that all the truth is to be spoken to unbelievers on any and every occasion. You should plan carefully what to say and what to leave unsaid. This is not practicing deception; it is to work as Paul worked. He says, ‘Being crafty, I caught you with guile.’ [83]

This is why the following words are most significant, “Let the talkative man remember that there are times when he has no right to talk. . . . The time of many is lost when a man uses his tongue instead of his tools.” [84]

There were times in Paul’s ministry when the people should have been able to bear more of the truth. But they were not able, and consequently he did not attempt to present it to them. Again it was a matter of the application of sound principles of preaching the message of Christ.

“I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able. ’ Paul here addressed a people whose advancement was not proportionate to their privileges and opportunities. They ought to have been able to bear the hearing of the plain word of God, but they were in the position in which the disciples were when Christ said to them, ‘I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. ’ They ought to have been far advanced in spiritual knowledge, able to comprehend and practice the higher truths of the word; but they were unsanctified. They had forgotten that they must be purged from their hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong, and that they must not cherish carnal attributes.

“It was impossible for the apostle to reprove wrong-doing without some who claim to believe the truth becoming offended. The inspired testimony could do these no good; for they had lost their spiritual discernment, jealousy, evil surmising, and accusing closed

the door to the working of the Holy Spirit. Paul would gladly have dwelt upon higher and more difficult truths, truths which were rich in nourishment, but his instruction would have cut directly across their tendencies to jealousy, and would not have been received. The divine mysteries of godliness, which would have enabled them to grasp the truths necessary for that time, could not be spoken. The apostle must select lessons which, like milk, could be taken without irritating the digestive organs. Truths of the deepest interest could not be spoken, because the hearers would misapply and misappropriate them, presenting them to young converts who needed only the more simple truths of the Word.” [85]

Once again we have an example of a situation in which the people ought to have been able to grasp advanced truth; but conditions actually “compelled” a wise and judicious adjustment of labor until a time when the message could be more forcefully presented in a direct way.

Biblical Examples of Restraining Truth

Jesus:

“You cannot bear them now.” John 16:12.

“As they were able to hear it.” Mark 4:33.

The parable of the tares is an example of not explaining the details to the multitude. Matthew 13:24-43.

“Thou has hid these things.” Matthew 11:25.

Paul:

“Hitherto you were not able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 3:2.

“When I became a man, I put away childish things. I Corinthians 13: 11.

“May grow up into him in all things.” Ephesians 4:14, 15.

Peter:

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word.” 1 Peter 2:2.

Debate Invites Defeat

“The combative armor, the debating spirit, must be laid off. If we would be Christ like we must reach men where they are.” [86] There is no alternative to this approach.

This is a vital part of preaching the Christ centric message. Any spirit other than that of genuine Christ like temperament denies Him and robs the preacher of the great power that may be his.

“Men may speak fluently upon doctrines, and may express strong faith in theories, but do they possess Christian-like meekness and love? If they reveal a harsh, critical spirit, they are denying Christ. If they are not kind, tender-hearted, longsuffering, they are not like Jesus; they are deceiving their own souls. A spirit contrary to the love, humility, meekness, and gentleness of Christ, denies Him, whatever may be the profession!” [87]

Christ gave His disciples special instruction as to the course they were to pursue in their work, and outlined the principles that would govern their relationships with others.

“The work of the disciples needed molding and correcting by tender discipline, and by opening to others a knowledge of the word they themselves had received; and Christ gave them special instruction in regard to their course of action and their work. In His own life He had given them an example of strict conformity to the rules which He now laid down for them. They were not to enter into controversies; this was not their work.” [88]

It is interesting to note that this principle of dealing tenderly and sympathetically with men was demonstrated in the Savior’s success.

“If Christ had not held to the affirmative in the wilderness of temptation, He would have lost all that He desired to gain. Christ’s way is the best way to meet our opponents. We strengthen their arguments when we repeat what they say. Keep always to the affirmative.

It may be that the very man who is opposing you will carry your words home and be converted to the sensible truth that has reached his understanding.” [89]

When we are called upon to give a reason for the hope that is in us we should adhere to the affirmative.

“Often as you seek to present the truth, opposition will be aroused; but if you seek to meet the opposition with argument you will only multiply it, and that you cannot afford to do. Hold to the affirmative. Angels of God are watching you, and they understand how to impress those whose opposition you refuse to meet with arguments. Dwell not on the negative points of questions that arise, but gather to your minds affirmative truths, and fasten them there by much study, and earnest prayer, and heart consecration.” [90]

This point cannot be emphasized too much as a basic concept for presenting Christ to the world. Thus it becomes the heart of all true preaching.

“Do not repeat their statements; but hold to your assertions of the living truth, and angels of God will open the way before you. We have a great work to carry forward, and we must carry it in a sensible way. Let us never get excited or allow evil feelings to arise. Christ did not do this, and He is our example in all things. For the work given us to do we need much more of heavenly, sanctified, humble wisdom, and much less of self. We need to lay hold firmly on divine power.” [91]

“Love must be the prevailing element in all our work. In the representation of [truth to] others who do not believe as we do, every speaker must guard against making statements that will appear severe and like judging.” [92]

One of the most difficult of all statements to apply practically in our work is the following:

“In the advocacy of truth the bitterest opponents should be treated with respect and deference. Some will not respond to our efforts, but will make light of the gospel invitation. Others—even those whom we suppose to have passed the boundary of God’s mercy—will be won to Christ. The very last work in the controversy may be the enlightenment of those who have not rejected light and evidence, but who have been in midnight darkness and have in ignorance worked against the truth. Therefore treat every man as honest. Speak no word, do no deed, that will confirm any in unbelief.” [93] (Italics supplied.)

Here is self-mastery made manifest in the ultimate. To treat some arch critic with “respect and deference” and as though he were perfectly honest, would be an ideal beyond our comprehension save for the fact that this is divine instruction. Oh, how much more tempered would be our attitude, how much more Christ like would be our presentations, if this ideal were actually translated into our daily experience. But the preacher of Christ must do this in order to achieve the full maximum of his high privilege and opportunity.

Charges against churches and critics would be minimized by following the counsel that we are to be silent even if condemnation of them were just.

“The Lord wants His people to follow other methods than that of condemning wrong, even though the condemnation be just. He wants us to do something more than to hurl at our adversaries charges that only drive them further from the truth. The work which Christ came to do in our world was not to erect barriers and constantly thrust upon the people the fact that they were wrong. He who expects to enlighten a deceived people must come near to them and labor for them in love. He must become a center of holy influence.” [94]

This, brethren, is certainly a wonderful concept most worthy of our careful study and achievement. Any other approach is inimical to a Christ-centered presentation.

“The influence of your teaching would be tenfold greater if you were careful of your words. Words that should be a savor of life unto life may by the spirit which accompanies them be made a savor of death unto death. And remember that if by your spirit or your words you close the door to even one soul, that soul will confront you in the judgment. . . .

“Every sermon you preach, every article you write, may be all true; but one drop of gall in it will be poison to the hearer or the reader. Because of that drop of poison, one will discard all your good and acceptable words. Another will feed on the poison; for he loves such harsh words. He follows your example, and talks just as you talk. Thus the evil is multiplied.

“Those who present the eternal principles of truth need the holy oil emptied from the two olive branches into the heart. This will flow forth in words that will reform but not exasperate. The truth is to be spoken in love. Then the Lord Jesus by His Spirit will supply the force and the power. That is His work!” [95] (Italics supplied.)

This is the prevailing element of Christ-centered preaching. There should be no challenges to and controversies with other denominations. A sacred regard should be maintained for the fact that it is difficult to change long traditionally held beliefs and concepts.

“There should be no going out of the way to attack other denominations; for it only creates a combative spirit and closes ears and hearts to the entrance of the truth. We have our work to do, which is not to tear down but to build up.” [96]

Presenting a Straight Message

We do have a straightforward message that must be given. But even here we find definite counsel lest in our uncontrolled zeal we defeat the very purpose of our mission. Notice what God says to us on this point:

“It is true that we are commanded to ‘cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.’ Isaiah 58:1. This message must be given, but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have. We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at the Catholics. Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf. Those who have had great privileges and opportunities, and ‘Who have failed to improve their physical, mental, and moral powers, but who have lived to please themselves and have refused to bear their responsibility, are in greater danger and in greater condemnation before God than those who are in error upon doctrinal points, yet who seek to live to do good to others. Do not censure others; do not condemn them.’ [97]

This is a most important principle to govern our attitudes. Remember that error in the matter of doctrine is not so serious in God’s sight as the grosser error of failure to live the truth. The reflection of an unchristian life, or unkind thrusts made upon those of different religious backgrounds, if they practice the golden rule, are condemned by God more than doctrinal errors.

The Clergy

Even our attitude toward the clergy of other denominations comes into sharp focus.

“It should ever be manifest that we are reformers, but not bigots. When our laborers enter a new field, they should seek to become acquainted with the pastors of the several churches in the place. Much has been lost by neglecting to do this. If our ministers show themselves friendly and sociable, and do not act as if they were ashamed of the message they bear, it will have an excellent effect, and may give these pastors and their congregations favorable impressions of the truth. At any rate, it is right to give them a chance to be kind and favorable if they will.

“Our laborers should be very careful not to give the impression that they are wolves stealing in to get the sheep, but should let the ministers understand their position and the object of their mission, to call the attention of the people to the truths of God’s word. There are many of these which are dear to all Christians. Here is common ground, upon which we can meet people of other denominations; and in becoming acquainted with them, we should dwell mostly upon topics in which all feel an interest, and which will not lead directly and pointedly to the subjects of disagreement.” [98]

Surely we can all recognize, therefore, the close relationship between our attitudes and the, approach we are to make to other religious leaders and bodies. The sequence of subjects is naturally involved in the specific timing of presentation of the truth and the technique to be employed in thus fully preaching Christ. A most practical approach outlined for us by God, another important factor designed to assist in meeting the problem of prejudice, was Christ’s concept to effect an agreement, conciliation, and identification with the people’s common interest, customs, and practices to the full extent of consistency.

“Brethren, you who go forth to labor for those who are bound in chains of prejudice and ignorance, need to exercise the same divine wisdom that Paul manifested. When you are laboring in a place where souls are just beginning to get the scales from their eyes, and to see men as trees walking, be very careful not to present the truth in such a way as to arouse prejudice, and to close the door of the heart to the truth. Agree with the people on every point where you can consistently do so. Let them see that you love their souls, and want to be in harmony with them so far as possible. If the love of Christ is revealed in all your efforts, you will be able to sow the seed of truth in some hearts.” [99]

There is much more we could, and perhaps should, say on these points, but the limitation of time prevents our introduction of any further statements. Let it all be summarized by the significant words:

“We need far less controversy, and far more presentation of Christ. Our Redeemer is the center of all our faith and hope. Those who can present His matchless love, and inspire hearts to give Him their best and holiest affections, are doing work that is great and holy.” [100]

The Basic Four Points of Approach

Briefly we shall establish the general divisions of procedural sequences of subject presentation in a Christ-centered fashion. These fall into four general classifications:

1. Subjects of common interest.
2. Subjects of practical godliness.
3. Subjects of specific prophecy.
4. Subjects of distinctive doctrines.

We have already discussed the first two points of importance. A specific case in point will clarify this matter in a practical application.

“I told him [an evangelist] that the best and wisest plan would be to dwell upon subjects that would arouse the conscience. He could talk to them upon practical godliness; devotion and piety; and present the self-denial, self-sacrificing life of Jesus as our example until they will see the contrast in their self-indulgent life, and become dissatisfied with their unchristian lives. Then present to them the prophecies.” [101]

Thus we see the first three points of sequence in this brief but comprehensive counsel. That which is to follow the prophecies is clearly indicated by the following vision:

“I have been shown that our ministers go too rapidly through their subjects and bring the most objectionable features of our faith too early into their effort. There are truths that will not involve so great a cross, that should be kept before their minds, day after day and even weeks before the Sabbath and immortality questions are entered upon. Then you gain the confidence of the people as being men who have clear, forcible arguments, and they think you understand the Scriptures. When once the confidence of the people is gained, then it is time enough to introduce publicly the Sabbath and immortality questions.” [102]

One cannot with safety ignore such a clear statement of divine inspiration.

“But men who are not wise advance these questions too soon, and thus close the ears of the people, when with greater care and more faith and aptness and wisdom they could have carried them along step by step through the important events in the prophecies and in dwelling upon practical subjects in the teachings of Christ.” [103]

Let us remember that this instruction came through a specific vision from God. It is necessary that we fully understand this important part of our “timing” of the presentation of the message.

“In laboring in a new field, do not think it your duty to say at once to the people, We are Seventh-day Adventists; we believe that the seventh day is the Sabbath; we believe in the non-immortality of the soul. This would often erect a formidable barrier between you and those you wish to reach. Speak to them, as you have opportunity, upon points of doctrine on which you can agree. Dwell on the necessity of practical godliness. Give them evidence that you are a Christian, desiring peace, and that you love their souls. Let them see that you are conscientious. Thus you will gain their confidence; and there will be time enough for doctrines. Let the heart be won, the soil prepared, and then sow the seed, presenting in love the truth as it is in Jesus.” [104]

Here again is the emphasis of placing first things first.

A further unfolding of this principle is found in the wise counsel: “Present Jesus because you know Him as your personal Savior. Let His melting, love, His rich grace, flow forth from human lips. You need not present doctrinal points unless questioned.” [105] Here is a revolutionary concept for preaching the Advent message; yet it was given more than half a century ago-1895!

However, even when questioned, we as ministers must exercise great care and caution in presenting the precious truth. Even under these conditions certain specific qualifications must be met.

“You should not feel it your duty to introduce arguments upon the Sabbath question as you meet the people. If persons mention the subject, tell them that this is not your burden now. But when they surrender heart and mind and will to God, they are then prepared candidly to weigh evidence in regard to these solemn, testing truths.” [106]

Sermon Suggestions

The main burden in all our preaching must be Jesus Christ. The expositor often questions how much of Christ there is present and how he can make Him known. Therefore, the Christian preacher should be Christ centric. Every sermon should be Christ centric. That does

not mean that the way of salvation must in every sermon be presented at great length and in all its details; but the hearer must hear the answer to the question: "What must I do to be saved?" There is no subject in the Bible that precludes the Christ centric sermon. Every doctrine in the Bible is linked up close with the name of Christ. The actual subjects to be discussed in the early stages of an evangelistic campaign, or in the general ministry of the Advent clergy for that matter, are not to be left to conjecture. A few concluding quotations will identify these oft-neglected subjects and put them in their proper perspective in the presentation of Christ, the center of all true preaching.

Subjects Not to Be Neglected

1. Sorrow for Sin. Evangelism, Pages 179, 180.
2. Repentance. Evangelism, Pages 179, 180; Gospel Workers, Page 158.
3. Confession. Evangelism, Pages 179, 180.
4. Christ Crucified. Gospel Workers, Page 159; Evangelism, Page 187; Review and Herald, February 22, 1887; Gospel Workers, Page 315.
5. Christ Risen. Gospel Workers, Page 159; Evangelism, Page 187; Review and Herald, February 22, 1887.
6. Christ Ascended. Gospel Workers, Pages 154, 159.
7. Faith. Gospel Workers, Page 158; Review and Herald, February 22, 1887.
8. Intercession. Evangelism, Page 187; Gospel Workers, Page 154.
9. Holy Spirit. Evangelism, Page 187.
10. Pre-existence. Evangelism, Page 187.
11. Second Coming. Evangelism, Page 187.
12. Personal Dignity. Evangelism, Page 187.
13. Holy Law. Evangelism, Page 187.
14. Conversion. Review and Herald, February 22, 1887.
15. Regeneration. Gospel Workers, Page 315.
16. Redemption. Gospel Workers, Page 315.
- 17." The Lord desires His servants today to preach the old gospel doctrine, sorrow for sin, repentance, and confession. We want old-fashioned sermons, old-fashioned customs, old-fashioned fathers and mothers in Israel." [107]
- 18." Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ ascended into the heavens, Christ coming again, should so soften, gladden, and fill the mind of the minister that he will present these truths to the people in love and deep earnestness." [108]
- 19." Some ministers think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith; they take it for granted that their hearers are acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. But many people are sadly ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation; they need more instruction upon this all-important subject than upon any other." [109]
- 20." These are our themes-Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ our intercessor before God; and closely connected with these is the office work of the Holy Spirit, the representative of Christ, sent forth with divine power and gifts for men." [110]
- 21." His pre-existence, His coming the second time in glory and power, His personal dignity, His holy law uplifted, are the themes that have been dwelt upon with simplicity and power." [111]

22.” They want a plain and clear explanation of the steps requisite in conversion, and there should not a sermon be given unless a portion of that discourse is to especially make plain the way that sinners may come to Christ and be saved.” [112]

23.” Tell the story of His life of self-denial and sacrifice, His humiliation and death, His resurrection and ascension, His intercession for sinners in the courts above.” [113]

24.” I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption, the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.” [114]

References like the foregoing could be multiplied many fold, and through them additional subjects introduced; but we must conclude these considerations with this great challenge before us. In all of these doctrines and many more, Jesus Christ becomes central. Any presentation built around them remains Christ-centered.

“Talk to souls in peril, and get them to behold Jesus upon the cross, dying to make it possible for Him to pardon. Talk to the sinner with your own heart overflowing with the tender, pitying love of Christ. Let there be deep earnestness, but not a harsh, loud note should be heard in the voice of one who is trying to win the soul to look and live. First have your own soul consecrated to God. As you look upon our Intercessor in heaven, let your heart be broken. Then, soften and subdued, you can address repenting sinners as one who realizes the power of redeeming love. Pray with these souls, by faith laying them at the foot of the cross; carry their minds up with your mind, and fix the eye of faith where you look, upon Jesus, the Sin Bearer. Get them to look away from their poor sinful selves to the Savior, and the victory is won.” [115]

May God grant that we may have the grace as ministers to activate this counsel by putting into practice these basic principles and thus genuinely hasten the coming of our blessed Lord. May a new restlessness grip our souls and a new sense of our task move us to newer and higher vistas so that the panorama of Christ’s life, love, and work may once more beckon the lost to higher ground as a new apostolic power shakes the world. Let us arise and match the magnificence of such an attainment. Let us forever be weary of fruitless ministries and Christless sermons. Away forever with any other preaching than that which is centered in the power and might of the precious name of Jesus. Let us seek God earnestly, weeping between the porch and the altar, for the in filling again of His Spirit. May our ministry thus fulfill the high calling of presenting Him fully and untarnished, so that we may all individually say, I have not been “disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”

“I do not ask

That crowds may throng the temple,

That standing room be priced;

I only ask that as I voice the message

They may see Christ!

“I do not ask

For churchly pomp or pageant,

Or music such as wealth alone can buy;

I only ask that as I voice the message

He may be nigh!

“I do not ask

That men may sound my praises

Or headlines spread my name abroad;

I only pray that as I voice the message

Hearts may find God!”

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5. The Spirit Of Prophecy In The Remnant Church

D. E. REBOK

Introduction

“Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the way marks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.” [1]

Seventh-day Adventists are a people of the Word, and like Martin Luther, they take their stand on its sure foundation. The Bible, and the Bible only, is their rule of faith and practice. That is the source of the “way marks” that have made us a people, and we shall be preserved as such only as we allow the light of God’s Word to shine upon our pathway.

Seventh-day Adventists are blessed not only with God’s Word, the Scriptures, but also with the gift of prophecy, which was placed by God in the remnant church “to bear a message of reproof to the erring and of encouragement to the meek and lowly.” [2]

Seventh-day Adventists, in common with all other Christians, have staked their hopes for the present life and the future upon five great facts, to the non-Christian mere assumptions, but to the Christian, facts of faith.

First, by faith we recognize the existence of God. Because of our implicit and unbounded faith in God, we take for granted that He is. We ask for no proof, but we simply know that God “is in his holy temple”; therefore, “Let all the earth keep silence before him” (Habakkuk 2:20), “for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he rewards them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). (See also Job 22:21, 26)

Without hesitation or a word of proof, Christ admonishes all who claim His name, “Have faith in God”; and Seventh day Adventists, nearly a million strong, from every corner of the earth declare, “Lord, we believe; help Thou our unbelief.”

Second, by faith we accept the whole Bible as God’s message to man. It is a revelation of His love, His will, His plan, His purposes, and His standard for men of all ages and in all climes. Paul’s counsel to Timothy is God’s word to all men who, by faith, have accepted the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Seventh-day Adventists receive the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking directly to them. They fear and tremble at God’s Word, for to them every thought, every sentence, every verse, every chapter, is a real message from the living God given through His chosen messengers of old. Seventh-day Adventists open their hearts and their minds to receive it, for in it are God’s commands, entreaties, counsels, appeals, warnings, and promises. They accept it freely, willingly, literally, and fully as of God, and therefore not to be despised or treated lightly. They neither add to nor diminish therefrom. It is not for them to accept this and reject that according to their own whims, fancy, or convenience. It is indeed “the word of God.” (1 Thessalonians 2:11-13)

Third, by faith we acknowledge that all men everywhere have sinned and fallen short of their own ideals and of God’s ideals for them. This is a more universally accepted fact than all the others on which Christianity is based. Proof and circumstantial evidence are to be found everywhere. The assumption part has rather to do with man’s need of a Savior than with the fact of the sinfulness of the human race, for not every sinner is ready to acknowledge his need of a Savior. (Romans 3:23; 7:24)

Fourth, by faith we are convinced that Jesus Christ is man’s Deliverer and Savior. The answer to man’s desperate appeals for a Savior is found in Paul’s word to the Romans.

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was

weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh!" "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace!" Romans 7:25; 8:1-3, 6.

The sinner is saved from his sin by Jesus Christ who came from God to lead men back to God. This is a transaction based wholly on the personal faith of every individual man in Jesus as his Savior. There is no proof or explanation. It is just so. Here is another of the great assumptions which by faith becomes one of the greatest and most vital facts known to man.

Seventh-day Adventists believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their one and only Savior, and their faith in God and God's Word causes them to rejoice in His plan for their salvation. (John 1: 12; Acts 16:3 1; 1 John 1: 1-3)

As "sons of God," children in the family of God, Seventh day Adventists believe that it is their duty to begin a Christian experience, which becomes a growth in grace, a lifelong process of sanctification, leading ultimately to perfection of character and a fitness for the society of angels and the presence of God.

Salvation by faith in Jesus as the Savior is the work of a moment, but the growth in grace, a process by which "sons of God" become full-grown, mature, intelligent Christians, is the work of a lifetime. The apostle Peter describes it in His second letter (2 Peter 1: 2-9), and concludes:

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, you shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:10, 11.

Fifth, by faith we recognize that God has spoken to man by His prophets, and that this method of communication is the one used by God from the very earliest period of man's history to our own time." If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Numbers 12:6.

If by faith Christians accept the fact of God, and recognize the Bible as God's Word, then it is but natural and logical that Christians shall accept the fact of prophets as God's spokesmen. Christians will, therefore, ask for no more proof for the one great assumption than they do for the other both alike are matters of faith.

Concerning prophets the apostle Paul says: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesying. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:18-23.

Thus we see that God's message through His Word, which came by prophets as His spokesmen, is to change men and women from sinners to saints and to make them ready for the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Salvation comes through faith in the Lord Jesus. Sanctification and ultimate perfection come through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Through prophets God has set forth in the Bible and in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy a pattern of Christian living which shows us the kind of people Christians must be here and in the everlasting kingdom; for if we would be saints in the kingdom to come we must be saints in this world now. The business of Christianity is not so much how to get a man into heaven, as it is how to get heaven into the heart of a man. This is the work of prophets in both Old and New Testament times, and also in the remnant church.

Channels of Communication Between God and Man

To accept the existence of God is to accept His statement as to how He has chosen to communicate with man. It is neither reasonable nor sensible to accept God and then deny or reject what He says regarding His prophets through whom He has chosen to speak to man here on earth. The Bible offers neither scientific proof nor a well-reasoned argument for or against prophets. It simply declares that there are prophets through whom God spoke: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Hebrews 1: 1, 2.

God at Various Times Spoke by the Prophets

In Eden, God spoke directly to Adam and Eve. (Genesis 2, 3) "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Genesis 3:8. This thought is amplified by James White:

"Once, man walked with God in Eden. With open face he beheld the glory of the Lord, and talked with God, and Christ, and angels, in Paradise, without a dimming veil between. Man fell from his moral rectitude and innocence, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and His holy angels." [3]

When sin came, it formed a wall of partition between God and man. But God did not discard or neglect the work of His hand. He chose to communicate with men primarily through prophets (Genesis 20:6, 7); but also at times through priests (Genesis 14:18), and through angels (Genesis 16:7-13). (See also 2 Chronicles 36:15; Jeremiah 35:15; 2 Peter 1:21)

Ellen G. White states: "God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, none the less, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth." [4]

The men of God chosen to do this very essential and all important work were generally known as prophets, but there are other names or titles applied to them in the Scriptures: prophet in 1 Samuel 9:9. Son of man in Ezekiel 4:1; 5:1; seer in 2 Chronicles 16:7. Messenger in Malachi 3: 1; Haggai 1:13; spokesman in Exodus 4:16; 7:1; fellow servant in Revelation 22:9; 19:10; servant of God in 1 Chronicles 6:49; man of God in 1 Samuel 9:6; 2 Peter 1:21; watchman in Isaiah 52:8.

The work of all these men, by whatever title they were known, is well stated in these words:

"From the earliest times, prophets had been recognized as teachers divinely appointed. In the highest sense the prophet was one who spoke by direct inspiration, communicating to the people the messages he had received from God. But the name was given also to those who, though not so directly inspired, were divinely called to instruct the people in the works and ways of God." [5]

God's Method of Transmitting His Message to Man

In Revelation 1: 1-3 we find the steps involved:

- a. God gave His message to Jesus Christ.
- b. Jesus gave that message to His angel (Gabriel).
- c. His angel "sent and signified" it to the prophet.
- d. The prophet spoke or wrote it out for the people.

Thus did the prophet bear "record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 1:2). Furthermore, a blessing is pronounced upon all who read and hear the words of prophecy. This is true of all the prophecies that have come from the mind of God through His chosen channel. It is but natural that we should expect to see prophets among God's people, and indeed there have been many who have claimed to be God's prophets. This is in accord with Scripture, and therefore we are counseled not to "despise prophesying," but rather to "prove all things," holding "fast that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21)

Jesus Himself, looking down to our day, said, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets," and they shall "show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:24. Through John He adds this caution, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4: 1. Somehow, it is to be expected that where the true exists there is likely to be the false; where there is the genuine, there likewise you will find the counterfeit. Our business is to try, test, and prove the prophets to find the true and reject the false.

Accepting or Rejecting the Prophet and His Message

No, the question is not whether God has ever had prophets, but rather how can we know whether those who claim to be prophets are true? The most important aspect of the question is how shall I relate myself to both the prophets and their messages? It is a matter of acceptance or rejection of the prophet and his message. This was the imperative question in ancient times, and one which applies today. (See 2 Chronicles 36:16)

However, not all of the people rejected all the prophets. True, many did reject both God and His prophets, and God perforce had to reject them. The same will be true of Christians today.

May we cite but two examples in the ancient world:

- a. Jehoiakim. Jeremiah was bidden by God to write ill a scroll His words of condemnation against Israel, Judah, and the surrounding nations. There might be hope for reformation and divine forgiveness if the messages were heeded. (Jeremiah 36:2, 3) Therefore

Jeremiah dictated the messages, and Baruch his secretary, wrote them out in the best language of his day. When they were read, the people, and even some of the princes, were profoundly impressed by what they heard, so much so that they thought the king himself should both see and read.

Accordingly the scrolls were read in the king's presence as he warmed himself by the fire. As the monarch listened and gave heed to the prophet's words, he became angry, and seizing the manuscript, he cut it into shreds. Presumptuously, he cast the pieces into the fire until all the roll was consumed. The record then adds these significant words, "Yet they were not afraid." Jeremiah 36:24. Like Jehoiakim of old, many Christians and their leaders today would just as easily dispose of the message, the messenger, and the God who sends the message. Be it well remembered that neither penknife nor fire can get rid of God and God's messenger and God's message.

Though the messages were all rejected so summarily, the Chaldeans came, Judah was defeated, the city of Jerusalem was burned, and the temple destroyed. Leaders and people suffered the consequences of their rash act against God and His prophet.

b. David-King David was a man of human passions and was much like other men who do not occupy a throne. The devil caused him to commit an unspeakable outrage against Uriah and his beautiful wife. David, however, would keep the matter a secret and cover up his ignominy with subterfuge and deceit. But God's eye, looking down, sees clearly what human eyes cannot perceive. The record says, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." 2 Samuel 11:27.

God asked Nathan the prophet to go down to King David's palace and speak a few words for Him. The man of God went forth on his mission to bear a rather unpleasant message to his king, and presented it in the form of an allegory. David did not immediately grasp the point, and was so smoothly entrapped that he declared: "As the Lord lives, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." 2 Samuel 12:5, 6.

Be it noted that Nathan asked no questions. He did not hedge or side step the issue or offer the king any alibi or sympathy. Instead, without fear he pointed his finger at the king of Israel, and delivered God's message, "Thou art the man." Suppose he had made a mistake; but then, God never makes a mistake.

What was King David's reaction? He might have flown into a rage, denied the charge, rejected the message, put Nathan to death at sunrise. But the man of God had spoken with tears in his voice, I think, but with a finality that David could not escape. Like the great man that he was, in spite of his human frailty and weakness, he admitted, "I have sinned against the Lord." The record is so brief that it probably does not tell the whole story of David's sincere repentance, confession, and restitution, but it merely closes the incident with these words, "And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." 2 Samuel 12:13.

The Call to the Prophetic Office

The call to prophetic office is in the hands of God, who knows what He wants and when, where, and why He wants it at any given time. Therefore, it is not man's responsibility to desire or direct in the choice of the prophet. This call does not come by committee action or human planning or devising. As with the priesthood, "no man takes this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Hebrews 5:4. (2 Peter 1:11) God's men are individually chosen, prepared, called, and directed by Him, and yet it is done in such a way that the call to prophetic office comes to the individual with convincing power and sufficient evidence that both he and his associates know it for a certainty.

The call of Amos is to the point in question." I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos 7:14, 15.

Again, God's call to Isaiah was of an entirely different nature. The young man went into the temple and while there God opened his eyes and gave him a vision of the throne of God and the angels about that throne, which seemed high and lifted up. Isaiah caught that vision of God in all His glory and celestial majesty. Immediately he felt his own humiliation and sensed his unworthiness. He would flee from the presence of such awful holiness and grandeur, but the Lord took a live coal from off the altar, and as it were, placed it upon his lips and said." Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah 6:7. Purification made him ready to be God's servant and God's messenger. Then in response to the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah in his youth responded, "Here am I; send me."

Isaiah, as God's chosen mouthpiece, became the "gospel prophet" of the Old Testament, and has left for the Christian world a piece of literature of surpassing beauty. The testimony of Jesus through Isaiah is an example of the prophetic gift in sublime and powerful action.

Names Applied to the Messages of the Prophets

It is important that we find the various terms used in the Bible to designate the messages spoken or written by the prophets. In these there is a clue as to their use, application, and significance. They are as follows:

- a. Prophecy or prophecies. 2 Chronicles 9:29; 15:8; 1 Corinthians 13:8.
- b. Word of God. 1 Samuel 9:27, 1 Kings 12:22.
- c. The Lord's message. Haggai 1:13.
- d. Testimonies. 2 Kings 17:15, Nehemiah 9:30.
- e. Counsel. Isaiah 44:26.
- f. Burden. Jeremiah 23:33, 38; Isaiah 13:1; 15:1.

The word "testimony" or "testimonies" is frequently used and carries with it, among other senses, the meaning of "intentions." "The testimony of Jesus- would, therefore, be the "intentions" of God as revealed through Jesus, His angel, and His prophet to the people. The expression "the testimony of Jesus" is used but three times in the whole Bible, in Revelation 12:17 and 19:10. The Biblical meaning of the term is found in the verse, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Seventh-day Adventists, accepting the whole Bible from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21, believe in God, and in His Word as a revelation of God's "intentions," or will, as revealed through the prophets. They believe in the gifts of God as being available in this our day the same as in apostolic times.

Prophets in the New Testament Church

J. Peter Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures has this to say concerning Luke 2:26, "If the spirit of prophecy had departed from Israel since the time of Malachi, according to the opinion of the Jews, the return of this Spirit might be looked upon as one of the tokens of the Messiah's advent." [6]

Without discussing either the opinion of the Jews or the comment by Lange it is of interest to note that the apostle Luke recognizes that John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, was indeed a prophet. (Luke 1:76; 7:28) In Matthew 21:11 and Luke 7:16 it is likewise acknowledged that Jesus Himself was a prophet among men. And when He ascended to heaven He "gave gifts unto men," "some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Ephesians 4:8, 11.

The objectives of these workers in the church of the early apostolic period were:

To equip His people for service; to build up the church; to help all to arrive at oneness in faith and in knowledge of the Son of God, to attain to the stature of mature men in Jesus Christ instead of remaining babes in the Christian life, and to cease being carried about with every wind of doctrine, but to hold to the truth through union with Christ. (Ephesians 4:12-15)

Paul admonished the Ephesians that Christians should no longer live as the Gentiles live, but become new men who after God are "created in righteousness and true holiness" fit for God's everlasting kingdom and for the society of angels. (Ephesians 4:17-24)

These verses, together with those in 1 Corinthians 14:3, 4, 20, 22, would lead us to the conclusion that prophets are placed in the church by God primarily for the benefit of the church itself. In Williams' New Testament we read:

"But whoever prophesies is speaking to men for their up building, encouragement, and comfort. Whoever prophesies builds up the congregation. . . . Brothers, stop being children in intelligence, but as to evil keep on being babies; and yet as to intelligence be men of maturity. . . . Prophecy is meant, not for unbelievers but for believers." 1 Corinthians 14:3, 4, 20, 22.

Thus we can emphasize this very important principle: The work of prophets is essentially for the members of the church-for reproof to the erring and for the "up building, encouragement, and comfort" of the believers. The words of counsel and instruction from God through the prophets to the believer are designed to help the spiritually newborn babe to "grow" by his use of "the sincere milk of the word" (1 Peter 2:2) "unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children" (Ephesians 4:13, 14).

The chief business of the prophets in the church has been that of guiding the believers in the path that leads to heaven, of pointing out the signposts along the way so that believers could walk and work intelligently. They are not saved by the signposts nor by the instruction given nor by the deeds performed along the way. There is but one Savior, for “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Therefore, there is no salvation in this historical date or that; there is no eternal destiny at stake in this or that fulfilled or unfulfilled prophecy; there is no salvation in any particular viewpoint of the purely incidental doctrines or theories, “Indefinite, frivolous questions,” “obscure, unimportant points,” “idle sophistries,” things “not essential to our salvation,” “questions not necessary for the perfection of the faith,” and “idle tales.”

We should establish clearly in our minds the fact that so far as salvation is concerned there is but one and only one fundamental doctrine—that I am a sinner in need of a Savior, and Jesus Christ is that Savior if I only believe on Him and receive Him into my heart by faith.

Surrounding that one great fundamental doctrine of the Christian church are “landmarks,” “way marks,” “blocks,” “pegs and pins,” which have made us an intelligent Seventh day Adventist Christian people. These will preserve us as a people only as we clearly understand and live by them, allowing them to mold and fashion our character and determine every detail in the habits of our daily living. Our ultimate aim is to become fit to live forever in God’s everlasting, kingdom, and to this end God has placed His prophets in the church to help in preparation for an entrance into heaven.

Prophets in the Remnant Church

One writer has stated “The Church which He [Christ] founded was a Church in which prophecy was to be a continuous possession.” [7]

Ellen G. White says: “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: . . . and he will show you things to come.” John 16:13. Scripture plainly teaches that these promises, so far from being limited to apostolic days, extend to the church of Christ in all ages.” [8]

This is equally true of the church of God in the time of the end and in the end of time. The Bible refers to God’s chosen people of the last days as “the remnant.”

a. To identify the remnant church. The following Bible expressions identify the remnant church:

They will be gathered (Isaiah 11:11); distinguished from others (Micah 5:7,8); keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17); be saved from sin (Zephaniah 3:13); and enter the kingdom of God (Romans 9:27).

A study of church history shows that through the centuries there have always been groups of Christian people who have claimed the prophetic gift among them.

To the church waiting for the coming of the Lord, Paul wrote a message:

“That in every thing you are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge. Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that you come behind in no gift. Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ!” 1 Corinthians 1:5-8.

Mrs. White adds: “In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In

these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.” [9]

b. Seventh-day Adventists believe they are the remnant church because they comply with all the Scripture specifications for it. Among them is the gift of prophecy, or “the testimony of Jesus,” which is “the spirit of prophecy.” It is not for Christians to deny or reject or despise but rather to test and try the gift as claimed by Ellen G. White, who for seventy years spoke in the name of the Lord, and who claimed to have “visions” and “revelations” in which God revealed His “intentions” for individuals and for the church as a whole. Because of the very nature of the divine guidance given through Ellen G. White, Seventh-day Adventists esteem most highly the counsel, the admonitions, the warnings, the reproofs, the encouragement, and the comfort contained in her messages.

Now that a little more than a century has passed since the earliest manifestation of the gift of prophecy among us, Seventh-day Adventists should pause to evaluate the gift of God in the remnant church and apply the Bible tests. How does the prophet’s work

stand the test of time? Has the church prospered as the result of heeding her counsel and of molding its policies in harmony with her “testimonies”? These questions are reasonable and logical and deserve a candid and unbiased answer, not so much to prove that God has chosen and used men and women as His prophetic messengers, but rather to show that Ellen G. White was one of those so chosen by God.

God Chose Ellen G. White as His Messenger

Let us now project ourselves in imagination back to the year 1844. The Millerites were fervently preaching that the coming of Christ and the end of the world would be on October 22, 1844. Excitement ran high. Thousands upon thousands were seriously preparing to meet Christ as He would come in the clouds of heaven. Hundreds of thousands stood by a bit restless and uncertain, but hoping to make the right decision by the fateful day, afraid that He might come, and at the same time hoping that He would not come.

October 22 came and went. To the Advent believers its passing without incident was a terrible disappointment, resulting in frustration, confusion, division, fanaticism, and a sense of defeat and loneliness. This was heightened by the taunts of their enemies. Something indeed had gone wrong with the reckoning. As was to be expected, many Advent believers slipped back into the world and walked no more with God’s peculiar people. Many others figured that the event was right but that the time was wrong, and formed a group that set one date after another. A very small number of Advent believers studied the question through again and concluded that the time was right but the event was wrong. And so it was on October 23 and thereafter in 1844.

The Call of Ellen G. Harmon

It was at such a time of trouble and distress among God’s people that God chose to make His “intentions” and plans known through a seventeen-year-old maiden named Ellen Gould Harmon. In December of that year she had a strange and unexpected experience. Of that experience while kneeling humbly and quietly in prayer with four sisters in Christ in the home of Mrs. Haines in Portland, Maine, she says, “The power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before.” [10] The in filling of power brought her first vision, in which this girl of seventeen was shown the journey of the Advent people from the disappointment in 1844 to the city of God. [11] Quickly followed the bidding that she must go and relate to others what had been revealed to her. Her feelings are pictured as follows:

“After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled. . . . I went to the Lord in prayer and begged Him to lay the burden on some one else. It seemed to me that I could not bear it. I lay upon my face a long time, and all the light I could get was, ‘Make known to others what I have revealed to you.’” [12]

That young girl rose from prayer to take up the burden and to speak for God, doing so faithfully and well for seventy years. From her pen came twenty-five million words, published in forty-three books and four thousand periodical articles. Naturally there were critics of her life and her work, but their attacks made little or no impression on the great worldwide work which has grown as the result of following her counsel and revelations.

F. D. Nichol states: “After one hundred years the different Adventist bodies—other than Seventh-day Adventists—that stemmed from the Millerite movement of the early 1840’s total less than 50,000 members, which is no more than the total of Advent believers in 1844. Not long ago we enjoyed a delightful fellowship of a few days with an aged, saintly leader in one of these Adventist bodies. He spoke of the expansion of Seventh-day Adventists, their schools, publishing houses, medical institutions, and then he added: ‘Your men were more farsighted than ours and laid better plans.’ We replied: ‘No, our men were no wiser than yours, but we had a frail handmaiden of the Lord in our midst who declared that by visions from God she saw what we should do and how we should plan for the future.’ No other explanation could, in truth, have been offered for the vitality, distinctiveness, and foresight revealed in connection with the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement over the world.” [13]

This represents our attitude toward the life and work of Ellen G. White today, but it was not so easily seen nor accepted back in 1844 and 1845. Then it was merely the word of a teen-age girl claiming that God was speaking to her through His angel. It should be remembered that the leaders in the Advent Movement had counseled against fanatics and those deluded by so-called visions and dreams. In their Boston Advent Conference of May 29, 1843, they took the following action: “We have no confidence whatever in any visions, dreams, or private revelations.” [14]

Reactions of Early Pioneers to Ellen G. Harmon

How did the early pioneers and believers in general respond to the claims of Ellen Harmon and the physical evidences of her call? Did they see in her the evidence that God was again speaking through a human being the same as He had done all through the history of His people? She expected people not only to be critical but even skeptical, for they were human much as we are today.

One worker early in 1847 wrote a note to James White expressing his reaction to Ellen G. White’s visions:

“I cannot endorse sister Ellen’s visions as being of divine inspiration, as you and she think them to be; yet I do not suspect the least shade of dishonesty in either of you in this matter. . . . I think that what she and you regard as visions from the Lord, are only religious reveries, in which her imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested. . . . I do not by any means think her visions are like some from the devil.” [15]

The story of the changed attitude of doubt and uncertainty concerning Ellen Harmon’s visions on the part of Captain Bates to one of full faith and confidence is an impressive one. Joseph Bates entered upon his seafaring adventures at a very early age, beginning as cabin boy and advancing through various steps in responsibility until he finally became captain and owner of seagoing vessels. As such he became a sort of authority on astronomy. He read with avidity everything he could find on the subject, and was much interested in Lord John Rosse’s description of “the gap in the sky” which appeared in the Illustrated London News of April 19, 1845.

Captain Bates attended a conference of the Advent believers in Topsham, Maine, in November, 1846. At that time he was still unconvinced on the matter of visions. On one occasion he took opportunity to ask Mrs. E. G. White (she had then married James White) what she knew about astronomy. He found her as ignorant as most of us are on the subject, and was disappointed that she had never read a book or an article on it. In fact she had no inclination even to hear or talk about it.

Imagine Joseph Bates’s surprise one evening during that conference not only to see Ellen G. White in vision but to hear her describe what she was seeing. She began to talk about stars and the rosy-tinted belts around one of them. She said, “I see four moons.” Captain Bates mused, “Oh, she is viewing Jupiter.” Then she described a planet with rings changing in their colors and said, “I see seven moons.” “She is describing Saturn,” remarked the old sea captain. Next came a marvelous word picture of another planet and her six moons, but when she began to describe the “opening heavens” with all its beauty and immensity, Captain Bates exclaimed, “O how I wish Lord John Rosse were here to-night!” Not knowing even the name of John Rosse, Elder White asked, “Who is Lord John Rosse?” Joseph Bates told of this English astronomer and his description of the “opening” in the heavens.”

That was enough for Elder Bates. He was satisfied that the visions came from a power outside of Ellen G. White’s knowledge and control. No wonder he concluded, “I believe the work is of God, and is given to comfort and strengthen His ‘scattered,’ ‘torn,’ and ‘pealed people.’” [17]

James White saw these manifestations almost from the very beginning and had more opportunity to evaluate them than perhaps anyone else. He wrote:

“Dreams and Visions are among the signs that precede the great and notable days of the Lord. And as the signs of that day have been, and still are fulfilling, it must be clear to every unprejudiced mind, that the time has fully come, when the children of God may expect dreams and visions from the Lord.

“I know that this is a very unpopular position to hold on this subject, even among Adventists; but I choose to believe the word of the Lord on this point, rather than the teachings of men. I am well aware of the prejudice in many minds on this subject; but as it has been caused principally by the preaching of popular Adventists and the lack of a correct view of this subject. I have humbly hoped to cut it away, with the ‘sword of the Spirit,’ from some minds, at least.” [18]

Not all were won over to full and complete support for Ellen G. White and her singular spiritual manifestations. Some were merely overawed and silenced by what they saw and heard. Such is the case of Robbins and Sargent, who were leading a group of Advent believers into a very serious type of fanaticism in Boston, Massachusetts. We have the story in Otis Nichols’ own handwriting, around whose home the story has its setting. It is also presented by Mrs. White in her book *Spiritual Gifts*. She tells the story:

“By invitation of Brother and Sister Nichols, my sister S. and myself again went to Massachusetts, and made their house our home. There was in Boston and vicinity a company of fanatical persons, who held that it was a sin to labor. Their principal message was, ‘Sell that you have and give alms.’ They said they were in the jubilee, the land should rest, and the poor must be supported without labor. Sargent, Robbins, and some others, were leaders. They denounced my visions as being of the Devil, because I had been shown their errors. They were severe upon all who did not believe with them. While we were visiting at Brother N’s., R. and S. came from Boston to obtain a favor of Brother N., and said they had come to have a visit, and tarry over night with him. Brother N. replied that he was glad they had come, for sisters Sarah and Ellen were in the house, and wished them to become acquainted with us. They changed their mind at once, and could not be persuaded to come into the house. Brother N. asked if I could relate my message in Boston, and if they would hear, and then judge. ‘Yes,’ said they. ‘Come into Boston next Sabbath, we would like the privilege of hearing her.’

“Accordingly we designed to visit Boston, but in the evening, at the commencement of the Sabbath, I was shown in vision that we must not go into Boston, but in an opposite direction to Randolph; that the Lord had a work for us to do there. We went to Randolph, and found a large room full collected, and among them those who said they would be pleased to hear my message in Boston. As we entered, R. and S. looked at each other in surprise, and began to groan. They had promised to meet me in Boston, but thought they would disappoint us by going to Randolph, and while we were in Boston, warn the brethren against us. They did not have much

freedom. At intermission one of their number remarked that good matter would be brought out in the afternoon. Sister N. answered, 'I believe it.' R. told my sister that I could not have a vision where he was." [19]

The Review and Herald and the Visions

It is well to analyze another chapter in our early history having to do with the attitude of our early pioneers toward the gift of prophecy. A number of the visions were published in the Present Truth in 1849 and 1850. It must be remembered, however, that the Review and Herald, which followed in 1850 and on, was the church paper and the vehicle for presenting the truth to non church members as well. Some of the brethren were afraid that the "visions" and "testimonies" intended primarily for the church members (1 Corinthians 14:3, 4, 22) would prejudice the non church member readers of the Review. They decided that such material should be printed on a separate sheet and placed in papers going only to our own people.

Elder James White explained all this in a Review and Herald Extra in these words:

"THIS SHEET is the form of the paper that we hope to publish once in two weeks. . . . We do not design this extra for so general circulation as the regular paper, for the reason that strong prejudice exists in many minds against a portion of its contents. Those who judge of a matter before they hear are unwise. Says Paul, 'Despise not prophesying, prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' 1 Thessalonians v, 20, 21."

"We believe that God is unchangeable, that He is 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' And that it is His will and purpose to teach His tried people, at this the most important period in the history of God's people, in the same manner as in past time. But as many are prejudiced against visions, we think best at present not to insert anything of the kind in the regular paper. We will therefore publish the visions by themselves for the benefit of those who believe that God can fulfill His word and give visions 'in the last days.'" [20]

For five years the Review published none of Mrs. White's visions and only five articles from her pen of a general hortatory nature. The leaders thought their position sound and commendable, but the results among the advent people were not so wholesome. There seemed to result a general lack of appreciation of the gift, and a lowering of its place of importance in the work. This has been the general tendency all through the years for the individual Adventists as well as for the movement as a whole." Where there is no vision [or an indifference to it], the people perish" seems to be as true in our times as it was in ancient Israel.

A general meeting in 1855 brought a realization that all was not well. There seemed to be a partial withdrawal of the gift of prophecy. From two sources we draw the conclusion that a disregard for the gift and a desire to push it somewhat into the background had met with Heaven's disfavor.

First, we note an action taken by the business session of the conference in 1855 which reads, "That Joseph Bates, J. H. Waggoner, and M. E. Cornell be appointed to address the saints in behalf of the Conference, on the gifts of the church." Then the small committee reported to the meeting. We extract a few key sentences:

Confession." In view of the present low state of the precious cause of our blessed Master, we feel to humble ourselves before God, and confess our unfaithfulness and departure from the way of the Lord, whereby the spirit of holiness has been grieved, our own souls burdened, and an occasion, given to the enemy of all righteousness to rejoice over the decline of faith and spirituality amongst the scattered flock."

Gifts – "Nor have we appreciated the glorious privilege of claiming the gifts which our blessed Master has vouchsafed to His people; and we greatly fear that we have grieved the Spirit by neglecting the blessings already conferred upon the church."

Appreciated in Past – "We have also, in our past experience, been made to rejoice in the goodness of our God who has manifested His care for His people by leading us in His way and correcting our errors, through the operations of His Spirit. And the majority of Sabbath keepers in the Third Angel's Message, have firmly believed that the Lord was calling His church out of the wilderness by the means appointed to bring us to the unity of the faith. We refer to the visions which God has promised to the remnant 'in the last days.'"

Not to Take Place of Bible – "Nor do we, as some contend, exalt these gifts or their manifestations, above the Bible; on the contrary, we test them by the Bible, making it the great rule of judgment in all things. So that whatever is not in accordance with it, in its spirit and its teachings, we unhesitatingly reject. But as we cannot believe that a fountain sends forth at the same place sweet water and bitter, or that an evil tree brings forth good fruit, so we cannot believe that that is of the enemy which tends to unite the hearts of the saints, to lead to meekness and humility and holy living, and incites to deep heart searching before God, and a confession of our wrongs."

An Attitude Displeasing to God—"While we hold these views as emanating from the divine Mind, we would confess the inconsistency (which we believe has been displeasing to God) of professedly regarding them as messages from God, and really putting them on a level with the inventions of men. We fear that this has resulted from an unwillingness to bear the reproach of Christ, (which is indeed greater riches than the treasures of earth,) and a desire to conciliate the feelings of our opponents; but the word and our own experience have taught us that God is not honored, nor His cause advanced, by such a course. While we regard them as coming from God, and entirely harmonizing with His written word, we must acknowledge ourselves under obligation to abide by their teachings, and be corrected by their admonitions. To say that they are of God, and yet we will not be tested by them, is to say that God's will is not a test or rule for Christians, which is inconsistent and absurd." [21]

The conference began November 15, 1855, and the declaration of confession and neglect was made by the brethren. Then on November 20 Ellen G. White was given a vision of which she wrote: "November 20, 1855, while in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord came suddenly and powerfully upon me, and I was taken off in vision. I saw that the Spirit of the Lord has been dying away from the church." [22]

A few weeks later Sister White wrote:

"The visions have been of late less and less frequent, and my testimony for God's children has been gone. I have thought that my work in God's cause was done, and that I had no further duty to do, but to save my own soul, and carefully attend to my little family. . . .

"At our late Conference at Battle Creek, in November God wrought for us. The minds of the servants of God were exercised as to the gifts of the Church, and if God's frown had been brought upon His people because the gifts had been slighted and neglected, there was a pleasing prospect that His smiles would again be upon us, and He would graciously and mercifully revive the gifts again, and they would live in the Church, to encourage the desponding and fainting soul, and to correct and reprove the erring." [23]

Dr. Brown Comes to Scoff, Flees in Consternation

The manifestation of such a phenomenon in the church was bound to produce a variety of reactions. Some believed and accepted., Others sneered and scoffed. One, a Dr. Brown of Parkville, Michigan, a Spiritualist physician himself, declared that he could control Mrs. White in vision if he ever had the opportunity.

This came rather unexpectedly on Sabbath, January 12, 1861, when Elder and Mrs. White for the first time attended church in that very place. At the close of her sermon that Sabbath, Sister White was taken in vision. Immediately somebody thought of Dr. Brown and his loud boasts. He was invited to come and examine her. This he did without a moment's hesitation. An eyewitness tells what happened:

"Before he had half completed his examination, he turned deathly pale, and shook like an aspen leaf. Elder White said, 'Will the doctor report her condition?' He replied, 'She does not breathe,' and rapidly made his way to the door. Those at the door who knew of his boasting said, 'Go back, and do as you said you would; bring that woman out of the vision.' In great agitation he grasped the knob of the door, but was not permitted to open it until inquiry was made by those near the door, 'Doctor, what is it?' He replied, 'God only knows; let me out of this house;' and out he went." [24]

Thus the "testimony of Jesus," which is the "spirit of prophecy," was introduced among the Advent believers, and made its power and influence felt more and more as the years passed.

Advent Believers Accept the Seventh-day Sabbath

In Washington, New Hampshire, in the year 1844, was an earnest group of Advent believers preparing for the coming of the Lord. One Rachel Oakes Preston, a Seventh Day Baptist, came into that community and listened to the preaching on the coming of the Lord on October 22. They, of course, urged her to join them in looking for Jesus to come, but she in turn urged them to keep the seventh-day Sabbath if they really wanted to be ready when the Lord returned. Some of the Advent believers in Washington, New Hampshire, accepted the Sabbath truth and began observing it faithfully.

Early in 1845, after the terrible disappointment, T. M. Preble wrote an article on the seventh-day Sabbath for the paper called The Hope of Israel. Through this article Joseph Bates, an eager searcher for truth, was convinced that he should observe the Bible Sabbath, and he became an apostle of the Sabbath truth.

Early in 1846 Ellen Harmon and her sister and James White visited Joseph Bates at New Bedford. The thing that was on his heart was the Sabbath truth. He urged them to accept the true Bible Sabbath and they urged upon him the thing nearest to their hearts.

Regarding the Sabbath Ellen G. White wrote in *Life Sketches*: “I did not feel its importance, and thought that he [Bates] erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than upon the other nine.” [25] As a matter of fact she was not impressed by Joseph Bates’s enthusiasm for the Sabbath idea. Nevertheless, about the time of their marriage in August, 1846, James and Ellen White read Bates’s tract *The Seventh day Sabbath a Perpetual Sign*, and from the Bible verses used decided that they too must keep the seventh day as the Sabbath. She says, “In the autumn of 1846 we began to observe the Bible Sabbath, and to teach and defend it.” [26]

As one more testimony in this body of evidence that the great truths taught by Seventh-day Adventists came first from the Bible and not from Mrs. White, let us note a letter written by her in 1874, stating:

“I believed the truth upon the Sabbath question before I had seen anything in vision in reference to the Sabbath. It was months after I had commenced keeping the Sabbath before I was shown its importance and its place in the third angel’s message.” [27]

It was on the first Sabbath in April, 1847, that she had her first vision regarding the Sabbath. By putting together *Testimonies*, volume 1, pages 75 ff., and a letter to Joseph Bates, written April 7, 1847, now appearing in *Early Writings*, pages 32-35, we get the whole story of what she saw and heard. She seemed to be transferred from earth to heaven and in vision she was taken through the heavenly sanctuary, where she saw the most holy place and the ark containing the law. She was amazed to see the fourth commandment shining above all the others in glory with a sort of halo of light all around it. She was told of the change of the Sabbath, of the significance of its acceptance and observance, especially in the troublous times ahead, when it will become a sign or a mark for the people who have chosen to obey God rather than man.

“I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world, to keep the

commandments of God as the apple of the eye, and that in response to this warning many would embrace the Sabbath of the Lord.” [28]

Lo, here are the people of God mentioned in Revelation 12, having the “testimony of Jesus,” which is the “spirit of prophecy” (December, 1844), and keeping the commandments—all ten of them—the Seventh-day Sabbath included. Here the remnant church was born, and these two significant truths identify it.

Four Tests of a True Prophet

Repeatedly the New Testament asserts that there will be prophets in the church. It likewise states, “There were false prophets also among the people.” 2 Peter 2: 1. Clearly, we can expect both true and false prophets in the church. We should not “quench” the Holy Spirit and His manifestations or despise the prophesying, but rather “prove,” test, and try them. As a result of such a process we are to “hold fast that which is good.” (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21.)

Ellen G. White claimed the gift of prophecy, and thereby declared herself to be a prophet in the church. She, however, preferred the term “messenger.” Thus we find her declaring:

“I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. I have not stood before the people claiming this title, though many called me thus. I have been instructed to say, I am God’s messenger, sent to bear a message of reproof to the erring and of encouragement to the meek and lowly.” [29]

Every member of the remnant church must face the fact of Mrs. E. G. White, her visions, and her testimonies. In all fairness to ourselves, to her, and to the God whom she claimed to represent and for whom she said she spoke, we should apply the recognized Bible tests to satisfy ourselves as to her genuineness, and then decide what we shall do about her “messages,” “counsel,” and “testimonies.” This is a decision of tremendous and vital personal import, for that decision will mold and fashion the details of our everyday lives, nay, it will transform them.

Now let us first apply the tests of a prophet, see how Ellen G. White meets them, and then discuss final and vital decisions.

The Test of Fulfilled Predictions

Predictions of things to come are of interest to everybody, for without exception we like to peer through the veil of the future. However, making predictions, or foretelling, is but one phase of the work of the prophet.

There are four passages of Scripture to keep in mind when talking about the prophet’s predictions of things to come:

(I) Secret things belong to God. (Deuteronomy 29:29)

(2)God reveals secrets to the prophets. (Amos 3:7.)

(3)Unfulfilled predictions made in the name of the Lord are presumptuous; fulfilled predictions demonstrate that the prophet was sent by the Lord. (Jeremiah 28:9)

(4)Some prophecies are conditional. (Jeremiah 18:7-10)

Prophets have been God's chosen spokesmen, and through them He has made known things to come. Hence it is but natural for men to watch with eager interest to see whether such predictions actually come to pass. A failure of fulfillment would obviously become a factor in acceptance or rejection of the one claiming to be a prophet.

In the work of Ellen G. White we would expect to find some definite predictions and their equally definite fulfillment. Let us very briefly look at some of them:

Streams of Published Light to Encircle the Globe-In 1848, when our early pioneers were penniless, she was shown that a paper should be printed, and from this small beginning the publishing work would be a stream of light that would go clear round the world." Surely we have seen these words fulfilled as Seventh-day Adventists distribute \$13,000,000 worth of literature each year in 197 languages.

We cite in somewhat more detail one more illustration:

Rochester "Rappings" to Become World-encircling Delusion-These mysterious "rappings" began with the Fox sisters in New York State in 1848. On March 24, 1849, Ellen G. White made the following prediction:

"I saw that the mysterious knocking in New York and other places was the power of Satan, and that such things would be more and more common, clothed in a religious garb so as to lull the deceived to greater security, and to draw the minds of God's people, if possible, to those things, and cause them to doubt the teachings and power of the Holy Ghost." [31]

On August 24,1850, Ellen G. White again predicted: "I saw that soon . . . it [the mysterious rapping] would spread more and more, that Satan's power would increase, and some of his devoted followers would have power to work miracles." [32]

Yet again on January 10, 1854, Mrs. White added these further details: "I saw the rapping delusion-what progress it was making, and if it were possible it would deceive the very elect. Satan will have power to bring the appearance of a form before us purporting to be our relatives and friends that now sleep in Jesus. It will be made to appear as though they were present; the words they uttered while here, which we were familiar with, will be spoken, and the same tone of voice, which they had while living, will fall upon the ear. All this is to deceive the saints, and ensnare them into the belief of this delusion." [33]

Remember the dates of these predictions. In America then there were no mediums, trances, spirit messages, no organized groups or companies of Spiritualists. It was a bold prediction, but every word has come to pass. Recently a book entitled Centennial Book of Modern Spiritualism in America (1848-1948) was issued by the National Spiritualistic Association of the U. S. A., which summarizes their history and achievements. Spiritualism now claims millions of believers -eminent judges, physicians, scientists, editors, writers, poets, clergymen, educators, and statesmen of various countries.

According to the Declaration of Principles adopted by the National Spiritualist Association, those who have passed on are conscious, and can communicate with us; therefore, Spiritualism, according to Spiritualists, is God's message to mortals, declaring that there is no death, that all who have passed on still live, and that there is hope in the life beyond for the most sinful. Spiritualism teaches that every soul will progress through the ages to heights sublime and glorious. This means universal salvation and messages from the dead to the living.

Today all of this is history, which records the fulfillment of another of the E. G. White predictions.

San Francisco Earthquake Predicted-From 1902 and on she warned of coming destruction of San Francisco and Oakland, crying out that "not long hence these cities will suffer under the judgments of God." [34] Ask any old resident in San Francisco and Oakland and he will tell you how this prediction was fulfilled. [35]

World War Conditions Foretold Back in 1890-In an article in the Signs of the Times Mrs. White wrote:

"The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see [1] troubles on all sides. [2] Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. [3] Navies will go down, and [4] human lives will be sacrificed by millions. [5] Fires will break out unexpectedly,

and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. [6] Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; [7] confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. . . . Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near!" [36]

In 1910 she warned, "Soon strife among the nations will break out with an intensity that we do not now anticipate." [37] The fulfillment of this prediction made when men everywhere were proclaiming the golden age of peace and safety is too fresh in our memories to need any recital of details.

Divine Guidance in Times of Crisis in the Advent Movement

There are three texts to keep in mind when studying God's guidance of His people:

- (1) "The Lord shall guide thee continually." (Isaiah 58: 11.)
- (2) He instructs us in the way we should go. (Psalm 32:8)
- (3) By a prophet the Lord led and guided Israel of old. (Hosea 12:13)

Here the prophet becomes a "forth-teller"-one who speaks forth the "word of the Lord" when that word is needed most urgently. One who steps in when God's people do not know which way to turn or what to do; or warns of impending dangers when they are going in the wrong direction, or of the dire results if the course is pursued.

This phase of the prophet's work called for remarkable courage, close timing, and specific instruction to meet very specific circumstances. To make a mistake here would be fatal both to the prophet himself and to the situation he could remedy or safeguard. Herein is a test of the true prophet.

Time and again Ellen G. White, directed only by God, stepped into critical situations and the message she bore saved the church. If time permitted we might recount some of these thrilling experiences-how at the turn of the century the denomination was saved in the crisis over pantheistic teachings; and then there was the "holy flesh-movement. We might give the details of the work of false prophets and how the situation was met. On many occasions messages received at a critical moment protected the church or prevented some serious blunder. One outstanding experience must suffice.

The Salamanca Vision-In the night of November 3, 1890, God looked ahead some four months and saw a meeting of a very small group of men that would be held late on the night of March 7, 1891. Things would be said and done at that meeting on March 7 which would not be for the best interest of our work. In order to duly impress those who would be participants in that meeting and to convince them beyond the shadow of a doubt that God was still in control of His work, He gave a vision to His servant Ellen G. White on the night of November 3, 1890, and showed her a scene of that very meeting. She saw a man stand up and lift a copy of the American Sentinel high in the air and point to several articles, declaring that such topics as the Sabbath and the Second Coming of Christ should not find a place in the paper which spoke for the Religious Liberty Association.

Several times Mrs. White began to tell what she had seen in that vision at the meeting in Salamanca, New York. Each time she faltered and could not recall a single detail. Finally after four months she came to Battle Creek to attend the conference which convened from March 5 to 25 in the year 1891. She had been speaking to the ministers at their 5:30 A. M. meeting. On March 7 the president asked her if she would be back on Sunday morning, March 8, and she declined, thinking that she had given enough instruction already.

The Sabbath closed, the evening meeting was concluded, and Sister White with all others retired. Did I say "all others"? Not exactly, for a small group of men went to an office in the Review and Herald building for a strictly secret meeting of their own. They locked the door and resolved not to leave that room until their highly controversial problem was settled. Hour after hour passed. Midnight found them deep in their debate. One o'clock, two, and then three, when they finally adjourned and went to their respective rooms to sleep and rest.

As that meeting closed, Ellen G. White, in the privacy of her own room, was awakened. The angel of the Lord bade her attend the five-thirty meeting and present what she had seen at Salamanca four months before. The whole scene came back, and she wrote page after page until time came for the five-thirty ministers' meeting. She picked up her manuscripts and made her way to the vestry in the Tabernacle. The ministers were assembled. W. W. Prescott and O. A. Olsen were prepared to speak, but on seeing Mrs. White enter the room with her papers, Elder Olsen asked whether she had a message.

"Indeed I do," responded Ellen G. White, and made her way to the speaker's desk.

The Testimony Delivered on Time-She stated that she had not planned to be present at that meeting, but that she had been awakened at three o'clock and bidden to present some things she had seen in vision at Salamanca, New York, on November 3, 1890.

O. A. Olsen who was there in Battle Creek that morning records what was said and done:

"She then began to read, describing a meeting that was shown her that was held in one of the rooms in the Review Office, where a number of brethren were together. She described their attitude and their earnestness, and the position which they had taken; for there was a heated discussion, as they could not agree on certain questions at issue.

"Personally I sat there, in blank bewilderment. I did not know what she referred to. I had neither heard nor had any knowledge of the things that she presented, nor of such a meeting as she described. Indeed, I was so surprised, and the things she presented as having taken place in that meeting seemed so unreasonable, that I was quite nonplused in my mind as to what this meant." [38]

When Sister White sat down, the men present looked at one another in bewilderment, but not for long. Captain Eldridge arose and said:

"I was in that meeting. . . . Last night, after the close of the Conference, some of us met in my room in the Review Office, where we locked ourselves in, and there took up and discussed the questions and the matter that has been presented to us this morning. We remained in that room till three o'clock this morning." [39]

He stated further: "If I should have begun to give a description of what took place, and the personal attitude of those in the room, I could not have given it as exactly and correctly as it has been given by Sister White. I now see that I was in error; that the position that I took was not correct; and from the light that has been given this morning, I acknowledge that I was wrong." [40]

A. F. Ballenger, then secretary of the Religious Liberty Association, arose and said that the meeting described by the servant of the Lord had been held the night before. He declared that he was the one who had held up the copy of the American Sentinel and pointed to the article on the Sabbath and the Second Advent. He also confessed that he had been on the wrong side of the controversy.

Only a messenger in close communion with God could bear such an unusual but absolutely accurate testimony about a meeting to be held four months in advance.

Time and space forbid consideration of many other intensely interesting stories of crises met through divine guidance. We turn now to the third great test.

"To the Law and to the Testimony"

The true prophet must speak and write messages which are in harmony with the law and the testimony, or "there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. Every true prophet will be in accord with the law of God and the testimony of all of the other true prophets. Stated briefly, we must now test the twenty-five million words written by Ellen G. White, most of which appear in her forty-three bound volumes and the four thousand periodical articles of the church papers. Since she wrote so much, the chances of discrepancies are greatly increased. Did her teachings harmonize with the Scriptures?

Here we are looking at the prophet as a "for-teller," one who speaks for God, who expounds, clarifies, and explains. In this capacity Ellen G. White did the major portion of her work. She added nothing new in doctrine, but exalted the Scriptures and gave them a central position in all her writings. Hers was the work of a magnifying glass, simply making the details of the observed object stand out in clearer lines, showing its original beauty more perfectly. Hers is a sort of inspired commentary on the Bible.

So clear is this point of agreement of the Ellen G. White teachings with those of the Bible that it is unnecessary here to review the work of Ellen White in the light of this test.

The Bible sets forth several characteristics of the true prophet in relationship to "the law and the prophets," or the Scriptures as we know them:

1. Deuteronomy 13:1-4. He will exalt the true God.
2. 2 Chronicles 24:19, 20; Deuteronomy 13:4. He will teach obedience to God's law.
3. 1 John 4:2, 3. He will believe and teach that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

4. 2 Peter 1:21. He will speak as he is inspired by the Holy Ghost.

The writings of Ellen G. White not only give every evidence that she was the kind of person set forth in these scriptures but her work agrees in every detail with the expectations of God as delineated in His Word. She most certainly passes this third great test.

“By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them”

Seventy years is a long time to live and work before the public, under the critical eyes of millions of people, largely skeptical, doubtful, uncertain, suspicious, and in some cases openly hostile. If any faults, errors, or inconsistencies existed, they would be exposed with great satisfaction by opponents.

Mrs. White lived in various places, in New England, Michigan, Switzerland, Australia, and California. She traveled extensively in many parts of the United States, Europe, and Australia, but the fruit of her life and labors attests to her godliness, her sincerity, her zeal and earnestness, her upright and noble character, and her consistent Christian conduct.

The Testimony of Uriah Smith-The testimony of one who was in a strategic point for observation must suffice. Uriah Smith, for many years the editor of the church paper, the Review and Herald, in constant touch with Mrs. White and her work, sometimes the recipient of her “testimonies” and “counsels,” should be able to judge her work by the fruit or results of that work:

“Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations proves them genuine. The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive. They agree with the word of God and with themselves. They are given, unless those best qualified to judge are invariably deceived, when the Spirit of God is especially present. Calm, dignified, impressive, they commend themselves to every beholder as the very opposite of that which is false or fanatical.

“Their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil.

“They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and re aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.

“They lead us to Christ. Like the Bible they set Him forth as the only hope and only Savior of mankind. They portray before us in living characters His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in His steps.

“They lead us to the Bible. They set forth that Book as the inspired and unalterable word of God. They exhort to take that word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And, with a compelling power they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teachings, for it is to judge us in the last day.

“They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts. They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure. And no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Savior, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, ‘These are not the words of him that hath a devil.’ [41]

Ellen G. White’s Attitude Toward Jesus Christ-If one of the signs of a true prophet is to uplift, and exalt, and extol Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Son of man, the Savior of the fallen race, then the fruit of that teaching throughout the full seventy years of her labor can be found on every page of her writings and seen in the lives of Seventh-day Adventists around the world. Where will you find more beautiful words than these:

“Lift up Jesus, YOU that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to ‘the Lamb of God. ’ Lift Him up, the risen Savior, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who ‘hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. ’ Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God. Hold forth the word of life, presenting Jesus as the hope of the penitent and the stronghold of every believer. Reveal the way of peace to the troubled and the despondent, and show forth the grace and completeness of the Savior.” [42]

The External Evidence-The 4,155 church schools, the 283 intermediate schools, academies, and colleges, the 200,000 students in them, and the 40,000,000 dollars' worth of Seventh-day Adventist school property-all witness to Ellen G. White's work in the field of Christian education.

The 106 sanitariums, the 57 treatment rooms, the 371 institutional physicians, the College of Medical Evangelists, the 25,000,000 dollars' worth of medical institutions-all bear witness to Ellen G. White's work in the field of health and healing.

The 43 publishing houses, the 12,000,000 dollars' worth of denominational publishing property, the 4,500 faithful colporteurs, the sale of a million and a quarter dollars' worth of Seventh-day Adventist literature each month of the year-all bear their powerful testimony as to Ellen G. White's work in the field of Seventh-day Adventist literature ministry.

The 17,000 Sabbath schools, the 1,000,000 Sabbath school members, the \$5,000,000 a year as a Sabbath school gift to foreign missions-all testify to the power of her counsels on Sabbath school work.

The worldwide General Conference organization of Seventh-day Adventists, with its 80 union conference organizations, its 143 local conference and 227 mission organizations, its 10,300 churches, its 18,000 evangelistic workers, and 756,712 baptized church members, reflects the fruit of this gift.

The consistent godly lives of Seventh-day Adventists around the world, exemplifying in their daily experience the principles set forth in the two score E. G. White books, testify to the prophetic gift-all these are the external evidence of the power and influence of Ellen G. White's work for the spiritual uplift of the people of all nations.

All of this, I say, stands today as incontrovertible evidence of the power and influence of the life and work of the messenger who spoke and wrote what she called the messages of God to the people of the remnant church. These have stimulated, encouraged, and directed the inventive genius, the executive ability, the constructive thinking, and the consecrated efforts of men and women who have been instruments in God's hand to bring about so great an achievement.

Blot out her writings and take out of the Seventh-day Adventist movement the life and influence of Ellen G. White and what would you have left? Perhaps something similar to what you have today in the Advent Christian Church, for the two were on a par on October 23, 1844.

Six Evidences That Ellen G. White Bore the Testimony of Jesus to the Remnant Church

By the four Bible tests we must all agree that the claims of Ellen G. White seem to be substantiated, and that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is justified in its claims to be the remnant church of Revelation 12:17.

Lest there remain any within or without the church who still doubt her claims, we hasten to present added cumulative evidence, so that in the end all may be without excuse. Let us look at the evidence under six heads:

- a. The timeliness of the messages given.
- b. The practical nature of the messages.
- c. The absolute certainty of the messages.
- d. The relation to outside influences.
- e. The recognition accorded by contemporaries.
- f. The physical phenomena attending the "messenger."

Perhaps one incident or illustration from among many which might be cited will suffice for each type of evidence. We dip back into the records of a remarkably busy life for these very interesting and at times most unusual experiences.

The Timeliness of the Messages

Time and again the counsel given by the Lord for some particular individual arrived at the exact moment when it was needed most. Too early, it would not have been appreciated; too late, it would not have served its purpose. This placed a great responsibility upon the messenger of the Lord, for procrastination would have meant the defeat of God's plans and purposes. This often necessitated rising

at a very early hour, writing diligently hour after hour, hurrying to the post office to make connections with a particular train or boat. But the Lord saw to all of those details, and the Lord's servant responded to the call of her Master any hour of the day or night.

In June, 1871, two of our ministers, J. N. Loughborough and a fellow evangelist, began a tent effort in the city of San Francisco. In due time the meetings were transferred from the tent to a hall and by December 1, 1871, about fifty people had been baptized.

Much to the chagrin of the workers and believers and to the shame of the cause of God, Elder Loughborough's fellow evangelist had fallen into some questionable associations and actions. His conduct became such as to raise serious questions as to his relationship to the church and certainly gave rise to criticism by those opposing our work in that city. He took the attitude that he had a right to "do as he pleased,- and walk the streets "as he pleased- and "with whom he pleased."

When counseled and admonished by the brethren his only response was it is "none of your business," which was of course not true, for it is the business of the church how you and I conduct ourselves and live our lives. On Sabbath, January 27, 1872, it was decided that the church should investigate the situation on Sunday, January 28, at 9:00 A. M.

As Elder Loughborough started for that Sunday morning meeting, he met the brother on the sidewalk near the boarding house. He was weeping and gave evidence of a broken spirit. Looking up, he said, "Brother Loughborough, I am not going to the meeting today Not going to the meeting?" said Elder Loughborough." The meeting relates to your case."

"I know that," said he, "but I am all wrong. You are right in the position you have taken in reference to me. Here is a letter of confession I have written to the church; you take it and read it to them."

"What has occasioned this great change in you since yesterday?" inquired the elder.

"I went to the post office last night, after the Sabbath, and received a letter from Sister White, from Battle Creek, Michigan. It is a testimony she has written out for me," he replied." Read that, and you will see how the Lord sees my case.

Now what would you do with such a testimony if you were in a similar situation? I hold in my hand today the handwritten original of that testimony. It was mailed January 18, 1872. Very early that morning Sister White was awakened in her room in Battle Creek. She was bidden to arise and write out the testimony of what she had seen in vision on December 10, 1871, while in Bordoville, Vermont. As long before as December 27 she had begun to write out what she had seen about this worker in San Francisco, but had not finished it.

Without a moment's delay she arose, and the voice said, "Write out immediately that testimony for California, and get it into the very next mail; it is needed." just before breakfast she called her son Edson and charged him, "Take this letter to the post office, but don't put it into the drop. Hand it to the postmaster, and have him be sure to put it into the mail bag that goes out this morning."

Thus this letter reached San Francisco on January 27, when the worker in trouble needed it most urgently. No, my brother, my sister, such things do not just happen. The very timeliness of the messages is an evidence of their divine origin. [43]

The Practical Nature of the Messages

The practical nature of Ellen G. White's messages may well be illustrated by one of her experiences in Australia. She went there to help lay solid foundations for the building of our work in that part of the world. A great believer in youth as God's heritage in the church, and realizing that a trained leadership for the church of tomorrow depends upon the training of the boys and girls of today, she at once proposed the founding of a college, a Seventh-day Adventist training center-and this not just another college, but an institution such as God had shown her to be His kind of school, the details of which are found in the chapter on "Work and Education" in the book Fundamentals of Christian Education.

How impossible it seemed for our few, poor church members in Australia to carry out such a plan! But there was the counsel given as "instruction from the Lord." Not all the Australian brethren were convinced that the plan was a wise one and some gave expression to their feelings. Elder W. C. White wrote of this attitude:

"One day an influential and talented member of the Melbourne church, after listening to our plans for the establishment of such a school as we had at Healdsburg, said to me, "Brother White, this plan of building such a school is not an Australian plan at all, the demand for having such a school is not an Australian demand. The idea of establishing a school at this time, when our cause is so young and weak, is not an Australian idea." [41]

All of which was perfectly true and obvious. Neither was it Ellen G. White's plan nor idea, but rather both plan and idea were God's. Finally, the brethren appointed a committee to search for a suitable tract of land for such a school as called for in the "blueprint." They

found fine places but with a fine price of \$75 and up an acre, and that was impossible. In due time the committee found a block of 1,500 acres near Cooranbong, some seventy-five miles north of Sydney. It had but one commendatory feature-it was cheap at \$3 an acre. That price would and could buy only "poor, sandy, and hungry" land. The committee members were disappointed, but they decided Sister White should see it.

From several sources we put the story together. It seems that part of the committee went ahead, leaving Sister White to make the journey with Elder and Mrs. G. B. Starr. On the train she told the Starrs of her dream in which she and they were standing on the piece of property, looking it over, testing the soil, and studying a neat-cut furrow that had been plowed one quarter of a yard deep and two yards in length. She saw two of the brethren, who had grown up with the Iowa type of rich, deep soil, standing by the furrow and saying, "This is not good land; the soil is not favorable." As they spoke those words Sister White was told by One who had often given her counsel, "False witness has been borne of this land."

In due time she and her party arrived at Cooranbong, and looked over the estate without reaching a decision that day. The next morning, May 25, 1894, the whole group met in a fisherman's hut for a season of prayer. Sister White felt a burden to pray for divine healing to come to Brother McCullagh's tuberculosis-weakened body. As she prayed for him, he felt a sensation like an electric wave pass through his whole body and arose from that season of prayer a completely restored man, who continued to live for more than thirty-five years.

This manifestation of divine presence assured them all of divine guidance in the decision to be made that day. The group scattered out to examine the various parts of the property. The Starrs and Sister White walked over the place and came upon a spot where a neat-cut furrow had been plowed one quarter of a yard deep and two yards in length.

As they stood there looking at the turned up soil, two brethren came upon them from different directions. On seeing Sister White they remarked, "This is not good land; the soil is not favorable." [45]

Whereupon Sister White immediately told them of her dream and of the fulfillment. They decided to take the place, and made a down payment. Even then some hesitated, and to make sure they requested a government agricultural expert to visit the land and give his frank and honest appraisal of it. His comment was that if a bandicoot wanted to cross the 1,500 acres he would have to take with him his lunch in a basket, for there would be nothing for him to eat.

In the spring of 1895 the place was bought on the advice of the Lord and in spite of the expert's adverse report. To show Sister White's own confidence in what God had revealed to her, she selected sixty-six acres of the same land, moved into a few tents, and began work on her place, which she called "Sunny Side." She demonstrated that with proper cultivation the land would produce abundantly-and so it has all these years-a splendid harvest of fruit and vegetables and of fine Seventh-day Adventist youth to be workers in the great harvest fields.

The Certainty of the Prophetic Messages

Here is a type of evidence which is conclusive and convincing, one in which no mistakes could be made without dire consequences to those involved. Here is no room for guesswork nor for human devising or imaginings. The message was either from God, or else it definitely was not.

Elder and Mrs. White arrived on the campground in a certain State after the meetings had begun. The people were assembled and a speaker was on the platform in the midst of his sermon. Ellen White paused a moment as she approached, and without a bit of hesitation took the arm of James White and they walked down the aisle straight to the place before the desk. James White sat down. She looked up at the man, and pointing her finger at him said in a loud voice, "You have no business to be standing by that desk. You are not a fit man to be bringing a message to these people."

Naturally the man stopped; all eyes were focused on him and on Ellen G. White as they stood there. She had never seen the man before, nor did she know anything about him, except what the Lord had revealed to her. She had heard only the sound of his voice, and the Lord told her when she heard that voice to deliver a message to that person. Tell him that he is not a fit man to preach to the people. There is a woman in another State who calls him husband and a child who calls him father, and there is a woman here on this campground who calls him husband and a child who calls him father.

The man disappeared. His sermon was never finished. His own brother sitting in the audience admitted that what Sister White had said was true, that the man had been living a double life and deserved the open rebuke. The effect of that message was immediate. The Spirit of God came into that camp, and a great revival followed.

Suppose Sister White had made a mistake. Suppose she had addressed the wrong man. Suppose it had been a message for a different camp meeting. It is easy to suppose a good many things in a situation like that, but Ellen G. White was certain of her revelations from the Lord only because she recognized a voice she had heard in vision. The Lord makes no mistakes.

No, if the Lord worked through her at all, the messages would be certain and very specific. Such messages could come from God alone; no human mind could devise such things with such deadly accuracy.

The Relation to Outside Influences

It would be but human to question and wonder whether at times Ellen G. White was not influenced by someone near her, or working for her, or perhaps the president of the General Conference, who might give her “messages” a certain “bias” or “slant.” Some have wondered to what extent Milton’s *Paradise Lost* might have influenced her Conflict Series, or whether she had been reading Doctors Trall and Jackson before her “health vision” of 1863.

These are good and fair questions, and therefore deserve the same kind of answer. First, let us look at the *Paradise Lost* question. In the spring of 1858 she had the long vision in which the scenes of the great controversy were opened before her. She was so thrilled with the message that she told it to the believers in Battle Creek at the morning and evening services.

J. N. Andrews heard the description of the fall of Satan, the fall of man, and the plan of salvation. He asked Mrs. White whether she had ever read Milton’s book. She replied that she had never seen it nor read it. J. N. Andrews gave her a copy, but she put it up on a high shelf out of reach until she had finished writing out what she had been shown. Then she read it with great interest to see the harmony between the accounts.

The health message of 1863 brought from her pen these words: “As I introduced the subject of health to friends . . . and spoke against drugs and flesh meats, and in favor of water, pure air, and a proper diet, the reply was often made, ‘You speak very nearly the opinions taught in the *Laws of Life*, and other publications, by Drs. Trall, Jackson, and others. Have you read that paper and those works?’ My reply was that I had not, neither should I read them till I had fully written out my views, lest it should be said that I had received my light upon the subject of health from physicians, and not from the Lord.” [46]

In the same year she again declared, “My views were written independent of books or the opinions of others.” [47]

Recognized by Contemporaries

Contemporaries are of three kinds—those interested in the subject who approve or accept it, those interested in the subject who disapprove and reject it, and those not interested but who may accept or reject it. Mrs. E. G. White for the seventy years of her ministry had all three kinds of contemporaries, and it is only reasonable that we might get all three kinds of reactions or recognition.

Those Interested Who Approved—Let us begin with her friends who approved and accepted her and her work. The president of the General Conference in 1883 was George I. Butler, who stood in a unique relationship between Mrs. White and the people. He had very intimate relationships with both people and God’s messenger, and we shall let him speak for those who approved of her call and work. He knew whereof he spoke when he said:

“The majority of our people believe these visions to be a genuine manifestation of spiritual gifts, and as such to be entitled to respect. We do not hold them to be superior to the Bible, or in one sense equal to it. The Scriptures are our rule to test everything by, the visions as well as all other things. That rule, therefore, is of the highest authority; the standard is higher than the thing tested by it. If the Bible should show the visions were not in harmony with it, the Bible would stand, and the visions would be given up. This shows plainly that we hold the Bible the highest, our enemies to the contrary, notwithstanding.” [48]

Elder J. N. Loughborough, a close associate, testifies:

“It is now over fifty-eight years since the writer first saw Mrs. E. G. White in prophetic vision. During these years many prophetic statements have been made by her relative to things that would take place. Some of these predictions relate to events already fulfilled, and some are in process of fulfillment, while others are still future. As to those relating to the past or present events, I know not of a single instance of failure.” [49] “We find that the continual instruction given through Mrs. White has been in the line of unity and harmony, admonishing to ‘counsel together’ and to ‘press together,’ to be in union with Christ, thus insuring true fellowship and union with one another.” [50]

Another leader in the Seventh-day Adventist movement fully qualified to speak concerning the “visions” and messages from the Lord through Ellen G. White was Uriah Smith, the editor of the church paper, the *Review and Herald*. In the issue of January 13, 1863, he published an editorial under the title of “Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?” We quote his own words:

“Those who profess to stand on the Bible and the Bible alone, are bound to receive what the Bible tells them will exist, and commands them to respect.” [51]

Those Interested Who Disapproved-One of Mrs. White’s most severe and unrelenting critics was D. M. Canright, one-time preacher for the Seventh-day Adventist people. Look at Canright’s attitude toward Mrs. White from three angles-first, as a Seventh-day Adventist; then, as an opponent of the messages; finally, as an old man, too proud to admit a mistake, too weak to take his stand for the truth.

In 1885, just two years before he left the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he wrote in the Review and Herald the following words:

“While I have carefully read the first, second, and third volumes of ‘Spirit of Prophecy,’ heaven has seemed very near to me. If the Spirit of God does not speak to us in these writings, then I should despair of ever discerning it. Oh, how precious the dear Savior looks! How infinitely valuable the salvation of one soul! How hateful and inexcusable sin appears! God is good, and the sweetest thing on this earth is to love and serve him.” [52]

“I have read many books, but never one which has interested me so intensely and impressed me so profoundly as Volume 4 of ‘The Great Controversy,’ by Sister White. Perhaps it may be partly because I see things differently; but I am sure that is not wholly the reason. The historical part is good, but that which was of the most intense interest to me, was the last part, beginning with the ‘Origin of Evil.’ The ideas concerning the nature and attributes of God, the character of Christ, and the rebellion of Lucifer in heaven, carry with them their own proof of inspiration. They moved the depths of my soul as nothing else ever did. I feel that I have a new and higher conception of the goodness and forbearance of God, the awful wickedness of Satan, and the tender love of Christ. I wish everybody could read it whether of our people or not. Get it, brethren, and read it carefully.” [53]

In 1877, ten years before he finally turned his back on the Adventist Church, the Adventist message, and Ellen G. White, he wrote:

“As to the Christian character of Sister White, I beg leave to say that I think I know something about it. I have been acquainted with Sister White for eighteen years, more than half the history of our people. I have been in their family time and again, sometimes weeks at a time. They have been in our house and family many times. I have traveled with them almost everywhere; have been with them in private and in public, in meeting and out of meeting, and have had the very best chances to know something of the life, character, and spirit of Brother and Sister White. As a minister, I have had to deal with all kinds of persons, and all kinds of character, till I think I can judge something of what a person is, at least after years of intimate acquaintance.

I know Sister White to be an unassuming, modest, kind-hearted, noble woman. These traits in her character are not simply put on and cultivated, but they spring gracefully and easily from her natural disposition. She is not self-conceited, self-righteous, and self-important, as fanatics always are. I have frequently come in contact with fanatical persons, and I have always found them to be full of pretentious, full of pride, ready to give their opinion, boastful of their holiness, etc. But I have ever found Sister White the reverse of all this. Any one, the poorest and the humblest, can go to her freely for advice and comfort without being repulsed. She is ever looking after the needy, the destitute, and the suffering, providing for them, and pleading their cause. I have never formed an acquaintance with any persons who so constantly have the fear of God before them.” [54]

It is strange how quickly the mental machinery of some people can go into reverse. We believe D. M. Canright to have been an honest man and to have meant what he said at least when he was saying it. Either he told the truth or he told lies. Now read some words from the same man and judge for yourself which Canright was telling the truth:

“I have been well acquainted with Mrs. White for nearly thirty years; have been in her family for weeks at a time, and she has often been in my family. I am familiar with all her work and all her books. I am satisfied that the whole thing is a delusion. Her visions have been a constant source of quarrels and divisions among themselves. Many of their ablest men, and thousands of others, have left them on this account. There is a strong anti vision party now. . . .

“Mrs. White’s trances are simply the result of disease and religious excitement-hysteria. At the age of nine she received a blow upon her head which broke her nose and nearly killed her. It shattered her nervous system beyond recovery, and affected her mind to melancholy and even to insanity. She was weakly, sickly, often fainted, and did not expect to live. In this condition she was carried away with the Millerite fanaticism, and went into trances with others. All this she tells herself, in Spiritual Gifts, Volume 11, pages 7-48. . . .

“What harm does she do? Much every way. She teaches a false doctrine, writes a new Bible, leads her people to be narrow, clannish, and bigoted, to oppose the work of all other churches and needed Sunday and temperance laws. She has divided families, broken up churches, driven some to infidelity and others into despair. It leads her advocates to deceive. Being afraid that it will hurt them if it is known in what light they really hold her visions, they deny that it is a matter of importance with them. This is false and deceptive, for

they hold her visions to be as sacred as the Bible. To defend her mistakes and errors, both she and her apologists have to deny the plainest facts and resort to untruthful statements. Fear of her authority compels many to profess faith in her when they have none, and thus become hypocrites.” [55]

Many years went by, and D. M. Canright became the pastor emeritus of the Berean Baptist church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1919 he published a book, *Life of Mrs. E. G. White*, in which he took one full page to make clear his “present standing”:

“Since I withdrew from the Adventists, over thirty years ago, they have continued to report that I have regretted leaving them, have tried to get back again, have repudiated my book which I wrote and have confessed that I am now a lost man. There has never been a word of truth in any of these reports. I expect them to report that I recanted on my deathbed. All this is done to hinder the influence of my books. I now reaffirm all that I have written in my books and tracts against that doctrine.

“Several Adventist ministers have rendered valuable aid in preparing these pages. Once they were believers in Mrs. White’s divine inspiration, but plain facts finally compelled them to renounce faith in her dreams.” [56]

We come now to the question, Did D. M. Canright ever show any signs of regret for his own course of action? Did he ever indicate that he was sorry for the active and open warfare he conducted against Ellen G. White? In his book published in 1919 he declares that he did not. But in 1915 at Battle Creek when Mrs. White rested in her casket, and the funeral service was ended, and the people passed quietly by to pay a final tribute to a great, noble, but humble servant of God, D. M. Canright was among them. He and his brother passed by once, and then came by a second time. He rested his hand upon the side of the casket, and with warm tears trickling down his cheeks, he said, “There is a noble Christian woman gone.” [57]

Those Disinterested Who Approved-The last group of contemporaries to speak their mind concerning Mrs. E. G. White are those non-Adventists who were neither friend nor foe, but merely onlookers or bystanders, who observed much but said little. They saw her as a woman, a neighbor, a citizen, a busy worker going here and there. They had no special reason for saying anything good or bad about her.

Yet come with me to Battle Creek, where Ellen G. White lived for many years. The town leaders were preparing for a big mass meeting. They were anxious to make a good impression and to reach a certain objective in something of interest to all the citizens of Battle Creek. They wanted a public speaker with persuasive power, a gift of oratory, and a personality that would draw and hold the crowds.

To whom did they turn? None other than one of their own citizens on the west side-Mrs. E. G. White. Mayor Austin, W. H. Skinner, cashier of the First National Bank, and C. C. Peavey were the committee on arrangements. They invited Ellen G. White because they knew her and her work. Mrs. White, in writing of that occasion, says:

“I spoke in the mammoth tent, Sunday evening, July 1 [1877], upon the subject of Christian Temperance. God helped me that evening; and although I spoke ninety minutes, the crowd of fully five thousand persons listened in almost breathless silence.” [58]

The following year (1878) a book was published entitled *American Biographical History of Eminent and Self Made Men of the State of Michigan, Third Congressional District*. The authors of this book evidently observed and thought independently relative to Mrs. White:

“Mrs. White is a woman of singularly well-balanced mental organization. Benevolence, spirituality, conscientiousness, and ideality are the predominating traits. Her personal qualities are such as to win for her the warmest friendship of all with whom she comes in contact, and to inspire them with the utmost confidence in her sincerity. . . . Notwithstanding her many years of public labor, she has retained all the simplicity and honesty which characterized her early life.

“As a speaker, Mrs. White is one of the most successful of the few ladies who have become noteworthy as lecturers, in this country, during the last twenty years. Constant use has so strengthened her vocal organs as to give her voice rare depth and power. Her clearness and strength of articulation are so great that, when speaking in the open air, she has frequently been distinctly heard at the distance of a mile. Her language, though simple, is always forcible and elegant. When inspired with her subject, she is often marvelously eloquent, holding the largest audiences spellbound for hours without a sign of impatience or weariness.

“The subject matter of her discourses is always of a practical character, bearing chiefly on fireside duties, the religious education of children, temperance, and kindred topics. On revival occasions, she is always the most effective speaker. She has frequently spoken to immense audiences, in the large cities, on her favorite themes, and has always been received with great favor.” [59]

The Physical Phenomena Attending the Visions

For Seventh-day Adventists in particular and the world in general, seventy years of work by Ellen G. White have produced so many results of varied kinds that she and her works can be appraised and judged by their fruits alone. It was not so in 1844 and the years which immediately followed. Then evidence of a kind so unusual, so specific, was needed as to arrest attention and produce conviction and cause men and women to believe in her and her revelations.

Physical phenomena such as are described in the Bible concerning prophets, dreams, and visions supplied this evidence. They are described in Daniel 10: 16-19; Numbers 24:3, 4; 2 Samuel 23:2; 2 Corinthians 12:2A. The only question which concerns us briefly here is, Did Ellen G. White actually give evidence of these Biblical signs in the realm of physical phenomena?

Few, if any, present in this room can bear a personal testimony of having seen her in vision when she gave evidence of such physical manifestations. The most and the best we can do is to take the word or testimony of those who did have such firsthand knowledge. This we have in abundance from men whose veracity and honor are beyond question or doubt. The answer is, "Yes, the very same physical conditions were present in Mrs. White while in vision as are described in the Scriptures."

The Relation of Ellen G. White to the Bible

Surely no one in this audience today, and I take for granted that most certainly no one in the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world, would openly deny and defy God and His simple declaration of the fact that He has chosen to speak to men by His holy men called prophets. This is basic and fundamental.

The question which we have raised in this study is simply this, "Was Ellen G. White used by God as His prophet or messenger in the remnant church?" This we have studied, and we think sufficient evidence has been produced to satisfy every one of us that she was indeed chosen by God and for seventy years used by God as His "messenger," and that He gave her revelations which she faithfully wrote out and are now published for us to read.

We have yet two phases of the topic which we wish to consider. First, the relation of Ellen G. White and her writings to the Scriptures; second, my personal relationship, and yours, to the writings of Ellen G. White.

These are vitally important questions for each one of us to study and analyze carefully and prayerfully; for once having thought, them through we shall be brought face to face with a decision which can and must affect our present way of living and our future destiny. May God help us now to find His way through these great questions is our sincere prayer at this very moment.

A few Seventh-day Adventists are inclined to give the impression that Ellen G. White's writings are on a par with the Bible, and a very few tend to set the Scriptures aside and give first place in their study to the books written by Sister White. Without doubt the very free use we make of paragraphs and sentences from her writings in our sermons and Sabbath school lessons has given rise to the accusation from our critics that we make of those writings a second Bible.

However, to properly understand how Seventh-day Adventists as a group or as a church regard the writings of Ellen G. White, we should turn first to Mrs. White herself and find out the relation she saw between her writings and the Bible, and then examine statements by the leaders of the denomination as to the relation they see between the Bible and Mrs. White's writings.

Ellen G. White Exalted the Scriptures

No clearer statement can be found from the pen of Ellen White concerning the relationship of her writings to the Scriptures than the words with which she closed her first book (*Experiences and Views*) in 1851:

"I recommend to you dear reader, the word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that word we are to be judged. God has, in that word, promised to give visions in the 'LAST DAYS'; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth." [60]

All through her life she exalted the Word of God. Her last words to the General Conference in session were spoken in 1909 as she held the Bible extended on her hands: "I commend unto you this Book." [61]

Again and again she reiterated the truth of the supremacy of the Word of God. (See Item 3 in Appendix, page 277, for further E. G. White statements on this topic.)

From her own statements we may conclude that Ellen G. White believed:

a. That the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God.

- b. That men should “cling” to their Bibles.
- c. That men should believe and obey the Bible and “not one” of them would be lost.
- d. That in the Bible is found “comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam.”
- e. That the Bible is “fitted” for the needs of all-rich and poor, learned and illiterate, “all ages and all classes.”
- f. That the “truth of God is found in His Word.”
- g. That no one need “seek elsewhere for present truth.”
- h. That the Bible contains all that a man needs for salvation.
- i. That the Bible sets forth the pattern for Christian living.
- j. That the Testimonies were given only because man has neglected his Bible, and that the Testimonies will direct him back to his Bible. They are not given as “an addition to the Word of God,” nor to take the place of that Word of God.

Spirit of Prophecy Relationship to Development of Doctrine

Someone may say, “Is it not a fact that we Adventists got our fundamental doctrines and interpretations of prophecy from the writings of Ellen G. White?”

There is but one answer. No, we did not in the past and we cannot today. Our doctrines came from the Bible and then were confirmed by God in the revelations given to Mrs. White. As to interpretations of prophecy, L. E. Froom, in his four volumes, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, has proved conclusively that Seventh-day Adventists have made but few contributions in this field. Nowhere does Ellen G. White claim the right or distinction to any original interpretations of prophecy. That was not her burden or her message.

In 1848 and 1849 the earnest group of Sabbath-observing Adventists came together in a series of Bible conferences. They were held in such places as Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20-24, 1848; Volney, New York, beginning August 18, 1848, in “Brother Arnold’s barn”; Port Gibson, New York, August 27 and 28, in “Hiram Edson’s barn”; Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8 and 9; and in Topsham, Maine, October 20-22, in “Brother Howland’s house.”

The record states that when they first came together for such study, “hardly two agreed. Each was strenuous for his views.” [62] Sister White says:

“I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. . . . When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more,’ the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively.” [63]

Of great significance are these words:

“During this whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying. This was one of the greatest sorrows of my life. I was in this condition of mind until all the principal points of our faith were made clear to our minds, in harmony with the word of God. The brethren knew that when not in vision, I could not understand these matters, and they accepted as light direct from heaven the revelations given!” [64]

Without a doubt God intended it to be that way, for the doctrinal truths held by Seventh-day Adventists thus come from the Bible and not from Ellen G. White.

The Greater Light and the Lesser Light

In order that there may be no mistake in the relation of the writings of Ellen G. White to the Bible, God impressed this fact upon her mind by a dream which she had on April 3, 1871. Concerning it she wrote:

“I seemed to be attending an important meeting, at which a large company were assembled. . . .

“I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several Testimonies for the Church, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the Testimonies. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. if you had made God’s word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. . . .

“The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.” [65]

There is one other statement which seems to set forth her own attitude and certainly leaves no room for doubt or uncertainty in the matter:

“Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.” [66] (Italics supplied.)

We should close this section with the most solemn words she ever wrote on the subject:

“In the Bible the will of God is revealed to His children. Wherever it is read, in the family circle, the school, or the church, all should give quiet and devout attention as if God were really present and speaking to them.” [67]

What Others Have Said of the Relation of the Testimonies to the Bible

Ellen G. White leaves us with no doubt as to her own attitude toward the Bible. Now it, becomes necessary to find out what her writings did to her brethren and the relation they saw between those writings and the Bible.

James White reproduced in the Review and Herald of October 16, 1855, what he had first stated in a tract in 1847. He said:

“The Bible is a perfect and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice. But this is no reason why God may not show the past, present, and future fulfillment of His word, in these last days, by dreams and visions, according to Peter’s testimony. True visions are given to lead us to God, and to His written word; but those that are given for a new rule of faith and practice, separate from the Bible, cannot be from God, and should be rejected!” [68]

Continuing his article of October 16, 1855, he quotes from another of his articles on the gifts of the gospel church:

“Every Christian is therefore in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts. We say that the very moment he does, he places the gifts in a wrong place, and takes an extremely dangerous position.” [69]

In the February 28, 1856, issue of the Review, James White was laboring to correct the attitude of our people on the same topic. He stated his position and viewpoint in these words:

“The Word should be in front, and the eye of the church should be placed upon it, as the rule to walk by, and the fountain of wisdom, from which to learn duty in ‘all good works. ’ But if a portion of the church err from the truths of the Bible, and become weak and sickly, and the flock become scattered, so that it seems necessary for God to employ the Gifts of the Spirit to correct, revive and heal the erring, we should let Him work. Yea more, we should pray for Him to work and plead earnestly that He would work by the Spirit’s power, and bring the scattered sheep to His fold. Praise the Lord, He will work. Amen.” [70]

J. N. Andrews was highly respected by our people in the earlier years of our work. He must have represented a prevailing attitude in 1870 when he wrote: “We understand that the Holy Scriptures are divinely inspired, and that they contain the truth of God which is able to make us wise unto salvation.” [71]

G. I. Butler in 1874 wrote:

“They [the visions] everywhere direct us to the Scriptures as the great source of true instruction, and to the example of Jesus Christ as the true pattern. They never claim to be given to take the place of the Bible, but simply to be a manifestation of one of -those spiritual gifts set in the church by its divine Lord; and as such should have their proper weight.” [72]

By 1887 Uriah Smith spoke out with great positive desire on this subject. We do well to ponder his words and follow his reasoning:

“As to the relation of the visions to the word of God, our position is, and ever has been, the same as set forth in the work ‘Objections to the Visions Answered,’ published in 1868. In that work (p. 127) we said:

“Someone may say, Then you make the visions a second New Testament, a Mormon Bible in your system. We do not, as the following reason will show: We have ever held, as set forth in this work, that the word of God, the Bible, is the standard by which to test all these manifestations.” To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” All gifts of the Spirit in the church, must be thus tested. Now it is evident that that which tests occupies a higher position than that which is tested by it. This, in one word, expresses our view of the relative position which the Bible and the visions sustain to each other. But when a manifestation accords with the Word, and gives every evidence that it is a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God, we submit it to the objector himself to say how far we may regard it lightly, or despise or transgress its teachings with impunity.” [73]

In March, 1888, Elder G. I. Butler, then president of the General Conference, gave a series of talks to the students in Battle Creek College. As is our custom today in presenting the nature and work of the Spirit of prophecy in the remnant church, he gave an opportunity for questions. One of them had to do with the topic under consideration and expressed a denominational viewpoint in that year.

“Question 14. I have heard individuals say that if they were obliged to give up the Bible or the testimonies, they would give up the Bible. Is it right to make such statements, especially before those who have no knowledge of the visions?”

“Answer. I should say it is very unwise and very wrong to make such a statement as that. I believe that the testimonies are from God, because they agree with the Bible-with the rule it gives by which to test such things. I believe them, perhaps, as strongly as any one; but I have never said and never expect to say that the testimonies are to be placed superior to the Bible, or even equal to the Bible. . . . But the thing which tests is superior to the thing tested. The Bible is the standard. And that which comes up to the standard we ought to accept. But to go so far as to say, ‘I would give up the Bible before the testimonies,’ is a very wrong statement to make. And if any one says the testimonies contradict the Bible, I should advise him to cling to the Bible; for the Bible should be the test by which everything is tried.

“Our enemies make great cavil of this, just because of some such unguarded, foolish statements. Do not do it. Such persons are but little short of being fanatical.” [74]

Seeing the Scriptures Through the Eye of the Spirit of Prophecy

While Ellen G. White made it very clear that her writings were not in any way to supersede, surpass, or supplant the Holy Scriptures, yet she declared that they would help the diligent student of the Word to see more clearly and distinctly the great truths taught in that Word. They became a sort of magnifying glass, or microscope, to enable the searcher for truth to behold the wondrous beauties contained in the passage under observation.

They become a kind of inspired commentary on the Scriptures. The ministers and Bible teachers in our day schools as well as Sabbath schools who use the writings of God’s messenger in connection with their sermons and lessons are soon identified as men who have power and something to say. Men who live with the Bible and who place the Testimonies alongside that Book as they search for truth are richly repaid with gems of thought, treasures out of the infinite mind of God brought to man by means of the prophets, ancient and modern. I commend this method of study and this use of the writings to my brethren everywhere. You will be richly rewarded for every hour thus spent in your study with your God.

The experience of Mrs. S. M. I. Henry, at one time a prominent W. C. T. U. worker, with the writings of Ellen G. White illustrates the point under discussion. She accepted the Sabbath truth and other tenets of our faith before she became acquainted with and believed in the Testimonies. As she associated with our people in those critical days of readjustment of thinking and of coming to conclusions and decisions, she was somewhat perturbed by what she saw and that which she heard. They did not always agree, and therefore caused her some concern until she saw the Testimonies as simply a lens or a telescope through which to look at the truth. [75]

My Salvation and the Writings of Ellen G. White

Our study has brought us a long way from the point of departure, and yet there is a very close connection so far as you and I are concerned personally. My belief in the five great facts of faith upon which my Christianity is based leads me to the one and only possible conclusion, namely, that God has spoken to man through His Word-the Scriptures-using holy men and women of God as His spokesmen in Old and New Testament times, and also in our own time.

The evidence thus far presented proves that Ellen G. White was chosen by God as His messenger in the remnant church. Now the question before us is simply this, "How is my salvation, how is your salvation, related to the writings of Ellen G. White?"

What Does the Lord Require?

By salvation I mean a sinner saved out of this world of sin and given an entrance into God's everlasting kingdom as a saint. The question, then, is what must I be or do in order to qualify for such a transfer? What are God's requirements for an entrance into His kingdom? What bearing have the writings of Ellen G. White on our fitness for a place among the saints of all ages to whom the everlasting kingdom shall be given?

Ellen G. White is very consistent in her answer to these questions, and she has not left us in doubt in the matter. Two sentences from her pen are typical of what we find in all of her writings:

"All who would enter the city of God must during their earthly life set forth Christ in their dealings. It is this that constitutes them the messengers of Christ, His witnesses." [76]

The Conclusion From Her Own Statement

The conclusion is as simple as it is certain. Ellen G. White turns the sinner's attention to the Bible and to Christ as man's only hope for salvation. Every page of her writings uplifts Jesus, upholds Christ as man's only Savior, points unerringly to the Son of God as the one who takes away the sins of the penitent sinner. Steps to Christ, Ministry of Healing, Mount of Blessing, Christ's Object Lessons, and The Desire of Ages—all set forth the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"What are we to do," they asked, "to carry out what God requires?" John 6:28, Weymouth. It was Jesus Himself who gave the answer, "This. . . is above all what God requires -that you should be believers in Him whom He has sent." Verse 29.

Paul and Silas came forth with a similar answer to the earnest appeal of the keeper of the prison, "'O sirs, what must I do to be saved?' " They did not hesitate or falter for a moment, but knew the answer, and so must you and I as Christ's ministers today. They declared, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus. . . and both you and your household will be saved. ' " Acts 16:30, 31, Weymouth.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1: 12.

The whole story of God's requirements for my salvation is told in one verse, John 3:16; in one chapter, Ephesians 2; in one book, the Bible, "the greater light"; and in one library, "the lesser light," the forty-three bound volumes and four thousand E. G. White articles which have appeared in our church papers over the past one hundred years.

"The revelation of God's love to men centers in the cross. Its full significance tongue cannot utter; pen cannot portray; the mind of man cannot comprehend. Looking upon the cross of Calvary we can only say: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ' John 3:16.

"Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is the science of salvation that we are to learn and to teach." [77] (Italics supplied.)

My faith in Christ as my personal Savior causes me to make a full and complete surrender to Him:

"He asks for a whole heart; give it to Him; it is His, both by creation and by redemption. He asks for your intellect; give it to Him; it is His. He asks for your money; give it to Him; it is His. 'You are not your own; for you are bought with a price. ' God requires the homage of a sanctified soul, which has prepared itself, by the exercise of the faith that works by love, to serve Him. He holds up before us the highest ideal, even perfection. He asks us to be absolutely and completely for Him in this world as He is for us in the presence of God."

Now what is the purpose of the Bible? Christ and the cross are at the center of the Bible, and rise up, as it were, out of the Book as the focal point of interest for me, but God gave the Book from Genesis one to Revelation twenty-two as the story of redemption, the standard of His everlasting kingdom, a guidebook from earth to heaven, a complete pattern for Christian living. (See 2 Timothy 3:15-17)

We must keep in mind that a man is not saved by merely assenting to the doctrines of the Bible, but by his faith in the Lord Jesus. The doctrines, the reproofs, the instruction are given as the detailed specifications for building a perfect Christian character, for the making of an "intelligent Christian." This is what Peter means by "growing in grace" as set forth in 2 Peter 1: 5-11. We begin with our faith in Jesus Christ, and He then comes into our hearts by faith and takes up His abode. (Ephesians 3:17) This abiding presence brings about

a transformation of character so that the Christian shows forth the virtues of Christ in his every business transaction, in every social relation, in every phase of his everyday life.

Ellen G. White describes it this way:

“Every moment of our lives is intensely real, and charged with solemn responsibilities. Ignorance will be no excuse for lack of spiritual understanding and attainment; for we are exhorted to add to virtue, knowledge. Many are very ignorant of Bible truth, and they do not realize the duty and necessity of becoming intelligent Christians. . . . The uncultured fishermen became men of refinement and ability; and the lessons that they were privileged to learn are written for our admonition and instruction. We are invited to become learners in the school of Christ. We need to acquire all the knowledge possible. We cannot afford to be ignorant of the things that pertain to our eternal welfare. If all would cease gossip and evil communication, devoting the time to contemplation of Christ and the plan of salvation, they would add the knowledge essential to a growth in grace.” [79]

May we pause for a moment and think that through. Is it possible that we as Seventh-day Adventist preachers and teachers have been putting our emphasis in the wrong place? Have we shifted our focus from the great fundamentals to the incidentals and perhaps the nonessentials? Is my salvation still dependent on my faith in Jesus Christ? Or is it dependent on my readiness to give mere intellectual assent to certain designated answers to specific questions regarding a Seventh-day Adventist system of theology, and to certain interpretations of prophecies that were originally designed to help me know how far along I am today in the path leading to the everlasting kingdom?

Brethren, we do well to ponder these things lest we be guilty of doing the very things Ellen G. White warns against. Listen to her words:

“More people than we think are longing to find the way to Christ. Those who preach the last message of mercy should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner’s refuge. Some ministers think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith; they take it for granted that their hearers are acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. But many people are sadly ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation; they need more instruction upon this all-important subject than upon any other.

“Theoretical discourses are essential, that people may see the chain of truth link by link, uniting in a perfect whole; but no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel. Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness. . . .

“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. . . .

“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.” [80] (Italics supplied.)

Righteousness by Faith—the Latter Rain and the Loud Cry

May I call to your attention one more challenging question? Is it possible that our failure to give due emphasis to this topic of “Righteousness by Faith” is delaying the outpouring of the latter rain” and the “loud cry”?

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people. . . . This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. . . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” [81] (Italics supplied.)

No, my salvation does not depend upon the twenty-five million words written by Ellen G. White, but upon Jesus Christ, to whom they point, who only can save me from my sins and give me an entrance into His everlasting kingdom. She sums up her whole message to me in these words:

“The sum and substance of the whole matter of Christian grace and, experience is contained in believing on Christ, in knowing God and His Son whom He has sent.” [82]

“Religion means the abiding of Christ in the heart, and where He is, the soul goes on in spiritual activity, ever growing in grace, ever going on to perfection.” [83]

A letter written by Sister White from Melbourne December 21, 1892, was read by W. W. Prescott to the General Conference in session on Sabbath, January 28, 1893. One paragraph is pertinent to our discussion:

“The whole earth is to be lightened with the glory of God’s truth. The Lord will not close up the period of probation until the warning message shall be more distinctly proclaimed. The trumpet must give a certain sound. The law of God is to be magnified, its claims must be presented in their true, sacred character, that the people may be brought to decide for or against the truth. Yet the work will be cut short in righteousness. The message of Christ’s righteousness is to sound from one end of the world to the other. This is the glory of God which closes the work of the third angel.” [84] (Italics supplied.)

You see, there are some portions of the world which have none of the E. G. White writings, other portions have only two or three small books from her pen, while other areas are blessed with all her writings. This fact in itself makes it improbable that God would set up the Testimonies as basically necessary and essential for a man’s salvation.

The same is true of the Bible and its availability to each and every language area. It is safe for us to conclude that God will judge a man and his salvation on the basis of how well he has lived up to the amount of light he has had available.

Here is one paragraph on this topic from Ellen G. White herself:

“Said the angel: ‘If light come, and that light is set aside or rejected, then comes condemnation and the frown of God; but before the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no, light for them to reject.’” [85]

Ellen G. White’s Attitude Toward Her Own Writings

All of this leads us to the point in our study where we must settle our own individual and personal attitude toward the writings of Ellen G. White. To help us in arriving at that conclusion we shall first see how Mrs. White regarded her own work, and then search to find the attitude of the brethren toward her writings, and finally attempt to draw a statement of what our personal attitude should be today.

Infallibility and Inspiration

Ellen G. White never claimed “verbal inspiration” for either her own writings or the Bible itself. Neither did she ever claim infallibility for herself nor for the men who gave us the Bible.

Let us pause for a few minutes on this question, for some of our people must clarify their thinking and bring themselves into accord and agreement with Ellen G. White. whom they so ardently support.

First, on infallibility she said: “In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible. His word is true, and in him is no variableness or shadow of turning.” [86] That is final and unequivocal. No one can possibly misunderstand or misinterpret such a definite declaration of a fact.

Next, on inspiration she has much more to say, just as final and just as definite:

“The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. It is not that the difficulty is in the Bible. Opposing politicians argue points of law in the statute book, and take opposite views in their application and in these laws. . . .

“The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes. . . .

“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. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were 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 were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man’s words or his expressions 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. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God!” [87]

This is E. G. White's concept of inspiration. We also find it expressed in the Introduction to *The Great Controversy*.

Dr. David Paulson was known by many of our people as a dynamic worker and a zealous Seventh-day Adventist. In 1906 he wrote a letter to Ellen G. White and set forth his convictions regarding her and her work. It is not his letter to her, but rather her letter in response to his which has a part in our present discussion. Let us look at several paragraphs:

"In your letter you speak of your early training to have implicit faith in the testimonies and say, 'I was led to conclude and most firmly believe that every word that you ever spoke in public or private, that every letter you wrote under any and all circumstances, was as inspired as the ten commandments.'"

"My brother, you have studied my writings diligently, and you have never found that I have made any such claims, neither will you find that the pioneers in our cause ever made such claims."

"In my preface to '*Great Controversy*,' . . . you have no doubt read my statement regarding the ten commandments and the Bible, which should have helped you to a correct understanding of the matter under consideration." [88]

Concerning her own writings she declared in a similar vein:

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation." [89]

It thus becomes apparent that Ellen G. White:

- a. Never claimed infallibility either for herself or for the writers of the Scriptures." God alone is infallible."
- b. Never claimed verbal inspiration for her own writings nor for the Scriptures.
- c. Did claim thought inspiration both for her own writings and for the Scriptures.
- d. Did not look upon her writings as "Commandments of God," but saw them as "reproofs," "counsels," "warnings," encouragement," "messages . . . testimonies," "cautions."

I think of her writings as the detailed specifications which the Master Architect places in my hands along with the blueprint—the Bible—to help me in the building of a fine Christian character, fit for an entrance into God's everlasting kingdom. The wise builder sticks to his blueprints and specifications in every detail, for he has learned from experience that changes and deviations are expensive to him and a disappointment to the architect.

How the Writings Came to Be

"Early in my public labors I was bidden by the Lord, 'Write, write the things that are revealed to you.' At the time this message came to me, I could not hold my hand steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write. But again came the word, 'Write the things that are revealed to you.' I obeyed; and as the result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told me what to write? Who steadied my right hand, and made it possible for me to use a pen? It was the Lord." [90]

"I am very busy with my writing. Early and late, I am writing out the matters that the Lord opens before me. The burden of my work is to prepare a people to stand in the day of the Lord." [91]

Purpose of the Testimonies

"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word, yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse." [92] (Italics supplied.)

How to Read and Understand the Testimonies

“In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.” [93]

“The volumes of ‘Spirit of Prophecy’ [now Conflict of the Ages Series] should be in every family, and should be read aloud in the family circle. More than one-half of our people know little or nothing of the contents of these books, and they are losing much by their neglect.

“The Testimonies contain instruction which meets the case of all, both parents and children. Should these be read aloud to the entire family, the children as well as the parents would be benefited by their counsels, warnings, and reproofs. While these are placed out of sight and neglected for the reading of fictitious, sensational literature, both yourselves and your children will be retrograding mentally and spiritually.” [94]

Attitudes Toward the Testimonies

In a crisis in 1903 Ellen White clearly depicted the various attitudes which would reflect the reaction of the people toward the testimonies:

“Soon every possible effort will be made to discount and pervert the truth of the testimonies of God’s Spirit. We must have in readiness the clear, straight messages that since 1846 have been coming to God’s people.

[1] “There will be those once united with us in the faith who will search for new, strange doctrines, for something odd and sensational to present to the people. They will bring in all conceivable fallacies, and will present them as coming from Mrs. White, that they may beguile souls. . . .

[2] “Those who have treated the light that the Lord has given as a common thing will not be benefited by the instruction presented.

[3] “There are those who will misinterpret the messages that God has given, in accordance with their spiritual blindness.

[4] “Some will yield their faith, and will deny the truth of the messages, pointing to them as falsehoods.

[5] “Some will hold them up to ridicule, working against the light that God has been giving for years, and some who are weak in the faith will thus be led astray.

[6] “But others will be greatly helped by the messages. Though not personally addressed, they will be corrected, and will be led to shun the evils specified. . . . The Spirit of the Lord will be in the instruction, and doubts existing in many minds will be swept away. The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture. Many will read with eagerness the messages reproving wrong, that they may learn what they may do to be saved. . . . Light will dawn upon the understanding, and the Spirit will make, an impression on minds, as Bible truth is clearly and simply presented in the messages that since 1846 God has been sending His people. These messages are to find their place in hearts, and transformations will take place.” [95]

Wrong Use of the Testimonies

While the larger part of our Seventh-day Adventist church members are found in the last class named, those who are helped by the messages as light comes to them, correcting evils and pointing the way to life, yet there are some who may be found in one of the other classes.

Mrs. E. G. White was fully aware of the situation regarding her and her work, and did her best to make clear what she was appointed by God to do and why. She gave a number of cautions and suggestions to her contemporaries, and indirectly to us, so that we might not make unjustifiable claims for her and her writings, nor an unwise use of her words and her position in relation to God and the Holy Spirit.

The reproduction of some of them here may help us find and maintain a sensible, balanced, middle-of-the-road attitude toward her and her work:

a. Do not use the Testimonies as proof for unbelievers. Testimonies, Volume 1, Pages 119, 120; Volume 5, p. 669. (See Item 10 in Appendix, page 291, for statement from E. G. White.)

- b. Do not use as a test of fellowship. Testimonies, Volume 1, Pages 327-329.
- c. Do not use the visions as a rule to measure all. Testimonies, Volume 1, Pages 382, 383.
- d. Do not use the Testimonies as an iron rule or club. Testimonies, Volume 1, p. 369.
- e. Do not take the extreme meaning of what has been shown in the visions. Testimonies, Volume 1, p. 166.
- f. Do not use the Testimonies to give force to certain subjects to impress upon others. Manuscript 23, 1911.

Each one of us should keep in mind that, first of all, the Spirit of prophecy counsels are messages to us personally. There is a growing tendency on the part of some among us to apply the counsels to someone else and to use certain portions of the E. G. White writings as a sort of club over the heads of others. This is not a right or a proper use of the Testimonies. On the part of some, her words are used to give expression to harsh criticism of one another. All of this brings to mind the following paragraph:

“There are many whose religion consists in criticizing habits of dress and manners. They want to bring every one to their own measure. They desire to lengthen out those who seem too short for their standard, and to cut down others who seem too long. They have lost the love of God out of their hearts; but they think they have a spirit of discernment. They think it is their prerogative to criticize, and pronounce judgment; but they should repent of their error, and turn away from their sins. . . . Let us love one another. Let us have harmony and union throughout our ranks. Let us have our hearts sanctified to God. Let us look upon the light that abides for us in Jesus. Let us remember how forbearing and patient He was with the erring children of men. We should be in a wretched state if the God of heaven were like one of us, and treated us as we are inclined to treat one another.” [96]

Then, again, there are some who isolate a phrase or sentence and place the most extreme interpretation upon it, and then endeavor to persuade or drive everyone else to the same conclusion. Such have usually failed to study the full counsel, placing statement with statement in an endeavor to find the great underlying principles which should guide to right conclusions. A statement from the pen of Ellen White on this point, drawn from her counsel on the question of two meals versus three meals a day, is of great significance:

“It is plain that two meals a day are better than three. I believe and practice this, but I have no ‘Thus said the Lord’ that it is wrong for some to eat the third meal. We are not to be as the Pharisees, bound about by set rules and regulations. God’s word has not specified any set hours when food should be eaten. We are to be careful not to make laws like the laws of the Pharisees, or to teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Let your regulations be so consistent that they will appeal to the reason of those even who have not been educated to see all things clearly.” [97]

It is interesting that when writing on the subject of diet she declared: “I make myself a criterion for no one else. ’ Should we not look at the detailed counsels as but a part of a greater whole, the purpose of which is to guide us into the heavenly Canaan, rather than to select a few pet items and through them endeavor to earn our salvation?”

A Balanced Message in the Writings of Ellen G. White

Seventy years is a long period of service, and twenty-five million words are a lot of words; but over that long span of years and in that maze of instruction set forth in so many words, the remarkable thing is that there are so very, very few apparent discrepancies or mistakes. The human factor was ever present and God took that into account—so must we. Too many of us are prone to pick out a paragraph here or a sentence there, and set out to reform the brethren with but that one side or facet of the issue in question. May we set forth two such items to serve as examples. We draw again from the counsels on diet, for it is in this field that we so often observe tendencies toward extremes.

Caution Concerning Eggs (1870):

“Eggs should not be placed upon your table.” [99]

Without giving heed to the setting of the statement, this sentence may seem all-inclusive. A study of the setting, however, indicates that it is one sentence in a personal testimony addressed to Brother and Sister “E,” and the chapter is entitled “Sensuality in the Young.” Because some were giving the words a general all-inclusive application, Mrs. White sounded balancing counsels.

Balancing Counsel (1905):

“It is true that persons in full flesh and in whom the animal passions are strong need to avoid the use of stimulating foods. Especially in families of children who are given to sensual habits, eggs should not be used. But in the case of persons whose blood-making organs are feeble, especially if other foods to supply the needed elements can not be obtained,—milk and eggs should not be wholly

discarded. Great care should be taken, however, to obtain milk from healthy cows, and eggs from healthy fowls, that are well fed and well cared for.” [100]

Summarizing Statement (1909):

“While warnings have been given regarding the dangers of disease through butter, and the evil of the free use of eggs by small children, yet we should not consider it a violation of principle to use eggs from hens that are well cared for and suitably fed. Eggs contain properties that are remedial agencies in counteracting certain poisons.” [101]

Caution Concerning Dairy Products (1899):

“The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded. Disease is accumulating rapidly. The curse of God is upon the earth.” [102]

“Tell them that the time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men.” [103]

Note that the disease in the animal kingdom is the reason for caution, and that dairy products are not arbitrarily condemned, but rather a caution is sounded concerning the possible contamination of such foods.

Balancing Counsel:

“God has furnished man with abundant means for the gratification of a non perverted appetite. He has spread before him the products of the earth, a bountiful variety of food that is palatable to the taste and nutritious to the system. Of these our benevolent heavenly Father says we may freely eat. Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of all kinds, make, with milk or cream, the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body, and give a power of endurance and a vigor of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet.” [104]

“The time may come when it will not be safe to use milk. But if the cows are healthy and the milk thoroughly cooked, there is no necessity of creating a time of trouble beforehand.” [105]

“As for myself, I have settled the butter question. I do not use it. This question should easily be settled in every place where the purest article cannot be obtained. We have two good milk cows, a jersey and a Holstein. We use cream, and all are satisfied with this.” [106] (Italics supplied.)

Summarizing Statement (1909):

“Food should be prepared in such a way that it will be appetizing as well as nourishing. . . . Vegetables should be made palatable with a little milk or cream, or something equivalent. . . . Some, in abstaining from milk, eggs, and butter, have failed to supply the system with proper nourishment, and as a consequence have become weak and unable to work. Thus health reform is brought into disrepute. . . .” The time will come when we may have to discard some of the articles of diet we now use, such as milk and cream and eggs; but it is not necessary to bring upon ourselves perplexity by premature and extreme restrictions. Wait until the circumstances demand it, and the Lord prepares the way for it.” [107] (Italics supplied.)

“Milk, eggs, and butter should not be classed with flesh meat. In some cases the use of eggs is beneficial. The time has not come to say that the use of milk and eggs should be wholly discarded. There are poor families whose diet consists largely of bread and milk. They have little fruit and cannot afford to purchase the nut foods. In teaching health reform, as in all other gospel work, we are to meet the people where they are. Until we can teach them how to prepare health reform foods that are palatable, nourishing, and yet inexpensive, we are not at liberty to present the most advanced propositions regarding health reform diet.” [108] (Italics supplied.)

The Attitude of the Brethren Toward the Writings of Ellen G. White

One of the finest statements by the early brethren showing their attitude toward the writings of Ellen G. White came from the pen of Uriah Smith in the Review and Herald in 1866.

“Further, their [the Testimonies] fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring, is the opposite of evil. They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud, scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon

every hand. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master. . . . [Continued as Item 11 in the Appendix, page 294.]

“With all this array of good fruit which they are able to present, with all this innocence of any charge of evil that can be brought against them, they everywhere encounter the bitterest opposition. They are the object of the blindest prejudice, the most intense hate, and most malignant bitterness. Worldly people and formal professors of all denominations, join in one general outcry against them of vituperation and abuse. Many will go a long distance out of their way for the purpose of giving them an uncalled-for and malicious thrust. And false-hearted brethren in our own ranks make them the butt of their first attacks, as they launch off into apostasy and rebellion.

“Why is all this? Whence all this war against that of which no evil can be said? From the example of Cain who slew his brother, of the Jews who clamored for the blood of the innocent Savior, of the infidel who storms with passion at the very name of Jesus, and from the principle of the carnal heart which is at enmity with everything that is holy and spiritual, we leave the reader to answer.” [109] (Italics supplied.)

In answer to Uriah Smith’s question I would say that opposition or indifference to the Spirit of prophecy and spiritual gifts in general grows out of:

- (1) A failure to accept one or all of the five great facts of faith on which Christianity is based.
- (2) A failure to read enough of or all of the writings of Ellen G. White to thoroughly understand her over-all and well-balanced instruction on any given topic.
- (3) A failure to understand the proper relation of her writings to the Scriptures, and of the whole Bible to the one and only great fundamental requirement for salvation and an entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
- (4) A failure to grasp the true nature of her writings with respect to inspiration and infallibility.
- (5) A failure to recognize the principle of “time and place” in connection with the counsel she has given.
- (6) A failure to acknowledge that the counsels given in the early days of the message are safe for counsel for these its closing days.
- (7) A failure to recognize that while sufficient evidence is given to convince the honest in heart, the Lord does not propose to remove the opportunity for doubt nor to take away the hooks upon which doubts may be hung. The Lord requires the exercise of faith.
- (8) A failure to recognize that the veracity of the Spirit of prophecy counsels cannot be appraised by the changing dictums of science, nor the prejudiced or molded assertions of historians.
- (9) An unwillingness to make a personal sacrifice of some personally cherished habit, custom, or practice which seems out of harmony with the counsel given in the pattern for Christian living as set forth in the writings of E. G. White. Individual opposition stems from the point where a man’s “darling” taste, fancy, whim, habit, or practice is touched. He gets rid of that particular item by doing away with all.
- (10) Most Seventh-day Adventist opposition would disappear:
 - (a) If our ministers and our laymen would stop using some “Pet -sentences” or paragraphs as a “club” with which to hit somebody else.
 - (b) If each of us would take the counsel to ourselves instead of trying to find someone else to whom to apply it.
 - (c) If all of us Seventh-day Adventists would remember 1 Corinthians 14, which tells us that prophecy and prophesying are primarily for the church members and not for non church people.
 - (d) If each of us would determine not to use or pass on unfounded rumors” or “sayings” without proper reference in book, page, and paragraph.
 - (e) If we would not discuss a topic or question unless and until we have FULLY studied ALL the writings on it. Partial knowledge is more dangerous than no knowledge at all.” I do not know” is an acknowledgment which can be excused, but a half-truth or a lie is not soon forgiven or forgotten.

(f) If we would recognize that one person's failure, or that of many people, to live up to or carry out the counsel given by Ellen G. White has absolutely nothing to do with the authenticity or reliability of the visions of, or the instruction from, Ellen G. White.

Perhaps one more statement from J. N. Andrews, published in the Review and Herald, must suffice. There are many others, but space forbids their inclusion here:

"The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the living work of God in the church. They enable the Spirit of God to speak in the correction of wrongs, and in the exposure of iniquity. They are the means whereby God teaches His people when they are in danger of taking wrong steps. They are the means by which the Spirit of God sheds light upon church difficulties, when otherwise their adjustment would be impossible. They also constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correcting false interpretations of the Scriptures, and causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood, and therefore of being the cause of evil and division to the people of God. In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures. . . .

"Finally, in the reception of members into our churches, we desire on this subject to know two things: 1. That they believe the Bible doctrine of Spiritual gifts. 2. That they will candidly acquaint themselves with the visions of Sister White which have ever held so prominent place in this work. We believe that every person standing thus and carrying out this purpose will be guided in the way of truth and righteousness. And those who occupy this ground, are never denied all the time they desire to decide in this matter." [110]

My Attitude Toward the Life and Work of Ellen G. White

This brings us to the heart of this entire study. That which we have presented thus far is but a background for the all-important question, "What Is My Own Personal Attitude Toward the Life and Work of Ellen G. White?" "What Is Yours to Be Today and for All Time to Come?"

Personally, many years ago I settled my attitude toward the five great facts of faith on which Christianity is built. Therefore, there is no need of proofs and evidences to convince me of the "gift of prophecy" manifested through men and women chosen and called by God; there is no need for any further evidence to convince me that Ellen G. White was the one chosen by God as His "messenger" to the remnant church. Furthermore, I believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church, and that God's requirements for my salvation from this sinful world and for my entrance into His everlasting kingdom are still, as they always have been, "perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness," neither of which have I in and of myself; but that both of these are made available to me through my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. [111]

I believe that the Bible is given to me to show me how God thinks, how God works, what God wants me to become as a candidate for citizenship in His kingdom. And that the prophecies in the Bible have made plain to me where we stand today in relationship to the grand consummation of all God's plans. To me the Christian's business is not so much how to get into heaven by and by, as it is how to get heaven into me here and now. (See Item 12, Appendix, page 295)

I believe that the writings of Ellen G. White describe what God wants of me and what God will do for me through His Son Jesus Christ. They are words of beauty and of power. They present before me the pattern for the Christian life. I accept her words as she has declared them to be, words of "reproof for the erring," words "of encouragement to the meek and lowly," words of "counsel," "instruction," "correction." They are not the "commandments of the Ten Commandments," but the wise counsel and earnest entreaties of a kind heavenly Father through His chosen "messenger."

I find myself in perfect agreement with the great mass of counsel given, but like so many others I am tempted to despise and reject ONLY the testimonies which reprove my darling sins, conflict with my own preconceived ideas of theology, and disturb my self-complacency. In these few, very few items I am daily praying that God will help me to conform completely and perfectly to His will and standard.

I believe that I am voicing the opinion and describing the experience of Seventh-day Adventists generally in all parts of the world. Such opposition and indifference as is seen here and there is not directed against such books as the Conflict Series, Steps to Christ, Christ's Object Lessons, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, and a score of other such books, but rather to a very few paragraphs, a small percentage indeed, of the total messages given by Ellen G. White. Each one of us would do well to set down on paper a list of the things which cause us concern or which we may be inclined to ignore, and then give careful and prayerful study to each item.

It may be that your experience and mine are described in the words of these paragraphs from the Testimonies:

"As the word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, [by E. G. White], so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragement. Here you are crying before God, in the anguish of your souls, for more light. I am authorized from God to tell you that not another ray of light through the Testimonies will shine upon your pathway until you make a practical use of the

light already given. The Lord has walled you about with light; but you have not appreciated the light; you have trampled upon it. While some have despised the light, others have neglected it or followed it but indifferently. A few have set their hearts to obey the light which God has been pleased to give them.” [112]

“Let ministers and people remember that gospel truth hardens when it does not save. The rejection of light leaves men captives, bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief. The more self is exalted, the more will faith in the Testimonies of the Spirit of God be lessened. . . . Those who trust wholly in themselves will see less and less of God in the Testimonies of His Spirit.” [113]

Such paragraphs will cause any man down deep in his heart to desire to live a better life, to be a better man. But we must ever remember that the power to inspire is not wrapped up in the words themselves, but in the God who inspired the messenger with His thoughts and then left the human agent to find the human words to give expression to those inspired thoughts.

In a letter penned by Ellen G. White back in 1890 she wrote concerning the last work of Satan:

“Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious-to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish.’ [Proverbs 29:18.] Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.” [114]

Appeal

Brethren and sisters of the Advent family, let us give most careful, thoughtful, and prayerful consideration to the topic of this study, and take our stand with the remnant church for the message given to us as a people, and for the messenger whom God chose to accomplish His will and purpose in and for us as time comes to an end, as history comes to its last chapter, as Christ finishes His work for the salvation of men, and as the closing events in the great controversy bring us ever nearer to the grand consummation of all things earthly.

We have every reason to rejoice as Seventh-day Adventists in the abundant provision made by God Himself for our salvation. He loves us with a tender love. He is so kind and good and gentle. He has anticipated our every need, and has given us the help we must have at every turn in life’s way. He is ready to fit us for His kingdom. May each and every one of us be molded and fashioned according to His own divine pattern. He wants you and me in His presence throughout eternity.” Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets.” Hosea 6:5.

Appendix

ITEM 1.

The story of the vision concerning Robbins and Sargent in Randolph, Massachusetts. Referred to on page 210.

“In the afternoon the blessing of the Lord rested upon me, and I was taken off in vision. I was again shown the errors of R. and S., and others united with them. I saw that they could not prosper; that truth would triumph in the end, and error be brought down. I was shown that they were not honest, and then I was carried into the future and shown some thing of the course they would pursue, that they would continue to despise the teachings of the Lord, despise reproof, and that they would be left in total darkness, to resist God’s Spirit until their folly should be made manifest to all. A chain of truth was presented to me from the scriptures, in contrast with their errors. When I came out of vision, candles were burning. I had been in vision nearly four hours.

“As I was unconscious to all that transpired around me while in vision, I will copy from Brother Nichols’ description of that meeting.

“Sister Ellen was taken off in vision with extraordinary manifestations, and continued talking in vision with a clear voice, which could be distinctly understood by all present, until about sundown. S., R. and F. were much exasperated, as well as excited, to hear sister E. talk in vision, which they declared was of the Devil; they exhausted all their influence, and bodily strength, to destroy the effect of the vision. They would unite in singing very loud, and then alternately would talk and read from the Bible in a loud voice, in order that E. might not be heard, until their strength was exhausted, and their hands would shake so they could not read from the Bible. But amidst all this confusion and noise, E. ’s clear and shrill voice, as she talked in vision, was distinctly heard by all present. The opposition of these men continued as long as they could talk and sing, notwithstanding some of their own friends rebuked them, and requested them to stop. But says R., “You are bowed to an idol; you are worshiping a golden calf.”

“Mr. Thayer, the owner of the house, was not fully satisfied that her vision was of the Devil, as R. declared it to be. He wanted it tested in some way. He had heard that visions of satanic power were arrested by opening the Bible and laying it on the person in vision, and asked S. if he would test it in this way, which he declined to do. Then Thayer took a heavy, large quarto family Bible which was laying on the table, and seldom used, opened it, and laid it open upon the breast of E. while in vision, as she was then

inclined backward against the wall in the corner of the room. Immediately after the Bible was laid upon her, she arose upon her feet, and walked into the middle of the room, with the Bible open in one hand, and lifted up as high as she could reach, and with her eyes steadily looking upward, declared in a solemn manner, "The inspired testimony from God," or words of the same import. And then she continued for a long time, while the Bible was extended in one hand, and her eyes looking upwards, and not on the Bible, to turn over the leaves with her other hand, and place her finger upon certain passages, and correctly utter their words with a solemn voice. Many present looked at the passages where her finger was pointed, to see if she spoke them correctly, for her eyes at the same time were looking upwards. Some of the passages referred to were judgments against the wicked and blasphemers; and others were admonitions and instructions relative to our present condition.

"In this state she continued all the afternoon until near sunset, when she came out of vision. When E. arose in vision upon her feet, with the heavy open Bible in her hand, and walked the room, uttering the passages of scripture, S., R. and F. were silenced. For the remainder of the time they were troubled, with many others; but they shut their eyes and braved it out without making any acknowledgement of their feelings." [1]

ITEM. 2

Uriah Smith's statement from the Review and Herald, January 13, 1863. Referred to on page 237.

"The Bible, and the Bible alone,' 'The Bible in its purity,' 'The Bible a sufficient and only reliable rule of life,' etc., etc., is now the great cry of those who are giving vent to their opposition to the visions, and are working with their might to prejudice others against them. This course reminds us of the low tricks and maneuvers resorted to by political demagogues to gain their nefarious ends. It is similar to the game played by the democratic party in the last election, which led to results in many States so disastrous to the Republicans, and to the country. Their cry was, 'Our country before party;' and thus under the garb of supreme devotion to the country, to the exclusion of all other considerations, many honest-hearted ones were deceived into co-operation with them, and they were enabled to place in positions of trust and power, men full of depravity and corruption. Such are unworthy weapons in the hands of Christians; yet some, we are sorry to say, who profess that name, do not hesitate to use them.

"The Protestant principle, of 'The Bible and the Bible alone,' is of itself good and true; and we stand upon it as firmly as any one can; but when re-iterated in connection with outspoken denunciations of the visions, it has a specious appearance for evil. So used it contains a covert insinuation, most effectively calculated to warp the judgment of the unguarded, that to believe the visions is to leave the Bible, and to cling to the Bible, is to discard the visions. . . .

"1. When we claim to stand on the Bible and the Bible alone, we bind ourselves to receive, unequivocally and fully, all that the Bible teaches. This being a self-evident proposition, we pass on to inquire what the Bible teaches concerning the outpouring of the Spirit, its operations, the gift of prophecy, visions, etc. . . .

"In view of all these considerations, what shall we conclude? Those who reject these manifestations, do so not only without evidence, but against all evidence. Those who profess to stand on the Bible and the Bible alone are bound to receive what the Bible tells them will exist, and commands them to respect.

"One illustration may help to set this matter in a still clearer light. Suppose we are about to start upon a voyage. The owner of the vessel gives us a book of directions, telling us that it contains instructions sufficient for our whole journey, and that if we will heed them, we shall reach in safety our port of destination. Setting sail we open our book to learn its contents. We find that its author lays down general principles to govern us in our voyage, and instructs us as far as practicable, touching the various contingencies that may arise, till the end. But he also tells us that the latter part of our journey will be especially perilous; that the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quick sands and tempests. 'But for this part of the journey,' says he, 'I have provided you a pilot, who will meet you, and give you such directions as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require; and to him you must give heed.' With these directions we reach the perilous time specified, and the pilot, according to promise, appears. But some of the crew, as he offers his services, rise up against him. 'We have the original book of directions,' say they, 'and that is enough for us. We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you.' Who now heed that original book of directions? Those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them? Judge you.

"But some, through lack of perception, or lack of principle, or the ebullitions of an unconquerable prejudice, one, or all combined, may meet us at this point like this: 'Then you would have us take sister White as our pilot, would you?' It is to forestall any efforts in this direction, that this sentence is penned. We say no such thing. What we do say is distinctly this: that the gifts of the Spirit are given for our pilot through these perilous times, and wherever and in whomsoever we find genuine manifestations of these, we are bound to respect them, nor can we do otherwise without in so far rejecting the word of God, which directs us to receive them. Who now stand upon the Bible, and the Bible alone?" [2]

ITEM 3.

E. G. White statements in which she exalts the Scriptures. Referred to on page 244.

“I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. Men arise who think they find something to criticize in God’s word. They lay it bare before others as evidence of superior wisdom. . . .

“Brethren, let not a mind or hand be engaged in criticizing the Bible. . . . Men should let God take care of His own Book, His Living Oracles, as He has done for ages. . . . Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity, and obey the word, and not one of you will be lost. . . .

“Wen of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the Living Oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam. No one need be lost for want of knowledge, unless he is willfully blind.

“We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes.” [3]

“God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired word to finite man. This word arranged into books, the Old and New Testaments, is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world; bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way to heaven.” [4]

“The truth of God is found in His word. Those who feel that they must seek elsewhere for present truth need to be converted anew. They have wrong habits to mend, evil ways to be abandoned. They need to seek anew the truth as it is in Jesus, that their character building may be in harmony with the lessons of Christ. As they abandon their human ideas and take up their God-given duties, beholding Christ and becoming conformed to His likeness, they say: ‘Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee.’” [5]

“Brother J 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. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His word, to give them a clearer understanding of it.” [6]

“The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.” [7]

For further study on this phase of the topic, kindly read the following references: Fundamentals of Christian Education, Page 384; Gospel Workers, Page 249. The Desire of Ages, Page 329; Mount of Blessing, Page 77; Testimonies, Volume 2, Pages 454, 455, 605-607. Volume 5, Pages 665-667, 674; Volume 6, pp. 402, 403; Introduction to The Great Controversy. The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, Page 45.

ITEM 4.

Paragraphs from Mrs. S. M. I. Henry’s letter stating the relation she saw between the Bible and the Testimonies.

Referred to on page 251.

“I supposed these Testimonies were considered as an appendix to the Bible, and of equal authority with it, that there were those among our people who even judged the Bible by these writings. When I came into the church, I stated to the brethren with whom I conversed that I knew nothing at all about this matter but that I was confident that God was leading me hither, and that he would not lead me into any organization where I would find an insuperable barrier to faith, and that if they were willing to accept me upon this condition, I was glad to come in. . . .

“I had so much confidence in the intelligent understanding of my brethren who fully accepted the Testimonies, that I could not repudiate the claim that this is God’s way of teaching his people in these days. I had read a few paragraphs only from these writings, but to everything which I had read or heard I had found a chord in my heart ready to respond; nothing seemed strange or new. It was always like a stave or bar from some old song; a repetition or resetting of some truth which I had known and loved long before; hence I had found nothing which could lead to any controversy. But one question troubled me. Suppose I should find some point in these writings with which I could not agree, which would be of vital significance if it were competent to become the end of controversy, what would I do with it? I knew that so far as any light which I now had would serve me, it would be impossible to surrender my own judgment to this authority. The Bible had my unquestioning obedience; but while the Testimonies might be good, sound, helpful, they were not, I had been compelled to notice, of sufficient authority to command obedience and silence controversy in those who had professed to have been always led by them.

“This fact caused a heavy and sad burden in my soul. I had supposed because of the solemnity of the truth as we believe it and the times in which we live, that the people who are known as Seventh-day Adventists must of necessity most earnestly believe and endeavor to practice all that they did accept as truth. But as I went out from the quiet seclusion of the Sanitarium, and mingled more with people abroad, I found this practical disbelief in the authority of the Testimonies among our own people, especially in the matter of health principles. It was natural that I should take especial note of this, because I had as a W. C. T. U. woman adopted and followed all the health principles which we had discovered; and as new light had come I promptly walked in it. But now I found in some Adventist homes a total disregard of these principles; and learned that there was controversy even among the brethren who were quoting and teaching from these writings.

“In letters and conversation I was assured that these writings were no longer considered of authority by the church; that they were accepted theoretically, but only as obsolete doctrines were by other denominations; for instance, that they stood on the same relative footing with the teaching of eternal torment in other churches, acknowledged at best with a very pronounced mental reservation even by those who preach it. And so at last I came to even question the necessity of considering this matter any further for myself. I reasoned that I was in all essentials a Seventh-day Adventist. I did not like to seem to be standing for something which I did not believe, but, at present, saw no help for it. I realized the importance of care in anything which I should write or say to others, and was careful, for I could not but see how helpful, inspiring, and full of truth these writings are even if they should carry no special weight over and above those of any good man or woman who had light and experience in Christian doctrine. . . .

“From my standpoint to see anything in the Bible was to believe it, to receive it, it was the end of all controversy; and if Adventists believed the Testimonies to be invested with authority from the Spirit of God, how could there be all this controversy upon points concerning which they had so clearly spoken?

“My attitude I see now must have been like that of an unbeliever in the Bible before a congregation of Christians, if he should see the same inconsistencies and declare it as he might have done in the same words; and the effect upon my brethren must have been to arouse them to the same earnest self-examination and consecration which any honest Christian would have made in such a crisis. I knew at once that the sympathies of my brethren were aroused for me, but felt that I was beyond any human help. If the Testimonies were the word of God for this time in which we live, if this was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, I wanted to know it, but only God could make me know it. The brethren did their best to help me, but all that was said seemed to only add to my perplexity, until at last, feeling that I could go no further in any direction until this question was disposed of, I determined to give myself to it at the sacrifice of any and all things. Brother Ballenger was arising again to give me something further in the hope that it might be light to me, but I asked him to wait while they should join with me in prayer that the Spirit of the Lord might come to my relief.

“Accordingly, we all bowed in prayer, and I stated the case to God, with as deep a sense of need as I had ever known in my life. All the great and marvelous blessings of my life were for the time forgotten in this present need, and as must always be true, I was heard. The manifestation of the power of the Spirit of God was as clear as sunlight; and in that light I saw the Testimony as simply a lens through which to look at the Truth. It at once grew from a lens to a telescope, a perfect, beautiful telescope, directed toward the field of the heavens:-(that field the Bible); subject to all telescopic conditions and limitations.

“Clouds may intervene between it and a heaven full of stars, clouds of unbelief, of contention; Satan may blow tempests all about it; it may be blurred by the breath of our own selfishness; the dust of superstition may gather upon it; we may meddle with, and turn it aside from the field; it may be pointed away toward empty space; it may be turned end for end, so that everything is so diminished that we can recognize nothing. We may change the focus so that everything is distorted out of all harmonious proportions, and made hideous. It may be so shortened that nothing but a great piece of opaque glass shall appear to our gaze. If the lens is mistaken for the field we can receive but a very narrow conception of the most magnificent spectacle with which the heavens ever invited our gaze, but in its proper office as a medium of enlarged and clearer vision, as a telescope, the Testimony has a wonderfully beautiful and holy office.

“Everything depends upon our relation to it and the use which we make of it. In itself it is only a glass through which to look, but in the hand of the Divine Director, properly mounted, set at the right angle and adjusted to the eye of the observer, with a field, clear of clouds, it will reveal truth such as will quicken the blood, gladden the heart, and open a wide door of expectation. It will reduce nebulae to constellations; faraway points of light to planets of the first magnitude; and to suns burning with glory.

“The failure has been in understanding what the Testimonies are and how to use them. They are not the heavens, palpitating with countless orbs of truth, but they do lead the eye and give it power to penetrate into the glories of the mysterious living word of God.

“This has been the most beautiful experience which has ever been granted me; it grows on me from day to day. I think I feel very much as Galileo must have felt when with his first telescope before him, he was bringing himself into position to look. Just to look, at last, beyond the stars which he had seen, into the vast, unexplored field where worlds on worlds were keeping rhythmic step to the throbbing heart of the Infinite One whose steady strokes of power set the pace for every moving thing. The simple possession of it must have given a sense of might, even before one glimpse had been taken through it. He knew that revelations such as eye had never seen nor ear heard were waiting him as soon as he should humble himself to the instrument, acknowledge its right to control his

vision, and fix his eye upon the point of observation. I have often tried to imagine how Galileo's heart must have throbbed and his whole soul been filled, even before he obtained one glimpse: And now I think I know." [8]

ITEM 5.

E. G. White's statements on "What Does the Lord Require?" Referred to on page 253.

"Who are the subjects of the kingdom of God? All those who do His will. They have righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The members of Christ's kingdom are the sons of God, partners in His great firm. The elect of God are a chosen generation, a peculiar people, a holy nation, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. They are the salt of the earth, the light of the world. They are living stones, a royal priesthood. They are in co partnership with Jesus Christ. These are they that follow the Lamb whither so ever He goes." [9]

"The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been, just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents, perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. . . . We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us." [10]

"The law requires righteousness, a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can 'be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.'" Romans 3:26. [11]

"This robe [of Christ's righteousness] woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. . . . When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. . . .

"Righteousness is right-doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine." [12]

"The Lord's philosophy is the rule of the Christian's life. The entire being should be imbued with the life-giving principles of heaven. The busy nothings which consume the time of so many shrink into their proper position before a healthy, sanctifying, Bible piety.

"The Bible, and the Bible alone, can produce this good result. . . . The whole Bible is a revelation of the glory of God in Christ. Received, believed, obeyed, it is the great instrumentality in the transformation of character. And it is the only sure means of intellectual culture. . . .

"The Scriptures are the great agency in the transformation of character. . . . If studied and obeyed, the Word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. . . . The truths of the word of God meet man's great practical necessity-the conversion of the soul through faith." [13]

ITEM 6.

More complete statements of Ellen G. White on "Accountability for Light Received." Referred to on page 258.

"None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain. But many refuse to obey the truth that is presented to them by Christ's ambassadors, because they wish to conform to the world's standard; and the truth that has reached their understanding, the light that has shone in the soul, will condemn them in the judgment. In these last days we have the accumulated light that has been shining through all the ages, and we shall be held correspondingly responsible. The path of holiness is not on a level with the world; it is a way cast up. If we walk in this way, if we run in the way of the Lord's commandments, we shall find that the 'path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.'" [14]

"Every soul to whom the Lord has granted light will be accountable for the light, and will be expected to walk in the light according to the degree of grace and truth given him.

"But those who have not had the light which is now shining upon the people of God concerning the Sabbath question, will not be accountable for the light; for it has never been brought before them, and they have died without condemnation. . . .

“We shall not be held accountable for the light that has not reached our perception, but for that which we have resisted and refused.” [15]

“Our fathers are not accountable for the light they never received, or for the messages of warning they never heard.

“Special truths have been adapted to the conditions of the nations as they have existed. The present truth, which is a test to the people of this generation, was not a test to the people of generations far back. If the light which now shines upon us in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, had been given to the generations of the past, God would have held them accountable for that light. We are accountable only for the light that shines upon us.” [16]

“Men will not be judged for light they have never had. But those who have kept Sunday, whose attention has been called to this error, but who would not open their eyes to behold wondrous things out of the law, will be judged according to the light that has come to them. . . .

“It is not a lack of knowledge of spiritual light and understanding that will separate any soul from the presence of God. These are not the things that will decide his destiny. It is the truth, brought home to the understanding, but rejected because of the cross it involves, that will condemn the sinner in that day of final judgment.” [17]

“Those who have been favored with great light and many opportunities, but who have not accepted the light nor improved the opportunities. . . . will receive punishment in accordance with their sin.” [18]

“Those who cling to old customs and hoary errors have lost sight of the fact that light is ever increasing upon the path of all who follow Christ; truth is constantly unfolding to the people of God. We must be continually advancing if we are following our Leader. It is when we walk in the light that shines upon us, obeying the truth that is open to our understanding, that we receive greater light. We cannot be excusable in accepting only the light which our fathers had one hundred years ago. If our God-fearing fathers had seen what we see, and heard what we hear, they would have accepted the light, and walked in it. If we desire to imitate their faithfulness, we must receive the truths open to us, as they received those presented to them; we must do as they would have done, had they lived in our day.” [19]

ITEM 7.

E. G. White statements on “How the Writings Came to Be. Referred to on page 261.

“Since the warning and instruction given in testimony for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been specially pointed out in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church.” [20]

“Through His Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the spirit of prophecy. . . . Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days.” [21]

“Yet now when I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God. You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy. Past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above or from beneath? . . .

“Weak and trembling, I arose at three o’clock in the morning to write to you. God was speaking through clay. You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.” [22]

“It is true concerning the articles in our papers and in the many volumes of my books. I have been instructed in accordance with the Word in the precepts of the law of God. I have been instructed in selecting from the lessons of Christ. Are not the positions taken in my writings in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ.” [23]

“The word of the Lord comes to us all who have not resisted His Spirit by determining not to hear and obey. This voice is heard in warnings, in counsels, in reproof. It is the Lord’s message of light to His people.” [24]

“I wish all to understand that my confidence in the light that God has given stands firm, because I know that the Holy Spirit’s power magnified the truth and made it honorable, saying, ‘This is the way; walk you in it.’ In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a ‘Thus said the Lord.’ The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, which are now in the ark, to be brought forth in that great day when sentence will be pronounced against every evil, seducing science produced by the father of lies.

“Ministers and doctors may depart from the faith, as the Word declares they will, and as the messages that God has given his servant declare they will. Thus believers will be given evidence that the Word of God, the warnings He has given, are being fulfilled right among us. Some may make light of these messages, misinterpret them, and say untruthful things, which lead other minds astray. Our only hope is in the God of truth.” [25]

“I commit my ways to the Lord; for I am wholly dependent upon His mercy and grace to aid me in glorifying His name with pen and voice.” [26]

“I am deeply concerned in regard to the disregard of warnings and appeals that have been made by the Spirit of God through the humble instrument.” [27]

“What you have done is not against me, but against my Savior, who has given me my work to do.” [28]

“I see that you regard my work and my mission as on a level with your own work. . . . When I stand before the people I do not stand in my own spirit. My words are not mine, but His who sent me, and has given me a message to bear. . . .

“I have no explanation to make, no apologies to make. I have spoken to you the words of the Lord; I stand before the people bearing a testimony which is not premeditated, and which I do not manufacture. . . .

“If God strengthens me as He did on the last Sabbath and every day since then, I shall feel myself strengthened with a courageous and joyful spirit; for I experience within me a divine power by which and through which I can accomplish the work He has given me to do.” [29]

“The work that the Lord desires me and my workers to do is outlined before me. This work does not consist alone in attending camp meetings and special council-meetings, but in getting together as fast as possible the light given me by the Lord, that it may be given to the people.” [30]

“Jesus Christ is the world’s greatest Teacher. . . . He has made me His messenger, to communicate great spiritual truths to many thousands. With pen and voice I have been doing this for the past half century. How greatly I desire so to present His instruction that many will be led to Him. I never question His leading, and I know that I am sustained by the One who bade His disciples go forth and proclaim the gospel message, ‘Teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you. . . .

“Since 1844 I have been engaged in public labor. I am always strengthened by the Lord. I realize that a power from above is imparted to me, giving me physical, mental, and spiritual efficiency. I have the full assurance that Christ gives me His sustaining grace and the evidence that He is the light of the world.” [31]

“For half a century I have been the Lord’s messenger, and as long as my life shall last I shall continue to bear the messages that God gives me for His people. I take no glory to myself; in my youth the Lord made me His messenger, to communicate to His people testimonies of encouragement, warning, and reproof. For sixty years I have been in communication with heavenly messengers, and I have been constantly learning in reference to divine things, and in reference to the way in which God is constantly working to bring souls from the error of their ways to the light in God’s light. . . .

“I know that the Lord has given me this work, and I have no excuse to make for what I have done. In my experience I am constantly receiving evidence of the sustaining miracle-working power of God upon my body and my soul, which I have dedicated to the Lord. I am not my own; I have been bought with a price. And I have such assurance of the Lord’s working in my behalf that I must acknowledge His abundant grace. . . . As long as He sustains me, I shall bear a decided testimony.

“Why should I complain? So many times has the Lord raised me up from sickness, so wonderfully has He sustained me, that I can never doubt. . . . He gives me freedom to speak His truth before large numbers of people. Not only when I am standing before large congregations is special help bestowed upon me; but when I am using my pen, wonderful representations are given me of past, present, and future.” [32]

“Of mine own self I can do nothing. I feel that all credit must be given to a higher Power whose will and word I am to carry out, in order that, united with heavenly intelligence, I may have a clear perception of spiritual and eternal things.” [33]

“Sabbath night, a week ago, after I had been prayerfully studying over these things, I had a vision, in which I was speaking before a large company, where many questions were asked concerning my work and writings.

“I was directed by a messenger from heaven not to take the burden of picking up and answering all the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds. ‘Stand as the messenger of God anywhere, in any place,’ I was bidden, ‘and bear the testimony I shall give you. Be free. Bear the testimonies that the Lord has for you to bear in reproof, in rebuke, in the work of encouraging and lifting up the soul; ‘teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’ [34]

“O I need the closest connection with my brethren, but I cannot always follow their way. I pray the Lord that He will give me faith and clear eyesight to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. My life has been spared by the mercy of God, to do a certain work: I have pledged that life to Him, but the work is not always easy to perform. I have to take positions not in harmony with men whom I believe to be God’s workmen, and I see that I must do this in the future as in the past. It hurts me more than I can tell.” [35]

“The greatest tirade may be made against me, but it will not change in the least my mission or my work. We have had this to meet again and again. The Lord gave me the message when I was only sixteen years old, and I have been engaged in public labor ever since. Next November I shall be seventy years old. The message the Lord has given me to bear has been in a straight line from light to light, upward and onward from truth to advanced truth.

“As for the claims that these brethren make, that their conscience and the Holy Ghost has led them to take the position they have against me and the truth, the Lord has given them no such commission. They cannot do anything against the truth, but for the truth.” [36]

“I am again and again reminded that I am not to try to clear away the confusion and contradiction of faith and feeling and unbelief that is expressed. I am not to be depressed, but am to speak the words of the Lord with authority, and then leave with Him all the consequences. I am instructed by the Great Physician to speak the word that the Lord gives me, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. I am told that I have nothing to do with the consequences, that God, even the Lord Jehovah, will keep me in perfect peace if I will rest in His love and do the work He has given me.” [37]

“I shall try to arouse their slumbering senses by writing, but not by speaking. The awful sense of my responsibility takes possession of me. I do not desire to feel less keenly my obligation to the higher Power. That Presence is ever with me, asserting supreme authority and taking account of the service that I render or withhold.” [38]

“I cannot, at my own impulse, take up a work and launch out into it. I have to be impressed by the Spirit of God. I cannot write unless the Holy Spirit helps me. Sometimes I cannot write at all. Then again I am aroused at eleven, twelve, and one o’clock; and I can write as fast as my hand can move over the paper.” [39]

ITEM 8.

Quotations on “The Purpose of the Testimonies.” Referred to on page 261.

“The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.” [40]

“The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow.” [41]

“The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.” [42]

“As the end draws near and the work of giving the last warning to the world extends, it becomes more important for those who accept present truth to have a clear understanding of the nature and influence of the Testimonies, which God in His providence has linked with the work of the third angel’s message from its very rise.” [43]

“They [repentant sinners] have only to follow His counsel and do His will, to inherit eternal life.” [44]

“The Lord reprove and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear. . . . God rebukes, reprove, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to His own throne.” [45]

“I have been looking over the Testimonies given for Sabbath keepers and I am astonished at the mercy of God and His care for His people in giving them so many warnings, pointing out their dangers, and presenting before them the exalted position which He would have them occupy. . . .

“I have waited anxiously, hoping that God would put His Spirit upon some and use them as instruments of righteousness to awaken and set in order His church. . . . I ask: Wherein have those who profess confidence in the Testimonies sought to live according to the light given in them? Wherein have they regarded the warnings given? Wherein have they heeded the instructions they have received?” [46]

“Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people. . . .

“Are they [our people] heeding the messages of warning given them? Is it our greatest concern to-day that our lives shall be refined and purified, and that we shall reflect the similitude of the divine? This must be the experience of all who join that company who are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. They must be arrayed in the righteousness of Christ. . . .

“Never have testimonies been more clearly brought before the people than those that have recently been traced by my pen. God bids me urge upon the attention of our people the importance of their study. Let this work begin now. Then, whether I am permitted to labor or am laid away to rest until Jesus comes, these messages are immortalized.” [47]

ITEM 9.

E. G. White statements on-How to Read and Understand the Testimonies.” Referred to on page 261.

“Those who are indifferent to this light and instruction must not expect to escape the snares which we have been plainly told will cause the rejecters of light to stumble, and fall, and be snared, and taken.” [48]

“Perilous times are before us. Everyone who has a knowledge of the truth should awake and place himself, body, soul, and spirit, under the discipline of God. The enemy is on our track. . . . We must follow the directions given through the spirit of prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His word. He has spoken to us through the testimonies to the church and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given, line upon line, precept upon precept, should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?” [49]

“These words were spoken to me: ‘Your work is appointed you of God. Many will not hear you, for they refuse to hear the Great Teacher; many will not be corrected, for their ways are right in their own eyes. Yet bear to them the reproofs and warnings I shall give you, whether they will hear or forbear.’”

“I bear you the testimony of the Lord. All will hear His voice who are willing to be corrected; but those who have been deceived by the enemy are not willing now to come to the light, lest their deeds shall be reprove. Many of you cannot discern the work and presence of God. You know not that it is He. The Lord is still gracious, willing to pardon all who turn to Him with penitence and faith.

“I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies has been steadily increasing as the people backslide from God. It is all through our ranks, all over the field. . . .

“Neither the word of God nor the testimonies of His Spirit make any lasting impression upon them. Just according to the light, the privileges, and opportunities which they have slighted will be their condemnation.” [50]

“So it is with many among our people who have drifted away from the old landmarks and who have followed their own understanding. What a great relief it would be to such could they quiet their conscience with the belief that my work is not of God. But your unbelief will not change the facts in the case.

“If you seek to turn aside the counsel of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God’s people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.” [51]

“Let none entertain the thought that I regret or take back any plain testimony I have borne to individuals or to the people. If I have erred anywhere, it is in not rebuking sin more decidedly and firmly. . . . I do not expect that all will accept the reproof and reform their lives, but I must discharge my duty all the same. I will walk in humility before God, doing my work for time and for eternity.” [52]

“Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin.” [53]

ITEM 10.

Quotations to accompany statements on “The Wrong Use of the Testimonies.” Referred to on page 263.

(1)1855.” Some have taken an injudicious course; when they have talked their faith to unbelievers, and the proof has been asked for, they have read a vision, instead of going to the Bible for proof. I saw that this course was inconsistent, and prejudiced unbelievers against the truth. The visions can have no weight with those who have never seen them and know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases.” [54]

“You who have been educating yourselves and others in a spirit of criticism and accusing, remember that you are imitating the example of Satan. When it suits your purpose, you treat the Testimonies as if you believed them, quoting from them to strengthen any statement you wish to have prevail. But how is it when light is given to correct your errors? Do you then accept the light? When the Testimonies speak contrary to your ideas, you treat them very lightly.

“It does not become any one to drop a word of doubt here and there that shall work like poison in other minds, shaking their confidence in the messages which God has given, which have aided in laying the foundation of this work, and have attended it to the present day, in reproofs, warnings, corrections, and encouragement. To all who have stood in the way of the Testimonies, I would say, God has given a message to his people, and his voice will be heard, whether you hear or forbear. Your opposition has not injured me; but you must give an account to the God of heaven, who has sent these warnings and instructions to keep his people in the right way. You will have to answer to him for your blindness, for being a stumbling-block in the way of sinners.

“To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. ’ Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures.” [55]

“The Testimonies can have no weight with those who know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases.” [56]

(2) 1862.” In the last vision given at Battle Creek I was shown that an unwise course was taken at - in regard to the visions at the time of the organization of the church there. There were some in who were God’s children, and yet doubted the visions. Others had no opposition, yet dared not take a decided stand in regard to them. Some were skeptical, and they had sufficient cause to make them so. The false visions and fanatical exercises, and the wretched fruits following, had an influence upon the cause in Wisconsin to make minds jealous of everything bearing the name of visions. All these things should have been taken into consideration, and wisdom exercised. There should be no trial or labor with those who have never seen the individual having visions, and who have had no personal knowledge of the influence of the visions. Such should not be deprived of the benefits and privileges of the church, if their Christian course is otherwise correct, and they have formed a good Christian character.

“Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions, judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published Testimonies, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others; but must see and have the evidence for themselves. Such must not be set aside, but long patience and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, of which they have no knowledge; if they carry their opposition so far as to oppose that in which they have had no experience, and feel annoyed when those who believe that the visions are of God speak of them in meeting, and comfort themselves with the instruction given through vision, the church may know that they are not right. God’s people should not cringe and yield, and give up their liberty to such disaffected ones. God has placed the gifts in the church that the church may be benefited by them; and when professed believers in the truth oppose these gifts, and fight against the visions, souls are in danger through their influence, and it is time then to labor with them, that the weak may not be led astray by their influence.” [57]

(3)1863.” I have been shown that some, especially in Iowa, make the visions a rule by which to measure all, and have taken a course which my husband and myself have never pursued. Some are unacquainted with me and my labors, and they are very skeptical of anything bearing the name of visions. This is all natural, and can be overcome only by experience. If persons are not settled in regard

to the visions, they should not be crowded off. The course to pursue with such may be found in Testimony Number 8 [Volume 1], Pages 328, 329, which I hope will be read by all. Ministers should have compassion of some, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. God's ministers should have wisdom to give to everyone his portion of meat and to make that difference with different persons which their cases require. The course pursued with some in Iowa who are unacquainted with me has not been careful and consistent. Those who were, comparatively, strangers to the visions have been dealt with in the same manner as those who have had much light and experience in the visions. Some have been required to endorse the visions when they could not conscientiously do so, and in this way some honest souls have been driven to take positions against the visions and against the body which they never would have taken had their cases been managed with discretion and mercy.

"Some of our brethren have had long experience in the truth and have for years been acquainted with me and with the influence of the visions. They have tested the truthfulness of these testimonies and asserted their belief in them. They have felt the powerful influence of the Spirit of God resting upon them to witness to the truthfulness of the visions. If such, when reprov'd through vision, rise up against them, and work secretly to injure our influence, they should be faithfully dealt with, for their influence is endangering those who lack experience." [58]

(4) 1863." Some of our ministers feel but little disposition to take upon them the burden of the work of God and labor with that disinterested benevolence which characterized the life of our divine Lord. The churches, as a general rule, are farther advanced than some of the ministers. They have had faith in the testimonies which God has been pleased to give, and have acted upon them, while some of the preachers are far behind. They profess to believe the testimony borne, and some do harm by making them an iron rule for those who have had no experience in reference to them, but they fail to carry them out themselves. They have had repeated testimonies which they have utterly disregarded. The course of such is not consistent." [59]

(5) 1857." I saw that many have taken advantage of what God has shown in regard to the sins and wrongs of others. They have taken the extreme meaning of what has been shown in vision, and then have pressed it until it has had a tendency to weaken the faith of many in what God has shown, and also to discourage and dishearten the church. With tender compassion should brother deal with brother. Delicately should he deal with feelings. It is the nicest and most important work that ever yet was done to touch the wrongs of another. With the deepest humility should a brother do this, considering his own weakness, lest he also should be tempted." [60]

(6) 1911." Many from among our own people are writing to me, asking with earnest determination the privilege of using my writings to give force to certain subjects which they wish to present to the people in such a way as to leave a deep impression upon them. . . .

"In taking account of such an enterprise, there are many things that must come into consideration; for in using the testimonies to bolster up some subject which may impress the mind of the author, the extracts may give a different impression than that which they would were they read in their original connection." [61]

ITEM 11.

Uriah Smith's attitude toward the writings of E. G. White. Referred to on page 267.

"They lead us to Christ. Like the Bible, they set Him forth as the only hope and only Savior of mankind. They portray before us in living characters, His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals, they urge us to follow in His steps."

"They lead us to the Bible. They set forth that book, as the inspired and unalterable word of God. They exhort us to take that word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And with a compelling power, they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teaching, for it is to judge us in the last day."

"They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts. They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure. And no person with an unprejudiced mind, can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Savior, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, 'These are not the words of him that bath a devil.'"

"Negatively, they have never been known to counsel evil or devise wickedness. No instance can be found in which they have lowered the standard of morality. No one of their adherents has ever been led by them into paths of transgression and sin. They do not lead men to serve God less faithfully or to love him less fervently. They do not lead to any of the works of the flesh, nor make less devoted and faithful Christians of those who believe them. In not a single instance can any of the charges here mentioned, be sustained against them; and concerning them we may emphatically ask the question which Pilate put to the Jews in reference to the Savior, 'Why, what evil hath he done?' [62]

ITEM 12.

E. G. White statements on which my personal attitude toward her life and work are based.

“Our happiness comes not from what is around us, but from what is within us; not from what we have, but from what we are.” [63]

“The surrender of all our powers to God greatly simplifies the problem of life. It weakens and cuts short a thousand struggles with the passions of the natural heart. Religion is as a golden cord that binds the souls of both youth and aged to Christ. Through it the willing and obedient are brought safely through dark and intricate paths to the city of God.” [64]

“The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.” [65]

“From eternal ages it was God’s purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple. . . . In cleansing the temple from the world’s buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin, from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. . . . No man can of himself cast out the evil throng that have taken possession of the heart. Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple. But He will not force an entrance.” [66]

“The grace of Christ is to control the temper and the voice. Its working will be seen in politeness and tender regard shown by brother for brother, in kind, encouraging words. An angel-presence is in the home. The life breathes a sweet perfume, which ascends to God as holy incense. Love is manifested in kindness, gentleness, forbearance, and long-suffering.

“The countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the heart shines out in the faces of those who love Him and keep His commandments. Truth is written there. The sweet peace of heaven is revealed. There is expressed a habitual gentleness, a more than human love.

“The leaven of truth works a change in the whole man, making the coarse refined, the rough gentle, the selfish generous. By it the impure are cleansed, washed in the blood of the Lamb. Through its life-giving power it brings all there is of mind and soul and strength into harmony with the divine life. Man with his human nature becomes a partaker of divinity. Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break forth in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude.” [67]

ITEM 13.

E. G. White statements which aptly describe your experience and mine. Referred to on page 272.

“If the people who now profess to be God’s peculiar treasure would obey His requirements, as specified in His word, special testimonies would not be given to awaken them to their duty and impress upon them their sinfulness and their fearful danger in neglecting to obey the word of God. Consciences have been blunted because light has been set aside, neglected, and despised.” [68]

“I was shown that many had so little spirituality that they did not understand the value of the Testimonies or their real object. They talked flippantly of the Testimonies given by God for the benefit of His people, and passed judgment upon them, giving their opinion and criticizing this and that, when they would better have placed their hands upon their lips, and prostrated themselves in the dust; for they could not appreciate the spirit of the Testimonies, because they knew so little of the Spirit of God.” [69]

“If you lose confidence in the testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth. . . . As you now hold the testimonies, should one be given crossing your track, correcting your errors, would you feel at perfect liberty to accept or reject any part or the whole? That which you will be least inclined to receive is the very part most needed.” [70]

“My brethren, beware of the evil heart of unbelief. The word of God is plain and close in its restrictions; it interferes with your selfish indulgence; therefore you do not obey it. The testimonies of His Spirit call your attention to the Scriptures, point out your defects of character, and rebuke your sins; therefore you do not heed them. And to justify your carnal, ease-loving course you begin to doubt whether the testimonies are from God. If you would obey their teachings you would be assured of their divine origin. Remember, your unbelief does not affect their truthfulness. If they are from God they will stand.” [71]

“I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God’s people. Unbelief is closing their eyes so that they are ignorant of their true condition.” [72]

“The question to be settled with them is: Shall I deny myself and receive as of God the Testimonies which reprove my sins, or shall I reject the Testimonies because they reprove my sins?” [73]

“It is a lack of moral courage—a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits.” [74]

“Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief.” [75]

“God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith.” [76]

“Many now despise the faithful reproof given of God in testimony. But opposition to God’s threatening will not hinder their execution.” [77]

“God has set me as a reprover of His people; and just so surely as He has laid upon me the heavy burden, He will make those to whom this message is given responsible for the manner in which they treat it. God will not be trifled with, and those who despise His work will receive according to their deeds. I have not chosen this unpleasant labor for myself.” [78]

“Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to His people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. . . . An account must be rendered to Him for every ray of light He has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclinations.” [79]

“What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom? In the judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work.” [80]

6. The Gospel In Type And Antitype

W. G. C. MURDOCH

The Gospel in Type and Antitype

The subject of these three studies is the gospel in type and anti type. A moment’s reflection on this topic suggests that it is broad and very comprehensive. It embraces not only the Old Testament but also the New. It embraces the time from man’s fall in the Garden of Eden to the time when he will have his dominion fully restored in the earth made new.

Although the sanctuary service was specially designed to teach the plan of salvation, it is well to remember that long before Moses was commanded to build the tabernacle after the pattern shown him in the mount, the Lord had given to sinful man many lessons portraying the sacrifice of Christ. Also for many centuries after the wilderness wanderings of Israel, God continued through His servants the prophets to present to His people the gospel in type. By the casual reader of the Old Testament many of these are not discerned, but to him whose eyes have been anointed with the spiritual eye salve, these great gems of truth shine with dazzling brilliance. As the millions of stars in the heavens come into our view through the aid of the giant telescope, so the reader of God’s Book is aided in his study by the Holy Spirit and by the writings of the Spirit of prophecy.

It is our sincere desire that as we study again these Old Testament types we may be led to a deeper understanding of God’s love for sinful man, and that we may comprehend more fully what it meant for Christ to die for us.

Glimpses of the Gospel From Adam to Moses

Like a thread of gold woven through a dark fabric, the gospel story runs through the history of mankind as related in the Sacred Scriptures. Our God is a God of love. The whole history of the conflict between good and evil is a demonstration of His unchanging love.

The plan of salvation was laid before the creation of the earth, for Christ was 11 the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”; yet had man not sinned, this plan might never have been revealed. At the fall of man sorrow filled all heaven. It was now time that the

secret plan of God the Father and Christ His Son, which had been hidden through times eternal, should be revealed. The messenger of God gives this description:

“The news of man’s fall spread through heaven. Every harp was hushed. The angels cast their crowns from their heads in sorrow. All heaven was in agitation. A counsel was held to decide what must be done with the guilty pair. The angels feared that they would put forth the hand, and cut of the tree of life, and be immortal sinners. But God said that He would drive the transgressors from the garden. Angels were commissioned immediately to guard the way of the tree of life. . . .

“I saw the lovely Jesus, and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. . . . The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the Father, His person could be seen. His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and trouble, and shone with benevolence and loveliness, such as words cannot express. He then made known to the angelic host that a way of escape had been made for lost man. . . . That through the merits of His blood, and obedience to the law of God, they [human beings] could have the favor of God, and be brought into the beautiful garden, and eat of the fruit of the tree of life.” [1]

This is the gospel-the good news of God’s plan to redeem man. This is the theme on which we wish to dwell.

“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, ‘They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads,’ the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme, man’s uplifting, the power of God ‘which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’”

“He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock to him the whole treasure house of God’s word.” [2]

The topic assigned for my three studies is “The Gospel in Type and Antitype.” Today we shall consider “Glimpses of the Gospel From Adam to Moses.”

The first intimation given to man of the plan of salvation was contained in the sentence pronounced upon the serpent in the garden. That first evening, after Adam and Eve, had transgressed God’s law, as it drew near the time for their accustomed communion with their Maker, their hearts were filled with fear and shame and they sought to hide themselves. In pathetic tones we hear the Lord calling to Adam, “Where art thou?” (Genesis 3:9) We have here brought to view, sinful man fleeing from a sinless God. We also have a picture of a Savior calling after the lost sinner who is hiding from Him. The Lord does not come to Adam in despair, but He brings with Him the precious promise that the seed of the woman would eventually conquer and destroy the serpent. (Verse 15) This was the first glimpse of the gospel given to Adam and Eve.

Prior to their sin, a garment of light had encircled them, but now this robe had been taken away and they sought to clothe themselves with garments of their own devising. They made themselves aprons of fig leaves by the work of their own hands, but like the filthy rags of our own righteousness these were not sufficient to cover their guilt. In the skins with which God covered them may be seen a type of that garment which is “woven in the loom of heaven,” a garment in which there is not one thread of human devising, the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness. It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word (Kethoneth) used for the coat provided by God is better translated “tunic” or “long coat,” in contradistinction to the aprons they themselves had made. Only Christ’s robe can cover the guilty sinner.

After Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden, God instructed him to offer sacrifices in order that the great plan of redemption might be kept vividly before the sinner. This was the beginning of the system of sacrifices.

“The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of his sin, and a confession of his faith in the promised Redeemer. They were intended to impress upon the fallen race the solemn truth that it was sin that caused death. To Adam, the offering of the first sacrifice was a most painful ceremony. His hand must be raised to take life, which only God could give. It was the first time he had ever witnessed death, and he knew that had he been obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. As he slew the innocent victim, he trembled at the thought that his sin must shed the blood of the spotless Lamb of God.” [3]

This glimpse of the gospel was like a star of hope illuminating the dark and terrible future and relieving it of its utter desolation.

Before his fall Adam had been able to commune directly with his Maker, but because of his sin this privilege was no longer his. However, the fact that God would communicate with him through Christ and the angels helped him to understand that the sacrifice of Christ would span the abyss and bring back to him the blessings of heaven.

In the experience of Cain and Abel is to be found another instance of God's plan to reveal to man the meaning of the gospel. Cain came before the Lord in a spirit of unbelief. He felt no need of repentance and trusted in his own merits. His offering was the result of his own effort, and he presented it as a favor to God through which he expected divine approval. His offering was rejected. Abel by faith grasped the great plan of salvation and recognized that without the shedding of blood there could be no forgiveness of sin. He brought of the firstlings of his flock, and God looked upon his offering and was well pleased.

All through the sinful antediluvian age the offering of sacrifices kept the light of the cross burning brightly in the hearts of the faithful few. The record of Enoch before his translation was, "He had this testimony, that he pleased God." Hebrews 11:5. To encourage the believers in that early age, God took Enoch from the earth without his seeing death. This gave hope and comfort to the faithful that the promise of a Redeemer would be fulfilled.

When men saw what God had done for Enoch they recognized that life and immortality had already been brought to light by the gospel. The good news of deliverance from sin and death now became a reality to that generation. Even while dwelling among a sinful people, and in a most corrupt age, Enoch stood out as a man to whom God gave power to live a holy life. That power was given to Enoch in the same way that it is given to us today, through the blood of the Lamb. Enoch's life gave the lie to the serpent's taunt that it was impossible to obey God's law. His life of "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," is a type of that holiness which all must reach if they are to be redeemed from among men.

Enoch's son, Methuselah, was a living witness to the longsuffering of a merciful God. So wicked was the generation in which he lived "that every imagination of the thoughts of his [man's] heart was only evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Genesis 6:5, 11.

Methuselah assisted Noah in building the ark. Both these righteous men manifested faith in God and recognized that safety was found only in the path of obedience.

The name Methuselah is a compound from two words meaning "dead" and "sent." It has been suggested that his very name was a living testimony to the world before the Flood that God suffers long with sinners. When, however, this aged patriarch should die, then the Flood would come. The Lord kept him alive for 969 years, waiting for men to repent and heed the message of warning. Very soon after the death of Methuselah, God's mercy ceased to plead with guilty sinners.

When the massive door of the ark was closed, Noah and his family were shut in, and those who had refused to accept the provision made for their safety were shut out.

"So when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut. Then divine grace will no longer restrain the wicked, and Satan will have full control of those who have rejected, mercy. They will endeavor to destroy God's people; but as Noah was shut into the ark, so the righteous will be shielded by divine power." [4]

The wicked destroyed by the Flood in Noah's day were a type of the final destruction of sinners in the last day. The apostle Peter states, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:6, 7.

After the floodwaters had abated and Noah had come out of the ark, his first act was that of building an altar to the Lord and placing an offering thereon. He recognized that the work of primary importance was to show his gratitude to the One who had preserved him. So he offered a sacrifice from every kind of clean beast and fowl. These sacrifices not only showed his gratitude to God but also revealed that by faith he looked forward to the greater sacrifice that Heaven would make on behalf of this world. This act of worship on Noah's part was well pleasing to God, who promised Noah that He would not again curse the ground for man's sake, that seedtime or harvest would not fail as long as the earth remained. (Genesis 8:20-22) He also set his bow in the clouds as a sign that He would never forget His covenant with man. Is there any more beautiful type of God's love than the rainbow in the clouds? Surely it is a token of God's mercy to the penitent sinner.

Although at times it appeared as if Satan had gained full control of this world, yet there have always been in all ages some who have kept God's law and looked with faith to the coming Redeemer. In the midst of idolatry Abraham preserved the worship of the true God. In his journeys, wherever he pitched his tent, close by he set up an altar and kept continually before his household the morning and evening sacrifice.

Whereas our first father, Adam, failed to obey God's command, Abraham did not stop to question God's dealings; he immediately rendered faithful obedience. God led him step by step and gave him test after test until He brought him to make the greatest decision and to pay the heaviest price in sacrifice that was ever asked of any human being.

The Lord gave him a command to take his son Isaac, whom he loved, and offer him as a sacrifice. Isaac, the child of promise, the son of faith, the one through whom his seed was to become as countless as the sands of the sea, more than that, the one through whom the promised Seed was to come -how could he do it! Did God really mean what He said? Only the heart of God knew the terrible test through which Abraham was passing.

For three days Abraham and Isaac journeyed to Mount Moriah' where the sacrifice was to take place. Likewise for three days God the Father had to suffer the terrible agony of seeing His only Son lying in the tomb. How the words of Isaac must have pierced his father's heart: "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Genesis 22:7. Abraham's faith did not waver; he obeyed the divine command, "accounting that God was able' to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead." Hebrews 11:19. His only answer to the lad was, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Genesis 22:8. The Lord saw that Abraham was not going to withhold his son, his greatest treasure, so He provided a substitute for him. In this substitute Abraham saw by faith the death of Christ, and entered into God's great sacrifice in allowing His Son to die. The cross of Calvary became very real to Abraham. Through this act of obedience even the angels entered into the gospel plan more fully and understood it more clearly.

"Through type and promise, God 'preached before the gospel unto Abraham. ' And the patriarch's faith was fixed upon the Redeemer to come. . . . The ram offered in the place of Isaac represented the Son of God, who was to be sacrificed in our stead. . . .

"It was to impress Abraham's mind with the reality of the gospel, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. . . .

"It had been difficult even for the angels to grasp the mystery of redemption,-to, comprehend that the Commander of heaven, the Son of God, must die for guilty man. When the command was given to Abraham to offer up his son, the interest of all heavenly beings was enlisted. With intense earnestness they watched each step in the fulfillment of this command. When to Isaac's question, 'Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' Abraham made answer, 'God will provide himself a lamb. ' And when the father's hand was stayed as he was about to slay his son, and the ram which God had provided was offered in the place of Isaac, then light was shed upon the mystery of redemption, and even the angels understood more clearly the wonderful provision that God had made for man's salvation." [5]

God indeed provided the lamb. It was not so much the one caught in the thicket that brought joy to Abraham. This was but a type of the Lamb of God, whom he saw by faith, and this view he received of the Savior caused his heart to rejoice and be glad. (John 8:56) We can almost hear him join in the paean of praise:

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Revelation 5:12,13.

Another glimpse of this restoration of communication between earth and heaven was given to the lonely fugitive Jacob. In his dream Jacob saw a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. (Genesis 28:12) That ladder is Christ. As Son of God He is omnipotent in heaven; as Son of man He stoops low to touch earth's sorrows. He has bridged the gulf that sin has made between heaven and earth.

Many of the experiences through which Joseph passed are illustrative of the life of Christ. Joseph was sold by his own brethren. Christ was betrayed by one of His own disciples. Through his pure and holy life in a land of exile, Joseph became the savior of his people. So Christ came from His home in heaven and lived a sinless life in this land of the enemy, that He might be our Savior and Redeemer. He freely forgives all who have done Him wrong.

The many years that elapsed between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses were dark for God's chosen people. The light of the gospel was burning low, and at times it looked as though it were almost extinguished. The Sabbath day, the memorial of God's creative power, had lost much of its spiritual significance, and the faith of Israel failed to grasp the offering of sacrifices as types of Christ who was to be their substitute. The first book of, the Bible closes with the pathetic words "a coffin in Egypt." The book that began so gloriously with sinless man in a fragrant garden, with everything to delight the eye and please the sense, now ends in gloom and despair, with God's chosen people in a land of darkness and slavery, and Joseph, he who had saved them from death, lying in a coffin.

The book of Exodus opens with the children of Israel in hopeless bondage and with no power to extricate themselves, but God does not leave them there. He says, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason

of their taskmasters. For I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land." Exodus 3:7, 8.

Moses, the deliverer from Egyptian bondage, was a type of Christ, the One who would lead His people from the bondage of sin to the glorious freedom of the heavenly Canaan. In prophetic vision he declared, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him you shall hearken." Deuteronomy 18:15. Moses was born at a dark time in the history of God's people. The record says, "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage." Exodus 1:13,14.

The Israelites, however, continued to increase in numbers, so the enemy devised another plan to destroy them. The king issued a decree that every male child as soon as he was born should be cast into the river. A similar command to kill all the male children was given when Christ was born in Bethlehem. Both of these devices of the enemy, however, came to naught. When Moses was placed upon the river God had a plan prepared to save him. He raised up Pharaoh's daughter to assist the child Moses to obtain that preparation he would need for the task of delivering Israel.

Like Christ, he was under the influence of his godly mother until he was about twelve years old. At this time a great change took place in the life of Moses. He entered the palace of Pharaoh and began his civil and military training. One recalls that when Jesus of Nazareth reached this age and visited the Temple at Jerusalem, His life's mission began to open up before Him. During his training in Egypt, Moses reasoned with the religious teachers of that land, explaining to them the folly of their worship, and none of these so-called wise men could gainsay his words. As in the case of Jesus before the doctors of the law, "all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." Luke 2:47.

The time came when Moses must make the great decision of his life. Would he leave the luxury of the lordly palace to lead a despised nation of slaves? The riches of Egypt meant something in those days. The tombs of the Pharaohs that have been discovered have contained fabulous sums of wealth. Like Christ, though Moses could have been rich, for the sake of his people he became poor. He left Egypt, with all its riches, and received a period of training as a shepherd in the solitude of the desert. Here he developed patience, meekness, and faith in God's power to save. At last the call came for him to go to his people and tell them of God's plan to deliver them. Like Christ, "he came to his own, and his own received him not." The Israelites would not listen to him. The record declares, "They hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage." Exodus 6:9.

As Moses miraculously revealed to them that he had been called of God to lead them out of Egypt and as they witnessed the plagues, they consented to follow him. Before the final judgment was meted out to the Egyptians on that last fatal night, the Lord taught the children of Israel a great lesson. He presented to each family the plan whereby they would be spared the loss of their first-born when at midnight the destroying angel would pass through the land. They had to slay a lamb or kid and sprinkle the blood upon the door posts of the house, so that when the angel saw the blood he would "pass over" that home. They were commanded to eat the roasted flesh of the animal with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Their loins had to be girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, indicative of their preparation for the journey ahead. Thus was instituted the Passover feast, which they celebrated from year to year as a reminder of their deliverance from Egypt. It had, however, much greater significance in that it was a type of the Lamb of God, whose blood, applied to the soul of the sinner, will save him from eternal destruction.

The hyssop employed to sprinkle the blood is symbolic of the purification of the heart from the defilement of sin. David, after his great sin, desired this cleansing experience and entreated the Lord." Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51:7. The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of their bitter experiences of a past life of slavery, and the unleavened bread was symbolic of a new beginning, a new life without sin.

Now they were a free people and had left behind them Pharaoh and the Egyptian taskmasters. Satan, however, does not let his captives go without making every effort to keep them. Even after all the plagues and the death of the firstborn, Pharaoh marshaled his army and pursued after the Israelites. The Lord led them into an impasse in order that He might test their faith. They were encamped "before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon." The meaning of these words in the Hebrew is deeply significant. There were marshes on one side, rocky fastness on the other. Behind them was Pharaoh, before them the Red Sea. This brought to them a great lesson of faith as they marched forward and the Red Sea opened before them. When they passed through safely to the other side, they rejoiced greatly because of their miraculous deliverance. They expressed this joy in a song of praise, a song of victory, the song of Moses. (Exodus 15) All of these experiences have their anti type in the experience of spiritual Israel in their journey to the heavenly Canaan. The seer of Patmos beheld a victorious group standing upon the sea of glass, and he heard them singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

Here the experience of the prophet Moses is linked with that of the Lamb of God. What an honor for a human being to have his name coupled with the Lamb.

As Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, so the Lamb will lead the spiritual Israelites out of the darkness of Egyptian bondage and through the sea of destruction to the other shore. It is significant that when Christ was on the mount of transfiguration, Moses was one of the two men appointed by Heaven to come to talk with Him. The topic of their conversation was the Exodus, "the way out," which Christ was soon to accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke 9:31) Never was a higher honor conferred upon a human being, and never was anyone more capable or competent of performing a task assigned to him. He knew what the Exodus experience back in the land of Egypt had meant to the chosen people. More than this, he was a witness to the victory that Christ was about to accomplish over sin and the grave. Had not he himself passed through the tomb and come forth glorified before he ascended to heaven, a type of those who would be raised from the grave at the first resurrection?

After the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea, the Lord, through Moses, began to instruct them in His provision for their salvation. In the hardships and darkness of the Egyptian bondage many had lost sight of the great plan of redemption. Being a nation of slaves, they had been so subdued by their taskmasters that the keeping of the Sabbath and the offering of sacrifices had well-nigh been forgotten. For this reason the Lord began all over again to teach them concerning these two great pillars of true religion. All through their wilderness wanderings He taught them "precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." The Lord allowed difficulties to come to them in order that they might learn to rely upon Him for physical and spiritual sustenance. In the manna, which He supplied from heaven, He desired them to see a type of the living bread that would come down from heaven and give life to the world. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven. . . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:48-51. By sending the manna on the six days and not on the seventh, God gave the Israelites a wonderful lesson each week on true Sabbath keeping.

How deeply impressed they must have been when they saw Moses strike the rock and there came forth a clear stream of sparkling water. In this incident Christ was portrayed as One who would be smitten once for their sins, and from henceforth all could come and drink freely of the waters of salvation provided by Him.

In the plague of the poisonous fiery serpents the Israelites were taught the lesson that the look of faith will save from death. (Numbers 21:8) This would certainly lead their minds to Christ, the great Life-giver. All who have the sting of sin and of death upon them may receive life by looking upon the uplifted Savior. One recalls how the Master Teacher in His interview with Nicodemus made reference to the exalting of the brazen serpent as a type of His own crucifixion: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14, 15.

At Sinai the greatest lesson yet given was to be presented to the children of Israel. Moses was called up into the mount to meet with the Most High. Six days passed before the Lord appeared to him. So solemn were the lessons he had to receive that God gave him this time of waiting to devote to heart searching and self-examination. On the seventh day, which was the Sabbath, Moses entered the cloud of glory and spent forty days in the presence of God. While here he received the wonderful plan of the sanctuary and its services, and was commanded to make the earthly tabernacle after the pattern of the heavenly, which was shown to him in the mount. During these forty days Israel, under Aaron, fell into degrading idolatry. This was revealed to Moses by God, and he was deeply concerned over their backsliding. The Lord asked him not to plead on their behalf, stating that because of their rebellious spirit He would destroy them and make of Moses a great nation. Justice really demanded their destruction. There are few who would not have accepted this proposal, especially when God Himself was holding out the offer. But this only gave Moses grounds for greater intercession on their behalf. He pleaded for his people akin to the way that Christ pleads for guilty sinners. He was willing to have his own name blotted out of the book of life rather than see his brethren not forgiven." The intercession of Moses in behalf of Israel illustrates the mediation of Christ for sinful men. But the Lord did not permit Moses to bear, as did Christ, the guilt of the transgressor." [6]

When Moses came down from communing with God on the mount the second time, and was carrying with him the sacred tables of the law, his countenance shone with heavenly brilliance. Because the Israelites could not look upon him, Moses put a veil over his face. This brightness of Moses' countenance was a reflection of the heavenly light streaming from Calvary, and was also typical of the glory of God's law.

"Moses was a type of Christ. As Israel's intercessor veiled his countenance, because the people could not endure to look upon its glory, so Christ, the divine Mediator, veiled His divinity with humanity when He came to earth. Had He come clothed with the brightness of heaven, He could not have found access to men in their sinful state. They could not have endured the glory of His presence. Therefore He humbled Himself, and was made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh,' that He might reach the fallen race, and lift them up." [7]

Moses now began to reveal in detail to the Israelites the pattern of the sanctuary that he had seen while in the mount. He carried out implicitly the instructions given by God.

More than fifty times it is recorded of him, "As the Lord commanded Moses, so did he." This entire system of offerings and sacrifices was a type of Christ's ministry, extending from Calvary back to the gates of Eden, and included a complete prophecy of the gospel. All the services taught that glorious provision had been made for the sinner through the death of the sinless Lamb of God. The sanctuary impressed the worshipers with the holiness of God and the dire consequences of sin. Though it is true this was a ministration of death, yet as the apostle Paul states, it was a "glorious" ministry. (2 Corinthians 3:11.) It pointed to the Redeemer, the Savior, the Sin Bearer, One who would intercede for us with His own precious blood. The subject of the sanctuary should be placed in the forefront of all our study. The pen of inspiration declares:

"I have seen the danger of the messengers running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause.

"But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell." [8]

Notice what can be inferred from the implications in this statement of the servant of the Lord concerning such study.

1. It sanctifies the individual soul.
2. It is calculated to unite the flock.
3. It explains the past Advent Movement.
4. It shows our present position.
5. It gives certainty to the future.
6. It establishes the faith of those given to doubt.
7. It is one of the principal subjects upon which we should dwell.

The messenger of the Lord also informs us that there has been no change in our understanding of this important subject.

"I know that the sanctuary question stands in righteousness and truth, just as we have held it for so many years. It is the enemy that leads minds off on side-tracks. He is pleased when those who know the truth become engrossed in collecting scriptures to pile around erroneous theories, which have no foundation in truth. The scriptures thus used are misapplied; they were not given to substantiate error, but to strengthen the truth!" [9]

The enemy will make a special attack upon our teaching on the sanctuary, because he knows that every gospel truth is centered here and radiates from it like rays of light from the sun.

"In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the word has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?" [10]

The devil is doing his utmost to bring in new and fanciful theories on the sanctuary question. Years ago the messenger of the Lord warned the church that this would happen.

"Satan is striving continually to bring in fanciful suppositions in regard to the sanctuary, degrading the wonderful representations of God and the ministry of Christ for our salvation into something that suits the carnal mind. He removes its presiding power from the hearts of believers, and supplies its place with fantastic theories invented to make void the truths of the atonement, and destroy our confidence in the doctrines which we have held sacred since the third angel's message was first given. Thus he would rob us of our faith in the very message that has made us a separate people, and has given character and power to our work." [11]

Truly did the psalmist exclaim, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary." Psalm 77:13. There was nothing superfluous in its construction or in the services performed there. Everything was typical of the heavenly. Could the Israelites have had their spiritual vision enlightened, they would have recognized Christ in every sacrifice. In the sin offering they would have seen Him as the Sin Bearer; in the peace offering, as the Prince of Peace; in the show bread, as the Bread of Life; and in the golden candlestick, as the Light of the world.

Through the eye of faith the altar of incense would have been to them the way of approach into the very presence of God through the supplication of His Son. As they contemplated the sacred law within the ark they would have beheld the mercy seat above which rested the Shekinah glory—the presence of God. They would have rejoiced to know that as God looked down upon His sacred law they had broken, He looked upon it through the propitiatory covering of the bloodstained mercy seat. They would have seen the blood of Christ that satisfied all the claims of the sacred and holy law.

The Passover to them would have meant much more than deliverance from the bondage of Egypt; the first fruits, more than merely the promise of an earthly harvest. Pentecost would have been to them a type of all nations of earth coming to join with them in their worship of the Lamb. In the Feast of Trumpets they would have looked forward to the sounding of the final message on earth calling all to prepare for the great anti typical day of atonement, when sin would be forever banished from the universe. The Feast of Tabernacles would have caused their hearts to thrill with joy at the prospect of the final harvest home, in which the redeemed of all ages will be gathered together to enjoy the pleasures of eternal rest. What a blessing would have come to them had their faith looked beyond the type on earth to the anti type in heaven. Instead of the Israelites' seeing beyond the types, these feasts and services degenerated into a mere round of ceremonies. They lost sight of the substance while grasping at the shadow.

As we look at their failure we need to fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Hebrews 4:1. Despite man's failure, God's purpose to save us remains unchanged. God has made His covenant with us, placing Himself under oath to perform His promises to the very letter. He undertook in Eden to rescue us from the enslavement of the serpent, and through the "seed" to recover us from the power of disobedience.

He has done this in giving His only-begotten Son to die for us. He has accepted Christ's obedient life in place of our life. This is the great truth He wants to teach us from a study of the Old Testament types. We need today to restudy the sanctuary in the light of the cross. As we do this we will obtain a closer acquaintance with our Redeemer." He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine, character and life." [12] By beholding Him in the sanctuary as the anti type of every service we shall become changed into His likeness and His glory will become reflected in our countenance and character.

Glimpses of the Gospel in the Sanctuary Sacrifices

"The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended. Truths vast and profound are shadowed forth in its rites and symbols. The gospel is the key that unlocks its mysteries. Through a knowledge of the plan of redemption, its truths are opened to the understanding. Far more than we do, it is our privilege to understand these wonderful themes." [13]

The outward appearance of the tabernacle was plain and unattractive. It was a long black tent of badger skins. The inside, however, was lined with shining gold, with wings of cherubim woven in blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. It presented a magnificent and impressive picture. With reference to this the servant of the Lord says:

"No language can describe the glory of the scene presented within the sanctuary, the gold-plated walls reflecting the light from the golden candle stick, the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels, the table, and the altar of incense, glittering with gold. Beyond the second veil the sacred ark, with its mystic cherubim, and above it the holy shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence; all but a dim reflection of the glories of the temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption." [14]

The beauty within the holy place was revealed by the light of the golden candlestick, while in the most holy shone the brilliant glory of the Shekinah. This great difference between the outward appearance and the inward glory reminds us of the One in whom all the sanctuary services were centered. We recall the words of the prophet Isaiah: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." Isaiah 53:2. As the natural man looks at the Savior, he is not attracted to Him by any outward splendor, but to those who are privileged to dwell in His presence Christ is the one "altogether lovely."

The walls of the tabernacle were constructed of boards of shittim wood overlaid with gold. They rested on massive sockets sunk into the sand. These sockets were made from the redemption money paid by every Israelite; thus the whole structure was built upon a foundation of redemption.

The acacia wood that entered so largely into the construction of most of the furniture was a symbol of durability. The Orientals called it the lignum imputrabile, or incorruptible wood, which meant that it would never decay. Gold stands for that which is valuable and beautiful; silver is regarded as the symbol of purity. The fine white linen of the woven tapestry of the coverings and hangings was suggestive of holiness; the blue, of the vault of heaven. The purple was a reminder of the royal robes with which kings array themselves.

Beautiful though the typical sanctuary was, and its furniture burnished with pure gold, this did not bring redemption to the sinner.” Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold. . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18,19.

The Dedication of the Earthly Sanctuary and the Heavenly Anti Type

Before the services in the earthly sanctuary began, the Lord commanded that there should be an anointing service. Moses had been instructed by God:

“Thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense, and the* altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot. And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever touches them shall be holy.” Exodus 30:26-29.

Moses carried out this instruction in every particular. (Numbers 7:1) He first anointed the tabernacle, including the ark, the table of show bread, the candlestick, and the golden altar, then the altar of burnt offering and the laver. Last of all he poured anointing oil on Aaron. (Leviticus 21:12) All this served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.” Hebrews 8:5. Likewise, before the heavenly sanctuary was opened for service, the new covenant had been ratified by the blood of Christ, and the sanctuary was solemnly dedicated to the sacred purpose to which it was henceforth to be devoted.

The time of this anointing was definitely foretold by the prophet Daniel. He declares that the most holy would be anointed within the seventy week period. (Daniel 9:24) The Hebrew for most holy is Qodhesh Qodashim, literally holy of holies. A critical study of these words reveals that they were frequently applied to the sanctuary and its services and not alone to the inner apartment. They were never used in speaking of a person. In this instance it would appear that Daniel is referring to the entire sanctuary in heaven, which was to be anointed near the close of the seventy weeks. This being the last of a series of expressions, we conclude that since the rest met their fulfillment in the life and death of Christ, this would be the next work He Would accomplish, after He had passed through the experience necessary to fit Him for this priestly ministry. Although the all-sufficient offering had been made on Calvary, and had been accepted by the Father, still the services would not begin in the heavenly sanctuary until the anointing had been accomplished.

The Court

The court surrounding the tabernacle was entered by a curtain. In this enclosure was the brazen altar of burnt offering and the laver of washing. Here men came who wished forgiveness of sin. Here sacrifices were made, and sinners experienced the cleansing power of the blood. The court was the nearest that the people could approach to God. It was a representation of the true church on earth.

All the ceremonies performed in the court were typical of those that took place on earth, whereas the services of the holy and most holy places typified the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary. In the court the burnt offerings were consumed by fire upon the brazen altar. This fire was kindled by God Himself. (Leviticus 9:24) It was never to be extinguished. (Leviticus 6:13) All sacrifices were made in the court, never within the sanctuary.

After the sacrifice had been consumed, the ashes were all that remained upon the altar of burnt offering. All these symbols are deeply significant in that they are typical of the final disposition of sin. For example, while sins are forgiven in the sanctuary, sin and sinners are finally destroyed on this earth, where the sins have been committed, and the prophet Malachi says, “For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, said the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 4:1

In addition to the altar in the court there was the laver. This was situated near the altar of burnt offering and was used by the officiating priests for cleansing their hands and feet before going to the altar to minister. (Exodus 30:17-21.) The lesson is plain for all who are called to holy office today. Only those whose hands are clean and whose feet have been washed from the dust of sin are fit to minister in holy things. Such washing was emblematic of that spoken of by the apostle Paul, namely, “the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus 3:5. John the revelator speaks of those who “have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:14. It should be noted that the washing took place in the court, and so it is, here on earth, that this work must be done for us. It is now that we must put away every sin. It is now that our robes must be washed white in preparation for entrance into the holy places not made with hands.

The Offerings

At least five different offerings were made upon the altar of burnt offering, and these unfold to us the method and meaning of personal consecration and dedication.

Every morning and evening as regularly as the sun rose and set, there was a burnt offering presented to the Lord. This was a whole burnt offering-the entire sacrifice was consumed upon the altar. This typified a complete consecration of the whole encampment to God each morning and evening-a beautiful picture of the daily life of the Christian.

This offering was not brought by the sinner, but by the priest. The sinner did not place his hands upon it, nor did he take its life. The priest did all this on his behalf. It was a sacrifice made for all. No one needed to be left out from having a share in it. This was to the Israelites what Calvary is to us. Provision has been made by Christ's substitution sacrifice for all the sons of Adam. All we have to do is to surrender our life and avail ourselves of this provision.

When the children of Israel settled in the Promised Land, the morning and evening sacrifices were continued in the Temple services at Jerusalem. There was no other place for sacrifice." But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall you seek, and thither thou shall come: and thither you shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices." Deuteronomy 12:5, 6. This was convenient for those who lived around Jerusalem, but what of those whose homes were many days' journey distant? They were asked to come up three times a year only. (Exodus 23:16, 17) Between these special occasions the morning and evening sacrifices provided for them forgiveness in prospect. Those living afar off would turn their faces to the Holy City and to the Temple each morning and evening and would plead the blood that the priest was offering for them. When they brought their own individual offerings at the yearly feasts, the priest would take the blood and make an atonement for them. In this way their forgiveness was sealed. What a blessed thought; we do not need to wait for a special occasion to receive forgiveness, nor do we need to be near a holy place; but we who are afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and forgiveness is full and free all the time. The continual morning and evening sacrifice is for all, at any time and in any place.

There was also a burnt offering employed by the individual. It was a voluntary, freewill offering. (Leviticus 1:3) God has bestowed upon man freedom of choice. He does not coerce anyone to serve Him, but delights in willing sacrifice. The sinner's consent to share in Christ's sacrifice and to accept Christ's life does not come by compulsion. Christ gave Himself as a voluntary sacrifice. He willingly and gladly emptied Himself of His glory to become obedient to the death on the cross. As a burnt offering the worshiper could bring an offering commensurate with his means. Those who could afford a bullock brought one, but the offering of the poor, who could afford only two turtle doves, was equally acceptable. Both the Old and the New Testament teach that God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34; Job 34:19) He accepts a voluntary offering whether it be the widow's mite or the rich man's fortune.

The first chapter of Leviticus emphasizes three important elements used in this offering: blood, water, and fire. The blood typifying the blood of Christ, as it applied to the penitent sinner; the water, representing the outward mode of baptism; and the fire, the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the heart. The blood atones, the water cleanses (Ephesians 5:25, 26), and the fire energizes. These are the three necessary stages in Christian development.

The Meat Offering

The meat offering, or better, meal offering, was the work of men's hands. It was of the fruit of the ground, the results of cultivation and preparation, and suggested that complete dedication necessitates the offering of perfect service to God. This offering was an acknowledgment of God's ownership and of man's stewardship. While the burnt offering signified that the individual was wholly consecrated to the Lord, the meal offering typified that all his possessions were placed upon the altar. The meal offering accompanied the burnt offering. (Numbers 15:3, 4) The two were inseparable. This means that after I consecrate my heart to the Lord, all my possessions and my service will be included in this consecration.

"We are to give ourselves to the service of God, and we should seek to make the offering as nearly perfect as possible. God will not be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer. Those who love Him with all the heart, will desire to give Him the best service of the life, and they will be constantly seeking to bring every power of their being into harmony with the laws that will promote their ability to do His will." [15]

This meal offering had to be threshed and milled, a fitting example of the life of the Christian who passes through severe trials, so that the chaff in his character may be removed and the pure wheat remain. The word for affliction in the New Testament is *Thlipsis* (2 Corinthians 1:4-6), which means a flail, the old instrument that was employed for threshing and separating the wheat from the chaff.

The Peace Offering

The peace offering was the symbol of communion. Part was to be burned in the fire, and part to be consumed by the worshiper. Christ is seen clearly in the peace offering. He has broken down all national boundaries and all racial prejudices and has made one all peoples of the earth. Paul declared when writing to the Ephesians:

"He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making

peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” Ephesians 2:14-17,

At His birth the angels sang, “On earth peace.” (Luke 2:14) During His ministry He brought peace to many a troubled soul, and as He departed from this world He left a legacy of peace for us. (John 14:27) One of the titles given to Him by Isaiah was “The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6) When He comes the second time “he makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth.” Psalm 46:9.

The Sin Offering

The sin offering was so closely connected with sin that the same Hebrew word (chatta'th) is used for both. This offering availed for what was called sins of ignorance. The connotation of the Hebrew word for ignorance (Shaghaghah) is much broader than the Anglo-Saxon. According to Gesenius' it has the thought of error, fault, wander, go astray, swerve, or blunder. It could better be translated a sin committed inadvertently, not a deliberate, determined act. It is not a presumptuous sin, but a sin committed when one is caught off guard, when Satan has tripped him up and caused him to fall.

Certain groups of individuals received instruction regarding these sins, and it was necessary for them to bring an offering for a sacrifice. In the event of the commission of such a sin by the priest or the whole congregation, the offering specified was that of a bullock. When a ruler sinned he brought a male kid, and the individual sinner presented a female lamb or a female kid. There are sins of varying degrees. The priest's sins appeared more heinous in God's sight than did those of the people. How true this is today. When a minister falls from his holy calling, what a blighting influence this has on the people.

“God does not regard all sins of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in His estimation, as well as in that of man; but however trifling this or that wrong act may seem in the eyes of men, no sin is small in the sight of God.” [16]

All sin meant death. Though God does not hold us responsible for sins of ignorance until the knowledge of them breaks upon our consciousness, they are sins nevertheless. They are not placed to our account, yet God recognizes them as sins in His sight; hence there is need of the covering blood of the atoning sacrifice for such sins. Jesus recognized such sins while hanging on the cross. He prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. Although they were responsible for their ignorance, Jesus, in His great compassion, was shedding His blood for them; the way of forgiveness was open for them.

The Trespass Offering

The trespass offering was provided for sins that in general had been knowingly committed. (Leviticus 6:23) The Hebrew word ('asham) is the word for guilt or debt. These sins appear to have been sins of intent. The sinner was conscious that he was sinning. The trespass offering was offered especially for sins “in the holy things of the Lord.” Leviticus 5:15. Dishonest dealings with God or with man were atoned for by the trespass offering. There was, however, definite instruction that ample restitution must be made. Restitution preceded reconciliation.

This is clearly brought out in the teachings of Christ in the New Testament.” Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matthew 5:23,24.

Christ was indeed the anti typical trespass offering. He gave His life to free man from guilt and debt. Isaiah makes reference to the trespass offering as a special type of the Son of God in his great prophecy of the Messiah: “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he bath put him to grief. When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Isaiah 53:10.

Summary

The morning and evening sacrifice in the continual burnt offering directed the faith of the people to Christ's sacrifice for the whole world. As individuals were brought under conviction of sin they came with their own offering to the door of the sanctuary. The fact that Jesus died in my stead will not save me unless I do my part. I must of my own volition confess my need of such substitution service. I must own that I am guilty, and therefore deserving of death. I must come for pardon. I must die in my substitute, and live anew in Christ's resurrection. God gave His Son to die, that I may have life. My death in Christ is death to sin, but my acceptance of His death brings a new life of righteousness to me. Peter declares, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.” 1 Peter 2:24. Paul brings to view the same great truth when he says of Christ, “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25.

The Holy Place

The furniture of the holy place included the golden candlestick emblematic of Him who was the light of the world (John 8:12); the table of show bread, inviting communion; and the altar of incense, whose fragrance reached beyond the veil into the most holy place and filled the entire sanctuary.

The ever-abiding character of Christ's sacred ministry is here brought to view. The incense, like the morning and evening sacrifices, was offered continually. It was called "a perpetual incense before the Lord." (Exodus 30:7, 8) The lamps also were to burn continually (Leviticus 24:24), and the loaves on the table were termed the continual show bread (Numbers 4:7).

The Hebrew word (Tamidh) is the same in all these references. In the book of Daniel this word is rendered "the daily." This is a very significant term and is applied frequently to the various services of the sanctuary. The writer of the book of Hebrews makes full use of this expression when he describes the work of our great High Priest in the sanctuary in heaven. Contrasted with the earthly priests, Christ "abides a priest continually." (Hebrews 7:3) He "continues ever," He "ever lives," and He has the -power of an endless life." (Verses 24, 25, 16)

The golden candlestick was formed after the fashion of an almond tree, the first to awaken from the sleep of winter and show the leaf and buds of spring. Its trunk and branches alternated with golden flowers and fruits, suggesting that God seeks for a similar living and fruitful character in His people. The candlestick was beaten out of pure gold. It had seven branches, each holding a lamp that gave light to the sanctuary. No one but the high priest was allowed to perform the sacred task of lighting these lamps and trimming them each morning and evening.

The candlestick's being beaten out of pure gold is typical of the fiery trials through which the Christians must pass before they are able to shine as lights in the world of darkness. Thus Peter encourages us in our troubles to "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12, 13. Notice that suffering here precedes the outshining of glory, as the cross precedes the crown. There were seven lamps indicating perfect light. Their anti type is brought to view in the book of Revelation, where John saw "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." Revelation 4:5.

Isaiah, prophesying of Christ, speaks of the Spirit in its fullness descending upon Him: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Isaiah 11:1, 2. The rod would seem to refer to the central stem; this with the three branches on either side would be similar to the seven-branched candlestick in the type.

Zechariah in his vision saw "a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof." Zechariah 4:2, 3. The lesson from this vision is that we accomplish God's work, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, said the Lord of hosts." Verse 6. The indwelling of the Spirit is reflected by the outshining of the light, but this is not of human origin, as Mrs. E. G. White declares:

"But no man can impart that which he himself has not received. In the work of God, humanity can originate nothing. No man can by his own effort make himself a light-bearer for God. It was the golden oil emptied by the heavenly messengers into the golden tubes, to be conducted from the golden bowl into the lamps of the sanctuary, that produced a continuous, bright and shining light. It is the love of God continually transferred to man that enables him to impart light. Into the hearts of all who are united to God by faith the golden oil of love flows freely, to shine out again in good works, in real, heartfelt service to God." [17]

The Table of Show Bread

Twelve new loaves were placed upon the table of show bread each Sabbath day. (Leviticus 24:8) These loaves were called the bread of the presence because they were continually before the Lord. The old bread was removed and eaten by the priests. (Verse 9) The priests were accustomed to eat the hard bread on the Sabbath day. There was to be no common bread made on the Sabbath, but the priests prepared the show bread on this sacred day. (1 Chronicles 9:32)

There is no more appropriate time than the Sabbath to receive unto our souls the bread of life warm from the courts of glory. Christ is the living bread, as He Himself stated, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." John 6:51. It is more than a coincidence that when He came to this earth He was born in Bethlehem, (Bethlehem), which means "the house of bread."

There is a very close relationship between Christ the living Word and the written Word. This led to Christ's explanation of what it means to eat His flesh and drink His blood." It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Verse 63. The priests' eating of the show bread was typical of the service of those who minister in holy things, feeding on the Word of God. It is that Word which assists us to overcome temptation and sin. As Christ stated to the

tempter, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. Well did Jeremiah the prophet exclaim, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." Jeremiah 15:16. And Job declared, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12.

The Altar of Incense

Nearest to the most holy place was situated the altar of incense. The incense was of careful and costly preparation, and was not to be imitated for any secular purpose, which indicates that nothing common or profane should mingle with the work and worship of the Lord. Every morning and evening the high priest performed the sacred duty of placing the incense before the Lord on the golden altar. (Exodus 30:7, 8)

"When the priest offered incense before the Lord, he looked toward the ark; and as the cloud of incense arose, the divine glory descended upon the mercy-seat and filled the most holy place, and often so filled both apartments that the priest was obliged to retire to the door of the tabernacle. As in that typical service the priest looked by faith to the mercy-seat which he could not see, so the people of God are now to direct their prayers to Christ, their great high priest, who, unseen by human vision, is pleading in their behalf in the sanctuary above. The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God." [18]

No other part of the daily ministration brought the priest so perfectly into the presence of God as the offering of incense. Our prayers are made fragrant as they are mingled with the righteousness of Christ and are presented by the Holy Spirit before the Father. This golden altar was an altar of continual intercession, indicating that there is a welcome at all times at the throne of grace. Heaven has no office hours. When the plague was raging among the Israelites, Moses said to Aaron:

"Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded ' and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed." Numbers 16:46-48.

John, looking into the holy place in the heavenly sanctuary, saw the incense as it was being offered: "The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." Revelation 5:8. We can all pray as did David, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Psalm 141:2. The daily service in the holy place thus provided continual prayer through the cloud of incense, atonement by the blood of the sacrifice, life physical and spiritual through the show bread, and light from the lamps of the candlestick. What more can Christ do for His people than He is doing in the sanctuary?

Christ as Priest in the Holy Place

In the work of atonement there was of necessity a sacrifice, but there must also be a priest. The sacrificial animal became man's substitute. It had to be slain. Its work was accomplished by death. After the animal had been put to death, the priest began his work. He took the blood and ministered it for each repentant sinner.

So it is in the anti type. Christ died in our stead. He was our substitute on the cross. After his resurrection He ascended to heaven, and "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:12. His priesthood, however, unlike the type, never changes but continues all the time." They truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death. But this man, because he continues ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Hebrews 7:23, 24. The atoning sacrifice was made certain upon the cross, when Christ uttered the words, "It is finished." This sacrifice becomes effectual for individual sinners by the priestly ministry of Christ in heaven. We should thank God that He who died for our sins is not now lying in Joseph's new tomb; otherwise His sacrifice for us would have been in vain, and the dead would not live again, as Paul says:

"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." 1 Corinthians 15:16-20.

This phase of Christ's priestly work is essential for our salvation.

"The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, 'Whither the Forerunner is for us entered.' There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected." [19]

Necessary and helpful though the ministry of Christ is in the holy place in heaven, yet His service there does not entirely do away with sin. In the type the daily service performed in the holy place during the year was not complete in itself. The ministrations in the second apartment were needed to effect the final destruction of sin. It is now to the most holy place we look for the final annihilation of all iniquity.

The Most Holy Place

In the most holy place were three objects of very deep significance: the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim. The ark was a chest of shittim wood overlaid within and without with pure gold. In this ark were the two tables of stone, containing the Ten Commandments, written by the finger of God. The mercy seat was the cover of the ark. It was made of solid gold, as were also the cherubim. It was called the mercy seat, because on the Day of Atonement, when blood was sprinkled on it, mercy was extended to repentant sinners. It was above the ark over the mercy seat, and between the cherubim, that the holy Shekinah of God's presence was manifested. The mercy seat's being placed over the ark, where the sacred law was enshrined, represented the union of justice with mercy. How God can be just and yet justify the sinners who believe on Jesus, is a mystery which we shall never fully fathom, but which we can all experience. The cherubim, looking down upon the mercy seat, typify the great interest that the heavenly beings have in the plan of God for man's redemption.

Into this most holy place the high priest entered one day in the year—the Day of Atonement. On this day, in contrast with the individual atonements during the year, a general atonement was made for all the people. It was a most solemn day. Its object was to take away all sin from the people and from the sanctuary. The ministrations on this day called up for final adjudication all the sins that had been transferred to the sanctuary during the year. The daily ministrations already examined were the means by which sins were borne into the sanctuary; the Day of Atonement shows us the means by which they were borne out.

Christ Our High Priest in the Most Holy

An examination of the typical services on earth reveals that there was a special work that the high priest alone was allowed to perform on the Day of Atonement. He alone could enter into the most holy place. So Christ, our great anti-typical High Priest, entered into the most holy place in heaven when the day specified for the cleansing of the sanctuary arrived. Here the final records are being examined. As in the type, sin was dealt with in three stages: first, the sacrifice by the sinner in the court; second, the blood being ministered in the holy place by the priest or high priest; and, third, the entire cleansing of the sanctuary. This last work was accomplished in the most holy place by the high priest alone. Christ meets all three. He is the sacrifice; He is the priest in the holy place; He is the high priest in the most holy.

This final stage of His mediatorial work is now in progress. The prophet Daniel gave us the time when it would begin. The seer of Patmos beheld the place where this work would be accomplished. He beheld the door opened into the most holy place, and there he saw the ark that contained the holy law. He also saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, announcing that the hour of judgment had arrived. Soon this mighty angel was joined by another calling the people of God out of Babylon, and a third angel followed, giving a description of the saints, declaring that they would be keeping the commandments of God. The law and the judgment were the two important features in the prophet's vision, and both of these are centered in the most holy place.

The sanctuary and the Sabbath are the two foundation pillars upon which this Advent message rests, and it is only as we understand and accept fully these two important truths that we enter by faith with our great High Priest into the most holy place in heaven.

“Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the most holy place. I saw that as the Jews crucified Jesus, so the nominal churches had crucified these messages, and therefore they have no knowledge of the way into the most holy, and they can not be benefited by the intercession of Jesus there. Like the Jews, who offered their useless sacrifices, they offer up their useless prayers to the apartment which Jesus has left.” [20]

It is because the remnant church keeps the commandments of God and cherishes the messages from the Spirit of prophecy that the ire of the dragon is aroused. Only those who follow closely their High Priest into the most holy place will be safe from the dragon's delusive snares. We need not fear the subtle acts of our enemy, because we are assured that “the Captain of our salvation is interceding for His people, not as a petitioner to move the Father to compassion, but as a conqueror, who claims the trophies of His victory.” [21]

Glimpses of the Gospel in the Sanctuary Services

Each year there were two groups of holy convocation among the Jews, one in the spring, the other in the autumn, beginning the first and seventh months respectively. In these groups the Feast of the Passover was of outstanding importance in the first, and the Day of Atonement in the second. The services on these two occasions are described in detail in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 16. They are not,

however, presented in relation to each other and to the other feasts of the system until the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. The special occasions of Leviticus 23 may be summarized as follows:

1. The Passover, which was a type of the death of Christ. (Leviticus 23:4-8; cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8)
2. The Feast of First Fruits, which was a presentation before the Lord of the first ripe sheaf, and met its anti type in Christ's resurrection and His ascension to His Father. (Leviticus 23:9-14; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:20)
3. The Day of Pentecost, which was fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the early church. (Leviticus 23: 15-2. 1; cf. Acts 2:1-4.)

These three feasts, which were observed in the first months of the Jewish year, all represented important events in the early part of Christ's ministry.

The remaining special days of the year were observed in the seventh month.

4. The Feast of Trumpets, which was the sounding of an alarm in view of the approaching Day of Atonement. This represented the sounding of a similar alarm preceding the anti typical work of judgment. (Leviticus 23:23, 24; cf. Revelation 14: 6, 7)
5. The Day of Atonement, or the cleansing of the sanctuary, which represented the concluding work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. (Leviticus 23:26-32; cf. Daniel 8:13, 14)
6. The Feast of Tabernacles or harvest ingathering, which represented the final harvest and the ingathering of God's people at the Second Advent of Christ. (Leviticus 23:33-44; cf. Matthew 13:39)

To these might be added the observance of the year of jubilee referred to in Leviticus 25. The year of jubilee represented the ultimate restoration of God's people in the new earth. (Isaiah 65:17-25)

Each of these types portrays some particular phase of Christ's great work as Redeemer. They are not to be taken as each one representing His work in general, but as each one typifying some particular aspect of His work.

The Passover

The Passover feast was a type of the death of Christ, as we read, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7. A study of the twelfth chapter of Exodus reveals many similarities between the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the death of the Lamb of God. (John 1:29) Christ died at the time of the Passover.

The Passover lamb was to be without blemish. (Exodus 12:5) Of the anti typical Lamb it was stated even by the vacillating Pilate, 'I find in him no fault at all.' John 18:38. (Cf. John 19A, 6; Luke 23:14, 15; Matthew 27:19)

"Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan. . . , the enemy of God and man would have triumphed." [22]

The life that He gave for us was without guilt. As He neared the end of His earthly ministry He said to His followers, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes, and hath nothing in me." John 14:30. His sacrifice was perfect. There was no blemish in it. As the blood of the Passover lamb brought salvation to Israel (Exodus 12:7), so Christ's blood redeems us. There was no safety in Egypt that night except through the blood. (Verse 23) Neither is there any salvation outside of Christ. (Acts 4:12)

Not a bone of the Passover lamb was broken (Exodus 12:46); neither was there a bone of the Savior broken (John 19:33-36). The Passover lamb was not to see corruption (Exodus 12:10); neither did the Lord suffer His Holy One to see corruption (Acts 2:27).

The Passover was to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. (Exodus 12:8) We today are to purge out the leaven of sin from our lives and not go back again to the bitter bondage of slavery in which we were held by Satan.

When Christ uttered the words upon the cross, "It is finished," the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom. This rending was Heaven's announcement that the sacrifices for sin had come to an end. Type had met anti type. Henceforth the Levitical system on earth was to give place to Christ's ministry in heaven. It was no longer necessary for man to approach God by means of the offering of animals, but by the blood of Christ he was able to come with boldness to the heavenly throne of grace, as the writer to the Hebrews declares, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Hebrews 10: 19, 20.

The promise of salvation made to our first parents in the Garden of Eden had now been ratified.

“The destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain. . . . the redemption of man was assured. . . . the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished.’” [23]

The Wave Sheaf

The work of redemption was completed on the sixth day, the day before the Sabbath of the commandment. As God had rested after the work of creation on the seventh day, so Jesus rested in Joseph’s new tomb during the sacred hours of that holy Sabbath. He came forth from the grave the same day that the first fruits, in the typical system, had been waved before the Lord for many centuries.” And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.” Leviticus 23: 11. As the handful of grain in the type was a pledge of the coming harvest, so the resurrection of Christ was His pledge of the resurrection of the righteous.” Because I live, you shall live also,” said the Master. John 14:19. The sheaf of first fruits does not represent Christ’s work in general but His resurrection in particular. In the offering of the wave sheaf in the type, it was to be accepted by the Lord for the people (Leviticus 23: 11), so when Christ rose from the grave He ascended to His Father to be accepted for us. On His resurrection morning, before He ascended, He requested Mary not to touch Him, because He had not yet ascended to His Father; His offering had not yet been accepted by the Father. (John 20:17) Later in the same day His disciples touched Him (Matthew 28:9), which fact clearly shows that in the meantime He had ascended to His Father, and the Father had accepted Him as the offering of the first fruits. When the Father accepted His offering He accepted us in Him. We do not need to wait now until we have worked out a right standard of character before we can have the assurance of acceptance with God. We have already been accepted in the Beloved, and all we have to do is to believe that God by Christ will save to the uttermost all who come to Him, who ever lives to make intercession for us. (Hebrews 7:25)

“Through the simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.” [24]

We approach God through His Son, trusting in the merits of His sacrifice, which God has already accepted. God has done His part; When the believer does his part the transaction is complete. Faith in the accepted work of Christ is what we need.” Many hold faith as an opinion. But saving faith is a transaction.” [25]

“By virtue of His own merits, He gives them power to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ by receiving and welcoming Christ’s friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death, and mediation, of His Son.” [26]

After having His sacrifice accepted by the Father, Christ left the angels and inhabitants of other worlds and came back down to this earth.

“We wonder how Christ could ever leave the glories of heaven to return to the earth, where He had met only ignominy and reproach. But marvelous is the power of love! His sorrowing followers on earth were so dear to His heart that the worship of all heaven could not keep Him from them, and He returned to comfort and cheer their hearts.” [27]

Pentecost

Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the wave sheaf had been presented. (Leviticus 23:15, 16) The wave sheaf signified the beginning of the harvest, and Pentecost came at the end of the grain harvest. To express their gratitude for God’s bounties, the people offered two wave loaves of fine flour, together with “seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams.” Verse 18. The anti typical day of Pentecost occurred just fifty days after Christ’s resurrection. Forty of these days He spent with His disciples on earth, and at the end of this time He ascended to heaven, taking with Him the multitude of captives who had been raised from the dead. What a welcome awaited the Savior! Can we imagine the scene? Christ led the way. As they drew near the city of God, the escorting angels asked that the gates of heaven be opened, so that the King of glory might come in. Christ entered amid the presence of celestial beings. He went home as a conqueror, bringing the trophies of His victory and presenting them to the Father.

“Now He declares, ‘Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, ‘I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am.’ ‘ . . . The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him.’”

“With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!’ [28]

Amid all this glory and splendor Christ did not forget His earthly disciples, who during these ten days had been waiting with deep heart searching for the promised Spirit. Then came Pentecost. Here again type met anti type, as is recorded in the book of Acts, “The day of Pentecost was fully come.” Acts 2:1. The Greek conveys the idea that at this time the day of Pentecost was fulfilled. This outpouring of the Spirit carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had already begun His ministry, and was now shedding down upon His followers the promised blessing. Peter, in his sermon on this day, declares of Christ:

“This Jesus bath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he bath shed forth this, which you now see and hear. . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God bath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ [i. e., the Anointed One].” Verses 32-36.

The demonstration on the day of Pentecost was to the disciples an evidence by which they might “know assuredly” that God had made Jesus their Anointed One.

“The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven’s communication that the Redeemer’s inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.” [29]

This gift of the Holy Spirit brought the evidence of the power of Christ’s ministry in heaven, down to earth.

“Of what avail would it be to us that the only begotten Son of God humbled Himself endured the temptations of the wily foe, and died, the just for the unjust, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent, to make effectual in each individual case what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer?” [30]

Peter made it clear that this ministry of Christ was for everyone, not only for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Verses 38, 39.

Christ died for all; Christ lives and intercedes for all.” The world that Satan has claimed and has ruled over with cruel tyranny, the Son of God has, by one vast achievement, encircled in His love, and connected again with the throne of Jehovah. Cherubim and seraphim, and the unnumbered hosts of all the sinless worlds, sang anthems of praise to God and the Lamb when this triumph was assured.” [31]

The Blowing of Trumpets

The first day of the seventh month was a day of blowing of trumpets for the children of Israel. (Numbers 29:1) This day was kept as a ceremonial Sabbath and was one of the seven days of holy convocation connected with the annual services. (Leviticus 23:24) This ceremony took place ten days before the solemn Day of Atonement. The Jews still call these days the ten days of repentance. They are preparatory days, heart-searching days, to get ready for the Day of Atonement. We see in the heralding of the Advent message in the years prior to 1844, a fulfillment of this type, when the solemn message was proclaimed around the world that the hour of God’s judgment was at hand.

The Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement was of all days of the year the most solemn. It was a day of judgment. On this day it was decided who should live and who should die. It was a fast day, a holy convocation. Every soul must abstain from all secular labor and humble himself before God. It was a day of deep heart searching and prayer, a day when Israel came into perfect oneness with God, a day when sin was completely separated from the camp. (Leviticus 16:16-34) On this day all Israel awakened early, and the morning sacrifice was offered as usual. (Numbers 29:11.)

The high priest, who for days before had been preparing his heart, now laid aside his regular priestly robes and put on the holy white garments. The girdle he wore was also white, and upon his head he placed a linen miter instead of the regular bonnet. (Leviticus 16:4.) He entered softly into the most holy place and let the incense cover the mercy seat. (Verse 13) After coming out again to the court, he took the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it before the mercy seat as an offering for himself and for his family. (Verses 11, 14) Once

again he returned to the altar, and after taking the blood of the Lord's goat, he re-entered the most holy place and sprinkled the blood before the mercy seat. (Verse 15) This made an atonement for the most holy, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." Verse 16. He then did the same for the holy place and for the altar. (Verses 17-19) When he had made an end of reconciling the holy places and the altar and the congregation, he took the live goat and in figure transferred all the sins upon its head, and sent it away by the hand of a fit man into a land not inhabited. (Verses 20-22) When these special services were completed, the high priest changed his raiment and put on again the regular garments and offered a burnt offering for himself and for the people. (Verses 23, 24)

The Anti Typical Day of Atonement

We have noticed that the Passover met its anti types in the crucifixion of Christ, the wave sheaf in His resurrection, and the Feast of Weeks in the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Since these feasts took

place near the beginning of the Jewish year, and met their fulfillment at the beginning of the Christian Era, we conclude that the anti types of the three later events would occur near the end of time. It is also reasonable to expect that the Lord would indicate somewhere in His Holy Word when such an important event as the anti typical day of atonement, or the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, would begin.

It is a well-established fact that the end of the 2300 years of Daniel's prophecy marks the beginning of this solemn service. This long prophetic period began in 457 BC and ended in AD 1844. Consequently, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary could not begin until 1844. While the prophet Daniel gave the precise time of the beginning of the day of judgment, the apostle John records the announcement of this important event to the world. In vision John beheld "another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,. . . saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Revelation 14:6, 7.

On the Day of Atonement in the typical service the high priest removed all sin from the sanctuary. This was the closing work of atonement and was the last service performed by him during the year. This prefigured the final work of the ministration of Christ, our great High Priest, in heaven. This service involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment, and will take place immediately preceding the second coming of Christ, for before He comes every case has been decided and the announcement has been made:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11,12.

There were three important steps in the final disposition of sin presented in type to Israel in the sanctuary services.

"The people were taught each day the great truths relative to Christ's death and ministration, and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners." [32]

On Calvary, Christ is the substitute accepted in the sinner's stead. In the holy place in the heavenly sanctuary Christ ministers His blood on behalf of penitent believers. In the most holy place the sins of all the truly penitent are blotted from the books of heaven. Then the sanctuary is cleansed from the record of all sin.

The Necessity for a Day of Atonement

In the earthly tabernacle, when the repentant sinner brought his offering to the court, he placed his hand upon the animal's head, confessing his sin. Then the victim was slain, and the priest ministered the blood. In the case of a common person or a ruler, the majority of cases, the blood was placed upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering and the ministering priest ate a portion of the flesh of the animal. Thus forgiveness was registered against the record of the sin, the priest took the guilt upon himself, and the sinner went free. In case a priest sinned, or the congregation as a whole was guilty of some wrong, the priest confessed the sin over the head of the animal, but the blood was carried into the holy place and sprinkled before the Lord and placed on the horns of the golden altar of incense. Then the whole animal was burned without the camp. These ceremonies both alike symbolized the transfer of sin from the sinner to the sanctuary.

After the sinner had done his part he left the sanctuary knowing that his sins had been forgiven. This did not mean, however, that the sin was never heard of again. It is true that he need not do anything more about it; as far as he was concerned he had obtained forgiveness. But the record of his sin was still in the sanctuary awaiting the Day of Atonement." But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Hebrews 10:1 This daily forgiveness then depended on the sinner's future course. If he continued faithful until the Day of Atonement, all his sins were blotted out and he was completely cleansed. It must be noted that there

is a difference between sins being covered or forgiven, and sins being entirely obliterated. Sins that have been forgiven may return upon the sinner's head, should he fall back into the old path and renounce his repentance.

"It is true that he may once have received forgiveness; but his unmerciful spirit shows that he now rejects God's pardoning love. He has separated himself from God, and is in the same condition as before he was forgiven. He has denied his repentance, and his sins are upon him as if he had not repented." [33]

This teaching is not pleasing to many. They have difficulty in thinking that God deals with sinners in this way. The prophet Ezekiel throws light on this subject." Yet you say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, and committed iniquity, and dies in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die." Ezekiel 18:25, 26. We should be thankful that the converse is also true: the transgressions of those who remain faithful to the end shall not be mentioned to them, but their righteousness alone will be remembered. (Verse 22)

It is made clear in the book of Hebrews that as the earthly sanctuary had to be cleansed, so must the heavenly." It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." Hebrews 9:23. It may seem strange to us to think of anything in heaven requiring cleansing, but the book of Hebrews declares that such is the case. Christ by His own blood has entered into heaven itself for us, but not to suffer death. Often, for since He offered Himself once He now ministers the blood of that one sacrifice. This blood itself abolishes sin forever, but not until after the judgment has been completed. Paul declared, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:10. Observe also what the writer to the Hebrews says:

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world bath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:26-28.

At His first coming Christ bore our sins, but at His Second Coming He appears without sin. All sin has been removed from the sanctuary in heaven as on the Day of Atonement it was removed from the earthly sanctuary and placed upon the head of the scapegoat.

The Scapegoat

It should be noted that the scapegoat does not take the sins from the sinner. In other words, he does not bear the sins by taking them upon himself. They are not placed upon him in order to allow the sinner to go free, for this has already been accomplished. Not until the high priest had completed his work in the most holy place were the sins placed upon the scapegoat. Were the sins destroyed when the sinner's penalty was paid, the devil, who is primarily responsible for all sin, would be freed from these sins. If this should be the case, Christ would become the devil's substitute, which would be unthinkable.

Satan has used all his wicked powers to try to make the blood of Christ ineffectual for us. He is responsible for all sin, having originated it and propagated it all through the centuries. It is therefore only reasonable and right that he should be annihilated with all the sins upon him that have ever been committed. The confession of all the sins of the children of Israel on the head of the Azazel goat signifies his responsibility for their committal. They are given to him as the primary cause of all the sins that the people have committed. He bears them as a criminal, not as a savior, and as a criminal he is separated forever from the congregation of God's people." The land of separation" to which the goat is banished is a fitting representation of the desolate earth to which Satan is cast during the millennium. (Revelation 20; Jeremiah 4:23-26)

Why Is the Anti Typical Day of Atonement so Long?

The question as to why Jesus has not finished His mediatorial work ere this has been a perplexity to many. Some have wondered whether a mistake has been made in the time of reckoning. We believe the study of such a question will strengthen our faith rather than cause it to be shaken. It will give us another glimpse of God's long-suffering for the last generation who are living upon this earth and will cause us to make a solemn vow that we will not be responsible for longer delay.

The apostle Peter, who himself was most impetuous, who always wanted to hurry things along, had a revelation of the way in which Jesus does His work and has left the record for us that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. Here is a picture of Christ waiting patiently for us, not wishing to close the door until we are all safely inside.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." [34]

It is evident then that the reason the anti typical day of atonement still lingers is that the character of Christ is not yet perfectly reproduced in us, His people. Some of the Old Testament writers also present the same view of Christ's long-suffering. Hosea, that patient prophet, presents God speaking to His children as a father to his son." I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms. . . . I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." Hosea 11:3,4. I did all I could for them, but they were "bent to backsliding" (verse 7), or as the figure is, they swung back like a pendulum all the while. Then comes the pathetic appeal, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboini?" Verse 8. These two cities were destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah, but God does not like to mention the more familiar cities because of their great wickedness. (Deuteronomy 29:23) When the Lord thinks of giving up one of His children, He declares, "Mine heart is turned within me." Hosea 11:8.

The psalmist presents to us another reason why the judgment is so long in process." The Lord shall count, when he writes up the people [when He examines the books], that this man was born there." Psalm 87:6. In the judgment now He is weighing all the evidence, trying to find a way to save as many as possible. He is thinking of our background, of the privileges or lack of privileges we have had. He is saying, "This man was born in Ethiopia, or Babylon, or Rahab, or perchance in Philistia or Tyre" (verses 4, 5), and his case must receive special consideration. Christ is examining the records now. He is waiting for us, for you, for me, for the Ethiopian, for the Babylonian. Many are looking on to see the results. The angels in glory, the inhabitants of other worlds, and also the devil are watching with a critical eye. All attention is centered in the judgment now proceeding in heaven. It is not for us to say in our hearts, "My lord delayed his coming" (Matthew 24:48; Luke 12:45), but it is our business to go and tell all men about the judgment-hour message, and help them to get ready. He is waiting for us to take this message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14) Instead of murmuring about the delay, let it be our one concern that we are not causing that delay by our apathy and indolence.

The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles began five days after the Day of Atonement. All Israel at this time rejoiced in their acceptance with God, and thanked Him for the bounties of the harvest that had been safely gathered in. This was the crowning festival of the year. The Israelites were to take "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." Leviticus 23:40.

This feast was commemorative of the wilderness sojourn, when the Israelites had no fixed dwelling place, but it is also typical of the experience of the true Israelites as they journey through the wilderness of sin to the heavenly Canaan.

It points forward to the great day of the ingathering of God's people at the final harvest when they shall come "from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 8:11. Christ now lays aside His priestly robes and puts on His kingly garments and with the holy angels He comes for His redeemed. John gives a vivid description of this scene:

"I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he does judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Revelation 19:11-14.

Although He comes in such majestic splendor, how comforting it is to notice that His vesture is still dipped in blood. If it were not for this blood, we could not meet Him in peace, but it is because He is coming for us that He is arrayed in this garment. Then the redeemed will sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. All honor is given to the Lamb, who by His blood has made possible our redemption and our entrance into the feast. Some of the songs that Israel sang of old will be fittingly employed by us then." Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Psalm 122:2. Again, "The Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation." Isaiah 12:2, 3.

The Jubilee

In addition to the lessons of the sanctuary, God continued to give His people types that helped them to understand the significance of the gospel. During the year of jubilee they would look forward to the time when, freed from all sin, they would enter into their former possessions. The fiftieth year, or year of jubilee, was one of special significance.

"You shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and you shall return every man unto his possession, and you shall return every man unto his family." Leviticus 25:10.

The plan of redemption included the buying back of man's original possession. All that was lost because of transgression will be fully restored by the Savior. Those who have been bound by sin will in the anti typical jubilee year obtain full liberty. The earth itself will be purified and restored to its primeval beauty. The redeemed will at that time "possess their possessions" and will become members of the family of God. Their dwelling place will be the new earth that has been prepared for them.

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Isaiah 65:17-19.

Cities of Refuge

Many lessons illustrating the gospel are found from the particulars given of the cities of refuge. Three cities were so placed on each side of Jordan that one of them was always within reach of him who was fleeing from his avenger. So has the Savior placed Himself within the reach of all, even of such as are in the utmost peril of vengeance. The high roads leading to each city were always kept in good repair, so that the fugitive might not be hindered in his flight. God designed that every time an Israelite saw a city of refuge, he should think of Christ, to whom every condemned sinner can flee for shelter from the enemy. There must be no delay. As soon as one had taken the life of another, the manslayer must flee at once; no family ties could hold him. His life depended upon his speedy flight to the city. Christ has made ample provision that all may "have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Hebrews 6:18.

Anciently, the one who had fled to the city found life within its walls, but death awaited him if he passed beyond its boundary. The beloved disciple was familiar with this truth when he wrote, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11, 12. It is not sufficient simply to believe on Christ; we must abide in Him to obtain life.

The Gospel Plan Revealed to Hosea

In the experience of some of the prophets, such as Hosea and Jonah, and in the stories of Ruth and Esther is to be found an endless field of study.

The love that Hosea manifested toward his wayward wife is a type of the love God has shown in His attitude toward sinners. At no time did the prophet ever waver in his tender care for his wandering bride. Despite Gomer's infidelity Hosea remained faithful and constant. What otherwise would have been a wretched scandal became one of the great gospel lessons of the Old Testament. All must have wondered at the marvelous love manifested by Hosea—a holy love for an unholy woman. Think what such a loathsome association would mean to a man of such spotless purity, yet he continued to look with longing pity upon his wife. Although she deserted him for other lovers, he searched diligently for her, and having found her he redeemed her to himself again. It was his love that made him go all the way. Although she had forsaken him, he refused to give her up.

Sinful man has acted toward God in the same way as Gomer did toward Hosea. We have spurned His longsuffering and His tender love, but He refuses to let us go. His relationship with us is symbolized by marriage. Just as in marriage two people become one flesh, so Christ, because of His great love, was willing to come down to this earth, and, taking our nature upon Him, became one with us. He came to seek and to save that which was lost—to redeem us from the land of sin and disgrace and to restore us to our former state of holiness and purity. The message of the book of Hosea presents one of the most beautiful pictures in the Old Testament, of God's love for His rebellious people who had broken their covenant with Him and had given themselves up to the worship of sin and pleasure.

Jonah

Christ declared to the generation of His day that no sign would be given to them save the sign of the prophet Jonah. (Matthew 12:39) He presents Jonah's experience in the belly of the whale as a type of the experience He would pass through in the tomb. Just as Jonah virtually died and was buried and rose again, so Christ would do the same. Jonah went forth and proclaimed the gospel to the inhabitants of Nineveh, and what remarkable success he had! We could almost say he went with resurrection power." By the resurrection from the dead," the apostle Paul states, "Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power." Romans 1:4.

The Book of Ruth

The great gospel work in the book of Ruth is that of redeeming. This relates to the nearest of kin, who had the right to acquire the former possessions of his friend by paying the ransom price. In Boaz, the kinsman of Elimelech, "a mighty man of wealth," we have another beautiful type of the redemption provided by Christ. The name Boaz means "ability." What a fitting title to apply to Christ. As the God man, He is our Kinsman-Redeemer. He has not only the right but the ability to save, even to the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him. The power to redeem fallen man was not vested in the angels, for they were not "nigh of kin." Christ did not take on

Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. (Hebrews 2:14-16) Therefore He is not ashamed to call us brethren. (Verse 11.) The patriarch Job recognized Christ as the near Kinsman, the “Goel” when he looked forward to a life beyond the tomb.” I know that my redeemer [near Kinsman] lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.” Job 19:25.

Right throughout the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi are to be found types of the gospel. Some of these are apparent to the casual reader, but others lie hidden, like rare diamonds, beneath the surface, and their brilliance is discerned only by those of spiritual vision. As the millions of stars in the heavens come into our view by the giant telescope, so can the types of the gospel be discerned in every page of the Old Testament under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

7. The Atonement And The Cross

TAYLOR G. BUNCH

The Atonement and the Cross

The invitation to speak on such a sublime subject on such an important occasion is a challenge that has sent me to the place of diligent study and fervent prayer, the result of which is a broadening of spiritual vision and a deepening of spiritual experience, for which I am deeply grateful. The experience is also humbling, because Scriptural research reveals one’s limitations in knowledge and thus emphasizes the truthfulness of Paul’s statement that “now we see through a glass, darkly,” and “know in part” until partial knowledge is supplanted by “that which is perfect,” when “the perfect state of things is come” and “all that is imperfect will be brought to an end.” (1 Corinthians 13:9-12, Weymouth.)

Our present limited vision is emphasized in scores of statements in the instruction given us through the Spirit of prophecy, of which the following are samples:

“You must have an experience much deeper than you have yet even thought of having. Many who are already members of God’s great family know little of what it means to behold His glory and to be changed from glory to glory. Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ’s excellence, and your souls thrill with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Savior’s love. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart’s best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communing. You have seen but the first rays of the early dawn of His glory. . . . ‘The path of the righteous is as the dawning light that shines more and more unto the perfect day.’ Proverbs 4:18, A. R. V. Having repented of our sins, confessed them, and found pardon, we are to continue to learn of Christ until we come into the full noontide of a perfect gospel faith.” [1]

“It is impossible for any mind to comprehend all the richness and greatness of even one promise of God. One catches the glory of one point of view, another the beauty and grace from another point, and the soul is filled with the heavenly light. If we saw all the glory, the spirit would faint. But we can bear far greater revelations from God’s abundant promises than we now enjoy. It makes my heart sad to think how we lose sight of the fullness of blessing designed for us. We content ourselves with momentary flashes of spiritual illumination, when we might walk day after day in the light of His presence.” [2]

“It is impossible for any human mind to exhaust even one truth or promise of the Bible. One catches the glory from one point of view, another from another point; yet we can discern only gleaming. The full radiance is beyond our vision. As we contemplate the great things of God’s word, we look into a fountain that broadens and deepens beneath our gaze. Its breadth and depth pass our knowledge. As we gaze, the vision widens; stretched out before us we behold a boundless, endless sea. Such study has vivifying power. The mind and heart acquire new strength, new life.” [3]

Let us all hope and pray that the studies and experiences of this Bible Conference will take us in spiritual vision beyond the mere “gleaming” and “momentary flashes of spiritual illumination” and the “twilight perception of Christ’s excellence” toward the “full radiance” of the “noontide of a perfect gospel faith” in the very “light of His presence,” so that we can enjoy the “entirely different religious experience” promised God’s remnant people when the early and latter rains are poured out for the speedy finishing of God’s work in the earth.

First of all let us consider some basic principles to guide us in our study and lead us to right conclusions:

1. The wages, result, or penalty of sin is death, not the first death, which is the common lot of humanity and is the result of Adam’s transgression, for which we are not responsible, but the second, eternal, death. The first is temporary and is therefore called “sleep,” because there will be an awakening, or resurrection, but the second will be permanent, from which there will be no resurrection. It is the penalty for our own transgressions, for which we are responsible.

2. Sin is the transgression, or violation, of divine law, the organic, constitutional law of basic principles that govern the moral universe, principles that set forth the character of the Lawgiver.

3. Both citizenship and justice demand that the requirements of God's law be fully satisfied. The standard can in no wise be lowered or altered to reach man in his fallen estate, for that would jeopardize the sovereignty of God and the stability of His government. Also, atonement, or reconciliation, is possible only on the basis of perfect obedience, either by the transgressor or by another in his behalf. Mercy and grace are available to the sinner only after the demands of the law are fully met. Strictly speaking, mercy and grace do not supplant justice, but they are extended to the repentant sinner because a substitute meets the death penalty and thus satisfies the requirements of justice, which is one of the foundation pillars of the divine administration.

4. Death is not only the penalty for disobedience but also the price of redemption, and both are accomplished by the same person in the one event—the atoning death of Christ, the Innocent One, on the cross of Calvary. Since only the Creator has the power to re-create, or redeem, and only the Lawgiver can save from the curse, or condemnation, of the law, the Son of God alone could pay the redemption price, which could not be accomplished “with corruptible things, as silver and gold,” but only “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,” for “without shedding of blood is no remission.” There is no other means of being restored to the divine favor.

5. The plan of redemption is world embracing in its scope and has thus been available to all men in all ages and dispensations.” Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world.” [4] Christ is the alpha and the omega of the plan of redemption, the first and the last of all truth and righteousness, the great I AM of all time, the Author and the Finisher of all faith, the all and in all of Christian experience. He is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” and thus the light “which lights every man that comes into the world.” Christ is the very center and substance of Christianity, and to Him will be given all honor and glory through all eternity. In the light of these statements the two following quotations are significant:

“Holy men of old were saved by faith in the blood of Christ. As they saw the dying agonies of the sacrificial victims, they looked across the gulf of ages to the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world.” [5]

“Few give thought to the sufferings that sin has caused the Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God.” [6]

6. And last but not least, the subject of the atonement is incomprehensible except on the basis of experience:

“The soul must be cleansed from vanity and pride, and vacated of all that has held it in possession, and Christ must be enthroned within. Human science is too limited to comprehend the atonement. The plan of redemption is so far-reaching that philosophy cannot explain it. It will ever remain a mystery that the most profound reasoning cannot fathom. The science of salvation cannot be explained; but it can be known by experience.” [7]

This fact is strikingly illustrated by the Hebrew race, to whom the plan of redemption was revealed through so many centuries in types and shadows and ceremonies, as well as the revelations of the prophets, and yet as a people they failed to comprehend. When the One to whom all their services pointed came into the world to visit His own, “his own received him not.” They rejected and crucified their own

Messiah, because their knowledge of the atonement was a mere theory, and they did not know redemption as an individual experience. Their knowledge was theoretical rather than practical and experimental. What a mighty challenge is their failure to modern Israel, who have inherited “the exceeding great and precious promises”! “That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth to-day,” and thus to spiritual Israel “will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people.” [8]

In the fulfillment of this divinely appointed mission we must not fail. We shall discuss the subject of “The Atonement and the Cross” in three divisions: “The Atonement in Promise,” “The Atonement in Reality,” and “The Atonement in Experience.

The Atonement in Promise

Not only is Christ “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” but He entered the shadow of the cross before the earth was created, when, in anticipation of the fall, He offered to pay the redemption price, as is set forth in the following statements:

“The plan of our redemption was not an after-thought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of ‘the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.’ It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the

deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency.” [9]

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished,’ He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares, ‘Father, it is finished. I have done thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, “I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am.” [10]

Because of His foreknowledge through the eternal ages of the past, and the provision that had been made for the emergency of sin, the Son of God was in the shadow of the cross from times eternal. In fact, there had never been a time when He was free from the certainty and anticipation of Calvary. Although the entrance of sin did not take the members of the Godhead by surprise, it came as a terrible shock to all created intelligence. This is strikingly described in the following statement:

“The fall of man filled all heaven with sorrow. The world that God had made was blighted with the curse of sin, and inhabited by beings doomed to misery and death. There appeared no escape for those who had transgressed the law. Angels ceased their songs of praise. Throughout the heavenly courts there was mourning for the ruin that sin had wrought.

“The Son of God, heaven’s glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law, and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin, sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race.

“Before the Father He pleaded in the sinner’s behalf, while the host of heaven awaited the result with an intensity of interest that words cannot express. Long continued was that mysterious communing, ‘the counsel of peace’ for the fallen sons of men. The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’; yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ’ O, the mystery of redemption! The love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depth of that love which ‘passes knowledge’? Through endless ages, immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore. . . .

“The angels prostrated themselves at the feet of their Commander, and offered to become a sacrifice for man. But an angel’s life could not pay the debt; only He who created man had the power to redeem him. Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. The glory and blessedness of a world redeemed, out measured even the anguish and sacrifice of the Prince of life. Through the celestial courts echoed the first strains of that song which was to ring out above the hills of Bethlehem, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. ’ With a deeper gladness now than in the rapture of the new creation, ‘the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.’ [11]

The good news that the plan of redemption provided a way of escape was communicated to Adam and Eve through a statement made to Satan in their hearing: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15. In this first gospel promise is revealed the temporary but triumphant death of the promised Seed, who would come into the world through birth, and thus become a partaker of human nature. Through His incarnation and death He would triumph over His antagonist, who would make his attacks chiefly from the rear, resulting in a temporary bruise of the heel, whereas Christ would meet him face to face in a head-on collision, which would crush his head in a defeat that would be fatal and permanent.” Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14, 15. The doctrines of the immaculate conception and the assumption of Mary destroy the value of the incarnation and the possibility of the atonement.

The plan of redemption was further revealed in the experience of the first parents of the human race when, as the result of sin, the robe of “light and glory, such as the angels wear,” which enshrouded them, departed, leaving them naked. By their own works they made for themselves aprons, or girdles, of fig leaves, which proved to be a miserable substitute for their former beautiful garments of innocence. They doubtless felt fairly well clothed, and may even have been proud of their handiwork, until God came into the garden. Then they realized that man-made garments were not sufficient in the divine presence, and they were so conscious of their nakedness that in their shame they ran and hid themselves.

The Lord then made them “coats of skins, and clothed them.” This covering was the handiwork of God, without one human stitch, but it cost the life of the animal that was typical of the Lamb of God, whose atoning sacrifice alone could pay the redemption price and restore man to his lost dominion. This complete covering was a gift to the guilty pair, with no obligation on their part except to receive it and put it on in place of the fig-leaf partial covering made by human hands. This illustrates the fact that attempted salvation by human works can produce but “filthy rags,” which can never prepare man to stand in the presence of a holy God. Here, in the form of an acted parable, is the first sermon ever preached on righteousness by faith, which is the very core of the gospel in all ages.

“The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. . . . A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God, it would ever have continued to enshroud them. But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig-leaves for a covering. . . .

“Nothing can man devise to supply the place of his lost robe of innocence. No fig-leaf garment, no worldly citizen-dress, can be worn by those who sit down with Christ and angels at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . . This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. . . . By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. . . . All must pass the scrutiny of the great King, and only those are received who have put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness.” [12]

The antagonism of Satan to the true system of religion based on righteousness and salvation by faith instead of on human works was revealed in another acted parable, when Cain presented a substitute offering and then slew Abel because of his faith and obedience. Cain brought “of the fruit of the ground,” the product of his own labor, as “an offering unto the Lord.” But his bloodless sacrifice was not acceptable, because “without shedding of blood is no remission.” The divine instruction is: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.” Leviticus 17:11. No bloodless sacrifice could represent the atoning death of Christ, and therefore the substitute offering was worse than useless. In fact it was an insult to God and an act of disobedience and rebellion, as are all human substitutes for the divine requirements. The rejection of Cain’s offering and the acceptance of Abel’s made Cain angry, and his spirit of envy led to murder.

Abel’s sacrifice was pleasing to God, because it was typical of the Lamb of God, who would die to atone for his sins. He was pardoned and experienced the joy of justification with the consciousness that his sins were covered so completely that God looked upon him as if he had never sinned.” By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks.” Hebrews 11:4. We are told that Cain “was of that wicked one, and slew his brother,” because “his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.” 1 John 3:12.

Through his example of “the obedience of faith,” Abel “yet speaks” to all mankind in one of the most eloquent sermons ever preached on righteousness by faith. And as has been true down through the ages, the experience brought on him the enmity and wrath of Satan, resulting in his martyrdom, the first of the uncounted millions who have sealed their faith with their blood because they overcame the great deceiver “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony,” and loved not their lives unto the death.”

Another outstanding example of the atonement in promise is in the experience of Abraham. In Christ’s argument with the Jews over His identity as the Son of God and the promised Messiah, Jesus said in answer to their boast of being the children of Abraham: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” John 8:56. When did Abraham get this vision of the coming Emmanuel? Chiefly in the experience referred to in Hebrews 11:17: “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.” This test of faith is recorded in Genesis 22. The Lord commanded Abraham to take his only son, the son of promise, whom he dearly loved and in whom his hopes centered-and offer him as a sacrifice to the Lord. Through this miracle child the Seed was to come, so that “all families of the earth” would be blessed. In the light of these promises the command seemed incredible. But he had never disobeyed his Lord, and “by faith” he carried out the strange instruction, knowing that the divine promises would be fulfilled even if the Lord had to resurrect Isaac from the dead.

The place of test and vision was on Mount Moriah, where the father and son erected a crude altar of stones on what is believed to be the very spot where the altar of burnt offering was located centuries later in Solomon’s Temple. During the entire three days’ journey, Isaac had been puzzled over the source of the sacrificial lamb, and when his father broke the news to him that he was to be the offering, he was filled with terror, but as a sharer of the faith of his godly father, he offered no resistance. To all intents and purposes the sacrifice of Isaac was an accomplished fact, even though at the last moment the Lord stayed the hand that held the uplifted knife. A

voice from heaven told Abraham not to slay the lad, "For now I know that thou fears God, seeing thou has not withheld thy son, your only son from me."

Abraham's attention was then called to a ram caught in a thicket by its horns, and he offered it upon the altar as a substitute for Isaac. Then the Lord renewed His covenant with Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. Note the following comments on this experience:

"Abraham's great act of faith stands like a pillar of light, illuminating the pathway of God's servants in all succeeding ages. . . . Through type and promise, God 'preached before the gospel unto Abraham.' And the patriarch's faith was fixed upon the Redeemer to come. . . . The ram offered in the place of Isaac represented the Son of God, who was to be sacrificed in our stead. . . . it was to impress Abraham's mind with the reality of the gospel, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. The agony which he endured during the dark days of that fearful trial, was permitted that he might understand from his own experience something of the greatness of the sacrifice made by the infinite God for man's redemption. . . . The sacrifice required of Abraham was not alone for his own good, nor solely for the benefit of succeeding generations; but it was also for the instruction of the sinless intelligence of heaven and of other worlds. The field of the controversy between Christ and Satan, the field on which the plan of redemption is wrought out, is the lesson-book of the universe. . . . God desired to prove the loyalty of his servant before all heaven, to demonstrate that nothing less than perfect obedience can be accepted, and to open more fully before them the plan of salvation. . . . Light was shed upon the mystery of redemption, and even the angels under-, stood more clearly the wonderful provision that God had made for man's salvation." [13]

"Abraham had greatly desired to see the promised Savior. He offered up the most earnest prayer that before his death he might behold the Messiah. And he saw Christ. A supernatural light was given him, and he acknowledged Christ's divine character. He saw His day, and was glad. He was given a view of the divine sacrifice for sin. Of this sacrifice he had an illustration in his own experience. . . . Upon the altar of sacrifice he laid the son of promise, the son in whom his hopes were centered. . . . This terrible ordeal was imposed upon Abraham that he might see the day of Christ, and realize the great love of God for the world, so great that to raise it from its degradation, He gave His only begotten Son to a most shameful death. Abraham learned of God the greatest lesson ever given to mortal. His prayer that he might see Christ before he should die was answered." [14]

The true system of religion, which has its center and substance in righteousness and salvation by faith in the atoning blood of Christ, was further revealed to ancient Israel through the typical sanctuary and its services. The statement, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them," indicates that by this means the Lord could come into a closer relationship with His people than would otherwise have been possible. Every part of the sanctuary, including its furniture, priesthood, and services, was typical of Christ and His priestly ministration in the heavenly sanctuary, where He is both the victim and the priest. He ministers His own blood, and of the redeemed out of the last generation it is said that they "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:14.

"Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary," declared the psalmist, and Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." The purpose of the sanctuary and its services was therefore to reveal Him as the only way of life and truth. This is testified to in the following quotations:

"In the ministration of the tabernacle, and of the temple that afterward took its place, the people were taught each day the great truths relative to Christ's death and ministration, and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners." [15]

"Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. . . . In the plan of redemption, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last." [16]

"Through the teachings of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before all nations, and all who would look to Him should live. Christ was the foundation of the Jewish economy. The whole system of types and symbols was a compacted prophecy of the gospel, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption." [17]

"The rites of the Jewish economy were instituted by Christ Himself. He was the foundation of their system of sacrificial offerings, the great anti type of all their religious service. The blood shed as the sacrifices were offered pointed to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. All the typical offerings were fulfilled in Him." [18]

"There was virtue in the symbolic service, only as it directed the worshipers to Christ as their personal Savior." [19]

"Christ was the foundation and life of the temple. Its services were typical of the sacrifice of the Son of God. The priesthood was established to represent the mediatorial character and work of Christ. The entire plan of sacrificial worship was a foreshadowing of the Savior's death to redeem the world. There would be no efficacy in these offerings when the great event toward which they had pointed

for ages was consummated. Since the whole ritual economy was symbolical of Christ, it had no value apart from Him. When the Jews scaled their rejection of Christ by delivering Him to death, they rejected all that gave significance to the temple and its services. Its sacredness had departed. It was doomed to destruction. . . . In putting Christ to death, the Jews virtually destroyed their temple.” [20]

“As they departed from God, the Jews in a great degree lost sight of the teachings of the ritual service. That service had been instituted by Christ Himself. In every part it was a symbol of Him; and it had been full of vitality and spiritual beauty. But the Jews lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to the dead forms. They trusted to the sacrifices and ordinances themselves, instead of resting upon Him to whom they pointed.” [21]

“The world has been committed to Christ, and through Him has come every blessing from God to the fallen race. He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Savior. . . . In every page, whether history, or precept, or prophecy, the Old Testament Scriptures are irradiated with the glory of the Son of God. So far as it was of divine institution, the entire system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. To Christ ‘give all the prophets witness.’ From the promise given to Adam, down through the patriarchal line and the legal economy, heaven’s glorious light made plain the footsteps of the Redeemer. Seers beheld the Star of Bethlehem, the Shiloh to come, as future things swept before them in mysterious procession. In every sacrifice, Christ’s death was shown. In every cloud of incense His righteousness ascended. By every jubilee trumpet His name was sounded. In the awful mystery of the holy of holies His glory dwelt.” [22]

These statements make it evident that the atonement in type was not completed at the altar of burnt offering, where the sacrifices were slain in the court, but included the ministry of the priests in the holy place and the high priest in the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement. The blood of the typical sacrifices had to be ministered in the sinner’s behalf. Each part was a finished work, but all three were required to make the atonement complete. That this is also true in the anti typical is self-evident. The death of Christ on the cross paid the redemption price, but His blood must be applied to the repentant sinner through His own mediation, in order that the atonement or reconciliation may be complete.

It is one of the great tragedies of history that ancient Israel took their eyes off the meaning and purpose of their Temple and its services and fixed them upon those things that were only typical, material, and temporary. They saw only the human priests, the altar of burnt offering, the dying sacrificial victims, the table with its twelve cakes of show bread, the seven-branched candlestick with its blazing lights, the altar of incense with its ascending fragrance,

the ark of the covenant with its mercy seat and the two angels of beaten gold on either side. The Jews failed to see what these material things were designed to show them, and therefore the types became virtual objects of worship and their religion a species of idolatry.

“Through paganism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his greatest triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. . . . The principle that man can save himself by his own works, lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin.” [23]

“He[Christ] was the one in whom all the Jewish economy and typical service was to find its fulfillment. He stood forth in the place of the temple; all the offices of the church centered in Himself alone.” [24]

“Yet they crucified the Originator of all the Jewish economy, Him to whom all their ordinances pointed. . . . They held, and still hold, the mere husks, the shadows, the figures symbolizing the true.” [25]

Modern Israel faces the same danger. It is tragic indeed that many today see only what the Jews saw, the literal so types rather than the spiritual anti types. They see the court instead of the church it symbolized, the altar of burnt offering rather than the altar of Calvary. They see the dying lamb rather than the Lamb of God, to whom it pointed the sinner; they behold the table of literal bread and forget Christ, the Bread of Life. They see the candlestick with its seven branches and fail to see Christ as “the light of the world” and of His church, through which He shines with the completeness of perfect illumination. They look at the literal altar of incense, with its ministering priests, instead of the ministration of Christ as He offers to the Father the prayers of His people with the fragrance of His own righteousness.

Altogether too many of God’s remnant people see only the wooden ark of the covenant containing the Ten Commandments written on stone. They see a literal mercy seat instead of Christ standing between the sinner and the broken law, ministering grace and mercy. Many see only two angels of gold rather than the mighty angel Gabriel and his associate covering cherub and their thousands of assistants who minister before the throne and were prefigured by the likeness of angels woven into the curtains of the sanctuary. God grant that our eyes may be opened to discern Christ and His priestly ministry in the heavenly temple rather than the typical and material symbols used to reveal Him to Israel. Otherwise our study of the typical sanctuary and its services will be in vain, and we too will be guilty of idolatry.

All the way from the fall of man and the introduction of the plan of redemption down to Calvary, Satan's enmity was evident. By his usurpation of Adam's position and kingdom he became "the prince of this world." He was therefore the official representative of this world in the councils of heaven from the time of the fall of Adam until Calvary, when Christ wrested the position from him and became "the second Adam." In Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7 is described two great meetings of the "sons of God," or the representatives of the different worlds, who came together before the Lord. It seems that a roll was called, and on both occasions Satan responded as the representative of this earth. The Lord asked him if he were acquainted with Job, "a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God, and despises evil." Satan knew Job well, and threw the challenge into the face of Jehovah that Job did not serve Him for nothing or because of love, but for the material advantages it brought him, and that if God would withdraw His protection, Job would curse Him to His face. The Lord accepted the challenge, and the fiery test proved Satan to be a liar. Job did not surrender his integrity, but withstood all the cruel onslaughts of Satan, and caused the defeat and embarrassment of the adversary before the universe.

Satan was three times declared to be "the prince of this world" by Christ, and felt so secure in this position that he offered his sovereignty to Christ in exchange for a single act of worship, which would constitute an acknowledgment of his own superiority. He said to Christ, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered to me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be yours." Luke 4:6, 7.

The very fact that the offer was a "temptation" indicates that Satan had the right to make the proposition and could have fulfilled his promise. But Jesus spurned the offer and began His journey on the bloody road to Calvary to win back the sovereignty of the world through conflict and sacrifice rather than compromise. The same offer was later accepted by the bishops of Rome, and to this day they boast of being the successors of the Caesars. Commenting on Revelation 11:15, A. T. Robertson said:

"This is the certain and glorious outcome of the age-long struggle against Satan, who wields the kingdom of the world which he offered to Christ on the mountain for one act of worship. But Jesus scorned partnership with Satan in the rule of the world, and chose war, war up to the hilt and to the end. Now the climax is come with Christ as Conqueror of the kingdom of this world for his Father. This is the crowning lesson of the Apocalypse." [26]

From the beginning, Satan was determined to make his ruler ship of the kingdom of this world permanent, but Christ was just as determined to thwart his plan.

"When Adam sinned, man broke away from the heaven-ordained center. A demon became the central power in the world. Where God's throne should have been, Satan had placed his throne. The world laid its homage, as a willing offering, at the feet of the enemy. Who could bring in the principles ordained by God in His rule and government to counter work the plans of Satan and bring the world back to its loyalty? God said: I will send My Son. . . . This is the remedy for sin. Christ says: 'Where Satan has set his throne, there shall stand My cross. Satan will be cast out, and I will be lifted up to draw all men unto, Me. I will become the center of the redeemed world.'" [27]

As He was approaching Gethsemane, Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:31, 32. That this "all" included the universe of sinless beings is evident from Colossians 1:20: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." The importance of the cross is emphasized by the fact that this event completed the reconciliation of the angels and sinless beings of other worlds to God. For the first time they fully understood the character of Satan and the meaning of the controversy that had long been a mystery to them.

"And as Christ in His expiring agony upon the cross cried out, 'It is finished!' a shout of triumph rung through ever), world, and through heaven itself. The great contest that had been so long in progress in this world was now decided, and Christ was conqueror. His death had answered the question whether the Father and the Son had sufficient love for man to exercise self-denial and a spirit of sacrifice. Satan had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he had ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested if permitted to control the intelligence of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration." [28]

The long controversy over the sovereignty of this world from its beginning in heaven to Satan's last attack on the remnant of God's church in the closing crisis, is graphically pictured in chapter twelve of the Revelation. Here the church of Christ through all the ages is symbolized by a woman who is clothed with the sun, or the righteousness of Christ, who is called "the Sun of Righteousness." She is standing on the moon and is crowned with twelve stars, symbolic of divinely appointed leadership. The Lord said, "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman" (Jeremiah 6:2); and Paul said to the church of Corinth: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

In regard to a woman being used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the church of God, Albertus Pieters said: "This meaning is more generally agreed upon than the meaning of almost any other of the chief figures of the book of Revelation." [29]

“Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church.” [30]

“In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as a woman, a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church.” [31]

The church of Christ is symbolized by one woman, whereas Babylon, the church of Satan, is represented by a family composed of a corrupt mother and many daughters of the same character. The church is spoken of as “the body of Christ,” and He can have but one body of which He is the head. (See Ephesians 2:22; 4:4.) Ancient Israel is called “the church in the wilderness.” (Acts 7:38) There has been but one true church through all the ages, of which all God’s people have been members. Those of the last generation are therefore called “the remnant of her seed” or children rather than “the remnant church.” (See Revelation 12:17)

“All of God’s people upon the earth are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. They have one Head that directs and governs the body.” [32]

“The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church.” [33]

In Hebrews 12:22, 23, we are told that “the church of the firstborn” embraces all “which are written in heaven,” including “an innumerable company of angels.”

It is evident that the symbolic woman under consideration cannot possibly represent the church of the Christian dispensation only, because the “man child” to whom she gave birth came into the world thirty years before the Christian church had its origin. The man child was of course Christ, who was later “caught up unto God, and to his throne,” and will someday “rule all nations with a rod of iron.” That this woman represents the one church of all time is the opinion of many of the best commentators:

“We regard the Woman as the symbol of God’s religious system on earth, from the beginning of His testimony until the consummation.” [34]

“It must then be the CHURCH; the church not simply as Jewish, but in a more generic and theocratic sense-the People of God.” [35]

“The Woman is the Old and New Testament Church of God in undivided unity.” [36]

“She is the heavenly representative of the people of God. . . . represented alike by the people of the old and new covenants. . . . With our writer there is only one true Israel, embracing alike the Jewish and Christian Church.” [37]

“Doubtless the Church of the Old Testament was the Mother of whom Christ came after the flesh. But here, as everywhere in the Book, no sharp dividing line is drawn between the Church of the Old Testament and the Christian Society, the latter is viewed as the Jewish Church come to its maturity. Thus the woman who gave birth to the Christ is afterwards identical with her who after His departure suffered for her faith in Him. . . and who is the mother of believers.” [38]

“There has really been but one Church on earth, existing through all times and under all economies. And so we have here, as the symbol of it, this one glorious woman, in whom all its highest excellencies and chief characteristics are summed up from the beginning even unto the great consummation.” [39]

The woman, or church, is pictured as waiting for the birth of the Redeemer. How long did God’s people wait for the promised Messiah?-from the gates of Paradise, when the first gospel promise was made, revealing the fact that redemption would come through the seed of the woman. Every godly mother hoped that her son would be the expected Deliverer. There was no definite knowledge of the time until Daniel received the prophecy of the seventy weeks of years, sixty nine of which would reach to “Messiah the Prince.” In this prophecy the very year of Christ’s baptism and anointing was pointed out almost six hundred years before the events occurred. So, naturally, when the time came “the people were in expectation.”

The revelator then saw another symbol, that of a “great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns.” In verse 9 this dragon is declared to represent-that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world.” That it also represents Satan’s earthly ruler ship through seven great universal powers of earth and the lesser kingdoms symbolized by the ten horns is evident. Both seven and ten are symbols of completeness and universality. Therefore, the dragon with seven heads and ten horns represents the entire history of the revolt of Satan against the government of God from the fall of a third of the angelic host and the first phase of the warfare against Michael in heaven to his final attack on the remnant of the church of Christ at the close of the career of the church militant.

That the dragon is symbolic of the completeness of Satan's dominion as "the prince of this world- is the position of most modern commentators, including our own:

"The seven heads may fitly represent the multiplied worldly powers which the evil one brings against Christ and His Church. . . . The whole scene is expressive of the great powers which from the beginning wage war with the Lamb!" [40]

"Here Satan is depicted as a great red monster, having seven heads and ten horns and upon his heads crowns. This and other similar presentations are surely given just to indicate the universality of Satanic power in the world. . . . The heads and horns and crowns simply express various phases of his earthly power." [41]

"The 'seven heads and ten horns' of this Dragon, represent the consummation of his efforts, through his control of the governments of this world, to persecute the true worshipers of God, and to secure for himself that worship which belongs to God alone. . . ; 'seven' being the number in this book to denote dispensational fullness or completeness." [42]

That the mighty dragon, the symbol of physical strength and power, should be defeated and finally destroyed by a Lamb, the symbol of timidity and weakness, is the paradox of paradoxes, indicating that the long contest has its climax in Christ's atoning sacrifice on the altar of Calvary. Satan's knowledge of the time of the Messiah's advent was gained through his study of the revelations of the prophets and of the types of the typical services:

"When God's written word was given through the Hebrew prophets, Satan studied with diligence the messages concerning the Messiah. Carefully he traced the words that outlined with unmistakable clearness Christ's work among men as a suffering sacrifice and a conquering king." [43]

His first definite knowledge as to the time was the prophecy of Daniel, and as the appointed time drew near Satan stood before the woman, or church, with even more expectancy than was manifested by God's own professed people. It was his long-expected opportunity, and he planned to make the most of it.

It seemed evident that at first Satan entertained some doubts regarding the identity of Jesus as the Messiah, just as did the people of God. He may have shared some of the mistaken ideas of the Jews. It did not seem possible that the meek and lowly Jesus could be the former mighty Prince Michael whom he had known in heaven and who had defeated him and his angels in the contest there. He was, however, assured that Jesus was the Messiah when at His baptism the voice of the Father was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The identity was complete when during the battle in the wilderness Christ asserted His divine authority and commanded Satan to get behind Him.

"Satan had questioned whether Jesus was the Son of God. In his summary dismissal he had proof that he could not gainsay. Divinity flashed through suffering humanity. Satan had no power to resist the command. Writhing with humiliation and rage, he was forced to withdraw from the presence of the world's Redeemer. Christ's victory was as complete as had been the failure of Adam." [44]

The prophecy declares that "the dragon stood," or "was standing" before the woman in a waiting and expectant attitude, ready to destroy "the man child" as soon as He was born. How long did he wait in anxious expectation for Michael to become a partaker of human flesh? Since he had been diligently searching the writings of the prophets down through the ages to ascertain if possible the time of His advent, it is evident that Satan waited just as long as did the church, or from the time of the first gospel promise. It was then that he learned that Michael would come into the world through birth. He may have wondered whether the miracle child Isaac was the promised one, and later whether Moses was the expected one. But because of his knowledge of the prophecy of Daniel, he too was in "expectation" when John the Baptist began to announce that the advent of the Messiah was at hand. The dragon, under the then-ruling head of pagan Rome, attempted through Herod to destroy Jesus soon after His birth, but was thwarted in his purpose.

Both the sun-clad woman and the great red dragon are symbolic of world-embracing, universal, and parallel organizations or movements. They represent two rival and antagonistic systems covering the entire history of the reign of sin. The church of Christ and the powers of darkness have always been two great conflicting forces on the earth, the latter ever manifesting the spirit of malignity and seeking to crush every tendency toward salvation through the blood of Christ.

Revelation 12:7-13 constitutes an interruption in the narrative of the warfare of the dragon against Christ and His church, and the purpose of this parenthetical statement is to give the background of the long controversy and the reason for Satan's malignity against Christ, especially while He was on earth completing the plan of redemption. It is evident that these verses have a double application, first, to the beginning of the conflict that took place in heaven and resulted in Satan's defeat and the loss of his official position as the first of the covering cherubs. And, second, to the great struggle between Christ and Satan on earth during the period of Christ's incarnation as "the man child." Verses 10-13 describe Christ's Calvary victory and its results both in heaven and on earth. This was the decisive battle in the war between Prince Michael and Prince Lucifer. It will be discussed in our next study.

The Atonement in Reality

The cross is the great center of all time, the meeting place of the two eternities. The word history is said to be an abbreviated form of his story, and the story of all stories is that of Christ and Him crucified. Therefore history can be properly understood and appreciated only when its events are viewed in their relationship to Calvary. This is especially true of sacred history.

“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption, the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.” [45]

“The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries.” [46]

This is also the viewpoint of the angelic host and the inhabitants of sinless worlds. The death of Christ was the great event that completed the process of reconciling the sinless universe to God. Christ declared that when He would be lifted up on the cross He would draw all unto Him. Concerning the pre-eminence of Christ in both creation and redemption the apostle Paul wrote:

“Christ is the visible representation of the invisible God, the Firstborn and Lord of all creation. For in Him was created the universe of things in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers—all were created, and exist, through and for Him. And HE IS before all things and in and through Him the universe is a harmonious whole. Moreover He is the I-lead of His Body, the Church. He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead, in order that He Himself may in all things occupy the foremost place. For it was the Father’s gracious will that the whole of the divine perfection should dwell in Him. And God purposed through Him to reconcile the universe to Himself, making peace through His blood, which was shed upon the Cross-to reconcile to Himself through Him, I say, things on earth and things in heaven.” Colossians 1:15-20, Weymouth.

The apostle makes it clear that Christ was the Redeemer because He was the Creator, and because He made all creatures He was able through His blood to reconcile them to the members of the Godhead, from whom they had been partially alienated because of unanswered questions in their minds in regard to the meaning of sin and the merits of Satan’s charges against the divine administration. The events of four millenniums of the reign of sin under the sovereignty of the usurper “prince of this world” had gradually opened their eyes to the meaning of “the mystery hidden from ages and generations” but which was “now made manifest to the saints” through the incarnation and atoning death of Christ.

In the panoramic view of world history embracing the controversy between Christ and Satan as set forth in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, the results of Calvary on the universe is thus described:

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he hath but a short time.” Verses 10-12.

Because of its eternal consequences to all creation, the sinless universe staged a great celebration over Christ’s Calvary triumph. The event sealed the new covenant and made sure the plan of redemption. It deposed Satan from his last official position in the government of heaven, that of “the prince of this world,” and therefore its representative before the throne of God, where for four thousand years he had spent much of his time as “the accuser of the brethren” on earth. There “day after day and night after night” he “was wont to accuse them in the presence of God.” (Weymouth.) All heaven was glad when Christ, as the result of His triumph, became the official representative of the saints, and Satan’s term of office came to an end as the result of his defeat.

Because of this fact the saints of earth can say with the apostle:

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:33-39.

There are no longer any charges made against God’s elect before the throne of God, because Christ is now there as our representative, not to accuse and condemn, but “to make intercession” for us.

Revelation 12:10-12 can be understood only when we keep in mind the fact that these statements were made by the celebrating inhabitants of the sinless universe. They are speaking of the "brethren" or saints of earth when they say, "Their victory was due to the sacrifice of the Lamb, and to the Message to which they bore their testimony." (Twentieth Century New Testament.) Since the offering of the first typical lamb at the gate of Paradise, all who have demonstrated their faith in the plan of redemption have gained the victory over Satan through the blood of the Lamb and their testimony as to its merits. Millions, like Abel, have been loyal even unto martyrdom." They held their lives cheap and did not shrink even from death." (Weymouth.) Christ was indeed "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and therefore has been the source and secret of victory during the entire reign of sin. Since Calvary, even the sinless beings have been able to answer the arguments of Satan and thus nullify his propaganda by reminding him of the results of his enmity in nailing Christ to the cross, and in this manner they defeat him by the word of their testimony.

Because the great rebel has been cast out of the position where he could accuse the saints of earth in the presence of God, and at the same time has lost the last vestige of their sympathies, they cry out in animation: "Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you that dwell in them." Then, remembering that the removing of Satan's center of activity to his only remaining foothold, the earth, they add: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the seal for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he hath but a short time." "Because the devil has gone down unto you having great wrath," or "has descended to you in fierce anger," or "has gone down to you in great fury," are other translations. For four thousand years Satan had made himself a nuisance in the heavenly courts, and now what was their gain would be the temporary disadvantage of the saints on earth. Defeated in every battle with Christ, there was nothing left for Satan except to make war on the citizens of the heavenly kingdom who dwell on earth, and to them he came down with great wrath.

This attack was made "because he knows that he hath but a short time." He was "full of fierce anger, because he knows that his appointed time is short." (Weymouth.) The language indicates that the death of Christ revealed something to Satan he never knew before, that his defeat was certain and the death knell of his kingdom had been sounded. It was only a question of time till he must meet his deserved doom as a transgressor of the divine

law and the leader of the revolt against the divine administration. Up to that time he had entertained hopes of ultimate success. He felt certain that he could overcome Michael in His human form, just as he had defeated the first Adam. And led captive his descendants almost at will. Satan had felt sure of success in leading Christ into sin and thus thwarting the plan of redemption. In his rage and disappointment he determined to do his successful rival all the damage possible before the end. He could no longer reach Christ in person, and the angels and sinless beings were so completely alienated from him that he could not influence them, and the only means of retaliation left was to wreak his vengeance on Christ by attacking His bride in the world, and this he does with ever-increasing fury.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." When Christ died in triumph, Satan "saw," or realized, that his cause was lost and that his activities in the future would be greatly restricted, except in the earth. It was the realization of what had happened and its final consequences that made him so angry and led him to make his last desperate stand in this world and fight to the bitter end even though he knew he was waging a losing battle. With his back to the wall he was fighting the war of desperation. His last attack against the remnant will be the most relentless and savage.

One of the chief reasons Satan becomes "furiously angry" with the remnant of the church is that they have "the testimony of Jesus Christ," or the Spirit of prophecy, through which they have been given the most complete pictures of his activities, and the best commentaries on these verses in the Revelation:

"When the last steps of Christ's humiliation were being taken, when the deepest sorrow was closing about His soul, He said to His disciples, 'The prince of this world comes, and bath nothing in me.' 'The prince of this world is judged.' Now shall he be cast out. With prophetic eye Christ traced the scenes to take place in His last great conflict. He knew that when He should exclaim, 'It is finished,' all heaven would triumph. His ear caught the distant music and the shouts of victory in the heavenly courts. He knew that the knell of Satan's empire would then be sounded, and the name of Christ would be heralded from world to world throughout the universe." [47]

"To the angels and sinless worlds the cry, 'It is finished,' had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us -that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ's victory. Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the sinless worlds. The arch-apostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion. . . .

"Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the sinless angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer by shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. . . . The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken. . . .

“Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Savior’s cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished.’ [48]

As far as the rest of the universe was concerned, Satan and his angels could have been destroyed at any time after the death of Christ, with their full approval, and the only reason for another two-thousand-year delay is in order that the inhabitants of this earth may decide.” Every creature” of “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” must hear the gospel and be enlightened sufficiently to make an intelligent decision as to whom he will have rule over him, Christ or Satan. As the result of the convicting power under the latter rain, all men will make a final and irrevocable decision that will settle their eternal destiny. Before their execution in the lake of fire all the impenitent will follow the lead of Satan and his angels in bowing the knee and acknowledging that God was just in all His dealings with them and that they deserve what is about to befall them. This will help make the universe “eternally secure,” so that “affliction shall not rise up the second time.” What an exhibition of the mercy, patience, and long-suffering of God in enduring the afflictions of sin for more than seven millenniums of time in order that the lesson may be so fully learned that the experience of sin can never be repeated.

Most of the persecutions of Satan against the church have taken place since his defeat at Calvary, and these are graphically described in Revelation 12:6, 13-15. The first bloody assault came during the pagan Rome persecutions of the first, second, and third centuries, and during the Middle Ages, when the Papacy dominated the world, millions of Christians sealed their faith with their blood. The last attack will be against those in the last days who keep the commandments of God and are guided by the prophetic gift. The persecuted saints are sustained through these fiery trials by the knowledge of eventual triumph:

“Why, what we now suffer I count as nothing in comparison with the glory which is soon to be manifested in us. For all creation, gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God. For the Creation fell into subjection to failure and unreality (not of its own choice, but by the will of Him who so subjected it). Yet there was always the hope that at last the Creation itself would also be set free from

the suffering of decay so as to enjoy the liberty that will attend, the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole Creation is groaning together in the pains of childbirth until this hour. And more than that, we ourselves, though we possess the Spirit as a foretaste and pledge of the glorious future, yet we ourselves inwardly sigh, as we wait and long for open recognition as sons through the deliverance of our bodies.” Romans 8:18-23, Weymouth.

While the cross must ever remain the center, the gospel is not complete without the preaching of kindred fundamental truths:

“These are our themes—Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ our intercessor before God; and closely connected with these is the office work of the Holy Spirit, the representative of Christ, sent forth with divine power and gifts for men. . .

“Lift Him up, the Man of Calvary, higher and still higher. There is power in the exaltation of the cross of Christ. . . . Christ is to be preached not controversially, but affirmatively. . . . Gather up the strongest affirmative statements regarding the atonement made by Christ for the sins of the world. . . . Give all the affirmatives and proofs that make the gospel the glad tidings of salvation to all who receive and believe on Christ as a personal Savior.” [49]

“The life and death of Christ, the price of our redemption, are not only to us the promise and pledge of life, not only the means of opening again to us the treasures of wisdom: they are a broader, higher revelation of His character than even the holy ones of Eden knew. [50]

We are therefore told where to fix our chief attention in study and meditation:

“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.” [51]

“Behold the life and character of Christ, and study His mediatorial work. Here is infinite wisdom, infinite love, infinite justice, infinite mercy. Here are depths and heights, lengths and breadths, for our consideration. Numberless pens have been employed in presenting to the world the life, the character, and the mediatorial work of Christ, and yet every mind through which the Holy Spirit has worked has presented these themes in a light that is fresh and new. ’ Teach the great practical truths that must be stamped upon the soul. Teach the saving power of Jesus ‘in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. ’ Colossians 1:14. It was at

the cross that mercy and truth met together, that righteousness and truth kissed each other. Let every student and every worker study this again and again, that they, setting forth the Lord crucified among us, may make it a fresh subject to the people.” [52]

As Jesus approached the hour of trial and decision, He said, “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. . . . Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” John 12:23-27. During the first world war a wounded soldier was told by his physician that he could live but a few hours. He turned his head to the wall, and after a few minutes of silent meditation was heard to say, as if in answer to his own thoughts, “Well, that is what I came over here for.” To die for the sins of the world is what Jesus came into the world to accomplish, and why should He seek to escape it? With this decision He set His face like a flint to go through with the ordeal. His intense soul anguish became evident to the disciples while they were in the upper room, and sensing an impending crisis, they were seized with anxiety and superstitious dread.

In the Garden of Gethsemane the sorrow of Jesus became so intense that He said to His disciples, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” and He urged them to watch and pray with Him. Then He went deeper into the garden alone to engage in a struggle in which His earthly companions could not share. There His soul agony was indescribable. He was “sore amazed” and “very heavy.” He was encompassed with “the sorrows of death” and “of hell.” The weight of the sins of the world was crushing out His life. The Lord had laid on him the iniquities of us all,” and in order to atone for them He must “taste death for every man.”

It was at this time that the experience recorded in Hebrews 5:7 took place: “For Jesus during His earthly life offered up prayers and entreaties, crying aloud and weeping as He pleaded with Him who was able to bring Him in safety out of death, and He was delivered from the terror from which He shrank.” (Weymouth.) This terror was that of the second death that He must suffer in order to meet the penalty of sin as the substitute of the lost sinner—the death that brings an eternal separation from God and heaven. It was necessary for Him to enter into that “outer darkness” where there is “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” He experienced all the terrors of those who realize they are eternally lost without a ray of hope, With all the mental and soul anguish that the experience involves, He fully met the penalty of the broken law.

“As the Son of God bowed in the attitude of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the agony of His spirit forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. . . . He was suffering in man’s stead as a transgressor of the Father’s law. . . . The divine light of God was receding

from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness. In His soul anguish He lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father’s frown. He had taken the cup of suffering from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and in its place give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man was now falling upon Christ.” [53]

During this terrible ordeal Jesus was tempted to give up and let man meet his deserved doom. The cup trembled in His hand as the fate of a lost world hung in the balance. Mark thus describes it: “And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” Mark 14:35, 36.

“Now had come the hour of the power of darkness. Now His voice was heard on the still evening air, not in tones of triumph, but full of human anguish. The words of the Savior were borne to the ears of the drowsy disciples. ‘O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.’ The first impulse of the disciples was to go to Him. . . . They saw His face marked with the bloody sweat of agony, and they were filled with fear. His anguish of mind they could not understand. ‘His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men!’”

“The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul. The awful moment had come, -that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity. . . . The words fell tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, ‘O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.’ Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice.”

“But now the history of the human race comes up before the world’s Redeemer. . . . The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: ‘If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.’ Having made the decision, He fell dying to the ground from which He had partially risen. . . .”

“But God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Savior’s agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of Satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin. . . . In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and the mighty angel who stands in God’s presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. The angel came not to take the cup from Christ’s hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father’s love. He came to give power to the divine human suppliant. . . . The sleeping disciples had been suddenly awakened by the light surrounding the Savior. They saw the angel bending over their prostrate Master. They saw him lift the Savior’s head upon his bosom, and point toward heaven. They heard his voice, like sweet music, speaking words of comfort and hope.” [54]

The secret of Christ’s final decision to drink the cup to its bitter dregs is set forth in the following quotation:

“What sustained the Son of God in His betrayal and trial? He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied. He caught a view of the expanse of eternity and saw the happiness of those who through His humiliation should receive pardon and everlasting life. . . . His ear caught the shout of the redeemed. He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. We must have a vision of the future and of the blessedness of heaven. Stand on the threshold of eternity, and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake.” [55]

After mentioning the visit of the angel to strengthen Jesus to go on to Calvary, Luke says: “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Luke 22:44. The blood came out of the pores of His skin and fell to the ground as it were sweat, or in the likeness of sweat. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 63:1-3, written more than six centuries before, that He would emerge from this ordeal with “dye garments” that would be “red” “like” those of “him that treads in the wine fat,” whose garments would be “sprinkled” and stained with the blood of the grapes. The apostle to the Hebrews declared that Jesus “resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Hebrews 12:4.

The sweating of blood is a rare occurrence, but it is not unknown to history and medical science and is known as diapedesis. A few notable cases have been recorded by historians and physicians in which persons under great physical strain, mental anguish, or intense fear have sweat blood. One of the most outstanding cases was that of King Charles IX of France. Of his death, Voltaire wrote:

“The disease that carried him off is very uncommon; his blood flowed from all of his pores. This malady, of which there are some examples, is the result either of excessive fear, furious passion, or of a violent and melancholic temperament.” [56]

The French historian Mezeray said of the same event: “During the last two weeks of his life his condition made strange efforts. He was affected with spasms and convulsions of extreme violence. He tossed and agitated himself continually and his blood gushed from all the outlets of his body, even from the pores of his skin, so that on one occasion he was found bathed in a bloody sweat.” [57]

A number of cases of this sort were collected by Dr. William Stroud, one-time president of the Royal Medical Society of Scotland, and published in 1871 in a book entitled *Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*.

Dr. David Russell, in his *Letters, Chiefly Practical and Consolatory*, said of the struggle of Christ in Gethsemane:

“His heart was preternaturally fired within him, so as to force a passage through the body for his rarefied blood; for his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The agony of his soul must have been bitter beyond conception, when such was its effect upon his body in the open air, at midnight, and when they who were within found it necessary to defend themselves against the cold. His firm heart was ready to break, and immediate death was threatened; but knowing that much remained to be accomplished, it was his prayer that the cup might for a time pass from him. His prayer was heard; an angel appeared to strengthen him; and he regained composure to act with propriety before his judges and the people, and to suffer what he endured before he reached the cross. On the cross, the scene of Gethsemane was renewed—the cup was again presented to him, and there he drank it to the very dregs!” [58]

In a previous quotation we were told that the cup was not removed, but that Jesus was strengthened to endure it, even to the cross.

It is evident that when Jesus said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” He was entering the death throes and would have died of a broken heart if He had not been strengthened by the angel Gabriel to go on to the cross. While the cross was foretold in prophecy, it was not revealed in the typical sanctuary services, where every sacrifice prefigured Christ’s death only as an atoning sacrifice. Paul’s statement that Jesus “humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” seems to indicate that the sufferings of the most cruel and ignominious of all deaths was something extra, or beyond the call of duty, showing that He went the second mile in shame and suffering. He died as an atoning sacrifice, even the death of the cross. Of course if He had

died in the garden, our salvation would have been just as secure, but prophecy would have been different. Prophecy is not a plan with events made to fulfill it, but a foreseeing and foretelling of events before they occur, just as history is an account of past events.

Another Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in the arrest, trials, and condemnation of Jesus before the Hebrew and Roman tribunals:

“And judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth fails; and he that departs from evil makes himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.” Isaiah 59:14-16.

At the close of His prayer struggle in the garden, Jesus said, “The hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.” He had no sooner spoken than the darkness began to be dispersed by the lights of the lanterns and torches of the approaching rabble, the temple guard, and the Roman soldiers, led by Judas and the high priests. The arrest took place just after midnight. It was in connection with this event, and at the time when Judas gave the prearranged identifying kiss, that divinity was for a moment permitted to flash through humanity, and priests, soldiers, and even Judas staggered backward and fell helpless to the ground.

“The angel withdrew, and the light faded away. Jesus had opportunity to escape, but He remained, calm and self-possessed. As one glorified He stood in the midst of that hardened band, now prostrate and helpless at His feet.” [59]

According to Hebrew law the arrest was illegal on four different counts. First, because it forbade all legal proceedings by night, including arrests. In the second place the use of a traitor or accomplice in effecting an arrest or conviction was forbidden. There was no such thing as “turning state’s evidence” in Hebrew jurisprudence, the rule

being based on Leviticus 19:16-18. In the third place an arrest must be the result of a warrant or legal mandate, which was neglected in this case. In the fourth place it was illegal to bind an uncondemned man, because an accused man is supposed to be innocent until he is proved guilty.

Likewise the preliminary hearings before Annas, the ex-high priest, and Caiaphas, the ruling high priest, were characterized by several legal transgressions. Annas asked Jesus “of His disciples, and of His doctrines,” with the hope of obtaining statements or confessions on which to base an indictment on the charge of sedition or blasphemy. The striking of Jesus because He acted within His legal rights by refusing to answer was an infraction of law. These hearings were illegal because they were conducted by night, and also before a single judge, for in Hebrew law no magistrate, sitting alone, could question an accused person judicially, or sit in judgment upon his legal rights, either by night or by day. Therefore private preliminary hearings were in themselves illegal.

Hebrew law required two sessions of the Sanhedrin in case of condemnation, a day apart. Not until the afternoon of the second day could a final decree be made and the death sentence executed. There seem to have been two sessions on this occasion, but only a few hours apart, one at about three o’clock in the morning, with only a portion of the members present, and the second at the break of day, with “the elders and scribes and the whole council” present. It is evident that Nicodemus, Joseph, and others who were friends of Jesus were not invited. The two sessions were doubtless an attempt to meet the requirements of the law, but constituted a mere subterfuge, for another ruling forbade any session to be held before the morning sacrifice, as well as on the day before the Sabbath, because in case of condemnation a second trial must be held on the afternoon of the following day, and Sabbath trials were strictly prohibited.

During the interval between the two trials every principle of justice was trampled underfoot when Jesus was turned over to the mob for tortures and indignities so revolting that the mind refuses to follow the imagination. Jesus was mocked, derided and spat upon, the latter being considered by the Jews as the greatest of all expressions of contempt. Centuries before, Christ had foretold these atrocities through His prophets: “The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.” Psalm 18:4.” They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the son of the drunkards.” Psalm 69:12.” I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” Isaiah 50:6.” To them that jerked at my whiskers,” and “I let them lash my back, and pluck my beard out; I never hid my face from shame and insult,” are other translations. Such treatment before an accused is tried and condemned legally is a terrible travesty on justice.

The first charge brought against Jesus before the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of the Jews, was sedition, in order to involve Him with the Roman authorities. Failing in this, His enemies changed the charge to blasphemy, which under the theocracy was considered a form of treason, with the penalty of death. The trampling underfoot of the most basic principles of Hebrew law on more than a score of counts made the entire proceedings before the Jewish authorities a travesty on justice unequalled in the history of jurisprudence. Judgment was turned away backward, justice stood afar off, truth fell in the streets, and even equity was refused entrance.

The following are a few of the other irregularities in the proceedings which condemned to death the Innocent One: The indictment was illegal because it was twofold, being changed from sedition to blasphemy during the trial. The use of false witnesses to bring about condemnation was positively forbidden in the Mosaic law. Also a judge could not originate or prefer a charge, for this was the prerogative only of witnesses of the crime. Also an uncorroborated confession by the accused could not be a ground for guilt, and yet on such a confession Jesus was declared guilty of death. One of the strangest rules of Hebrew law prohibited conviction by the unanimous verdict of the judges. An accused must have at least one friend in court to plead his cause, since no defense counsel was provided. The record is that they all condemned him to be guilty of death." There was "no intercessor."

The Mosaic code did not permit a high priest to rend his official garment on any occasion, for it was symbolic of his sacred office, and to do so made him guilty of death. (See Leviticus 21:10; 10:6) The law declared that the verdict must be arrived at by ballot, beginning with the youngest member of the Sanhedrin and ending with the oldest, so that the more inexperienced would not be influenced by those holding higher positions, as is so often true today. In this case the decision was evidently made by acclamation at the instance of the high priest.

In the Hebrew system the sentence of death must be pronounced in The Hall of Gazith, or The Hall of Hewn Stones, in the Temple. On this occasion it is evident that the condemnation took place in the palace of Caiaphas and not in the designated place. Also, the high priest and his associates were disqualified by bribing Judas to betray Jesus, and their guilt was made public when Judas came to them and made public confession of his guilt and threw the money on the floor in the presence of the members of the court. The judges were also disqualified to try Jesus because of their acknowledged enmity against Him. The least evidence of prejudice gives the accused the right to demand trial before another judge. Most of the judges of Jesus had purchased their offices of the Roman governor and thus were not elected according to the provisions of Hebrew law, and by this act they were disqualified. The names and characters of most of the men who tried and condemned Jesus are known, and are severely condemned by Jewish writers as unworthy to hold such high positions. According to the descriptions of their characters in the Talmud, they were rightly described by the prophet as "ungodly men. -

The fact that the merits of the defense were entirely ignored constituted another serious infraction of law. The evidences that Jesus was the long-looked-for Messiah were legion, not only on the basis of the scores of prophecies in the Old Testament that He fulfilled, but also by His faultless life, His Scriptural teachings, and His mighty miracles. The Jewish leaders had long been pointing to two great signs as set forth in the predictions of Jacob on his deathbed, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." They interpreted this as meaning that when the Jewish nation lost its kingly power, and also the authority to make and enforce laws, the Messiah would arrive. The Talmud records these expectations in the following sentences: "The son of David shall not come unless the royal power has been taken away from Judah," and, "The son of David shall not come unless the judges have ceased in Israel." The first sign had been fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar removed the crown from the last king of Judah five hundred years before, and the second when Judea became a Roman province in AD 6, at which time the Sanhedrin was stripped of its judicial authority. We are told, therefore, that when John the Baptist began preaching the advent of the Messiah, "the people were in expectation."

The trials of Jesus before the Roman tribunal were also threefold, before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again, the first and last being held in the palace of Herod on Mount Zion, where Pilate resided during his visits to Jerusalem. Herod occupied the palace of the Maccabees. Ugly pictures of the character of Pilate have been given us by Philo Judaeus, a Jewish philosopher who was his contemporary, and also by other writers. The character of Herod was base and contemptible. Fortunately, we know the proper procedure of a Roman trial and the laws that should govern its proceedings, and can therefore judge the conduct of the procurator in the case under consideration.

Before Pilate the Jews charged Jesus with a threefold crime, sedition, forbidding to pay tribute to Caesar, and claiming to be king, all of which were forms of treason against Rome. After a private interview with Jesus the governor was convinced that the charges were false and made on the basis of enmity, and he handed down a decision of acquittal. But the Jews refused to accept the verdict and preferred new charges in which they inferred that Jesus was a Galilean, with the hope of creating prejudice in the mind of a man who they knew especially hated the Galileans.

The mention of Galilee had a far different reaction on Pilate than they had anticipated. The situation was getting embarrassing to Pilate, and he saw an opportunity to get rid of a troublesome case without reversing his decision. He would send Jesus to Herod, who was also a visitor in the city during the Passover season. He was the tetrarch of Galilee, where he ruled as a petty king under the governor. Because of the dissolute character of Herod Antipas, the conscienceless Sadducean prince who had murdered John the Baptist and who had scarcely a spark of manhood left, Jesus gave him the severest rebuke possible by greeting his many questions with a withering silence. The king then demonstrated his real character in seeking revenge: "And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then, arraying him in gorgeous apparel, he sent him back to Pilate." Luke 23:11, RSV.

The refusal of Herod to condemn Jesus was equivalent to an acquittal, and was so considered by Pilate. He told the Jews that he had found no fault in the accused and that Herod also had come to the same conclusion. He would therefore "chastise him, and release him." This was of course a cowardly proposal. If Jesus was innocent, as He had just been declared to be, any punishment whatever

would be an act of rank injustice. The rabble indignantly rejected the offer of compromise and demanded the blood of their victim. Pilate's next attempt to avoid sending an innocent man to the cross was to take advantage of a custom for the governor, at the time of the Passover, to release a prisoner selected by the Jews, hoping that Jesus would be the fortunate one." Now it was the Governor's custom at the Festival to release some one prisoner, whomsoever the populace desired; and at this time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they were now assembled Pilate appealed to them. 'Whom shall I release to you?' he said, 'Barabbas, or Jesus the so-called Christ?' Matthew 27:15-17, Weymouth." Which Jesus will you have? Jesus the son of Abba, or Jesus the King," is an ancient Syriac rendering. It was a choice between Jesus the Son of God and Jesus the son of Abba, who had claimed to be the Messiah, and in an effort to prove his claims and establish his authority had instigated an insurrection in which there was considerable bloodshed. He was therefore awaiting the sentence of death as a mover of sedition and as a murderer. It was a choice between the true Messiah and the false messiah and the Jews chose the counterfeit, and demanded that Jesus the Christ be crucified.

It was at this time that a disturbing message was handed the governor from his wife, Claudia, begging him not to condemn "that just man," because she had been warned in a dream, the contents of which are described in *The Desire of Ages*, page 732. This filled Pilate with superstitious dread, and he renewed his efforts to save from a violent death an innocent man who might be more than a man." Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him." John 19:1. This was done with the hope that this cruel punishment would satisfy the Jews. Then follows the description of the crown of thorns, the purple robe, the mock court, and other indignities at the hands of the heartless and inhuman soldiers of the governor. Scourging was so terrible that the Jews limited the blows to "forty stripes save one," but the Romans knew no limit, and death was often the result of the terrible ordeal. The instrument of torture was a whip with the cords tipped with pieces of iron or lead, which partially buried themselves in the flesh of the victim's bare back. The lash was sometimes applied to other parts of the body, including the face. That this may have happened to Jesus may be indicated in Isaiah 52:14: "As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."

In the Vatican is a painting of Jesus with His robe rolled down from His waist and His arms around a marble post or pillar and His hands tied together on the opposite side. He is kneeling on one knee and His back is lacerated by the cruel scourging and blood is sprinkled over the pavement. The scourge is lying beside Him, and His countenance reveals inexpressible anguish. What He went through at the hands of these "ungodly men" who were hardened to such acts of violence can never be even imagined.

Then Pilate, with the hope of appealing to the sympathy of the Jews, brought Jesus, wearing the purple robe and thorny crown of mock sovereignty, out to the waiting multitude. But they met this attempt to save Jesus from the cross with the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him." When Pilate remonstrated with them they said: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." This frightened Pilate, because in Roman mythology there were many legends of sons of the gods visiting the earth in human form, and to offend or ill-treat them brought down upon the offender the wrath of the gods. The vacillating judge took Jesus into the praetorium for another interview in an attempt to ascertain His origin and mission, but Jesus refused to answer, knowing that the mob would have their way in the end. He did assure Pilate that the greater blame would rest upon the leaders of the Jews. When Pilate returned to the door of the palace it was evident to the Jews that he was more determined than ever to release Jesus and was ready to make such a decree and enforce it if necessary by armed might. However, his mind was changed by a veiled threat of an appeal to Caesar: "But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." John 19:12.

Pilate knew what it would mean if a large delegation of prominent Jews went to Rome with an appeal to suspicious Tiberias, and he began to waver under the threat. A terrific struggle took place within him between justice and position, and position won. Pointing to Jesus, Pilate said to the Jews: "Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him. . . . Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified." Verses 15, 16. Pilate thus ignored a well-known rule of Roman law, doubtless known to him, "The idle clamor of the populace is not to be regarded, when they call for a guilty man to be acquitted, or an innocent man to be condemned."

In a last attempt to escape the responsibility of his act, Pilate called for a basin of water and washed his hands in the presence of the mob, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Someone has said that all the waters of the Mediterranean could not have washed away his guilt, and he is designated in history as "The Unjust judge." The proceedings that sent Jesus to His death constitute the greatest travesty on justice in the history of jurisprudence. A noted jurist said, "Jesus of Nazareth was not condemned, but He was slain. His martyrdom was no miscarriage of justice, it was murder." [60]

The tortures of crucifixion are indescribable, since the victim lived on in agony for several days before death came as a relief to suffering; but physical pain was only a small part of the agony of Jesus:

"If the sufferings of Christ consisted in physical pain alone, then His death was no more painful than that of some of the martyrs. But bodily pain was but a small part of the agony of God's dear Son. The sins of the world were upon Him, also the sense of His Father's wrath as He suffered the penalty of the law transgressed. It was these that crushed His divine soul. It was the hiding of His Father's face—a sense that His own dear Father had forsaken Him—which brought despair. The separation that sin makes between God and man was fully realized and keenly felt by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. He was oppressed by the powers of darkness. He had not

one ray of light to brighten the future. . . . The death of the martyrs can bear no comparison with the agony endured by the Son of God.” [61]

The evidence is conclusive that Jesus died, not of crucifixion, but of a broken or ruptured heart. Speaking through the psalmist, Jesus said of the cause of His death, “My heart fails me,” and, “Reproach hath broken my heart.” (Psalm 40:12; 69:20, 21) Medical science knows of a number of instances where persons have died of a ruptured heart, and a number of these have been recorded by Dr. William Stroud in his book *Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*. Of Christ’s death he said:

“On the cross, the scene of Gethsemane was renewed-the cup was again presented to him, and there he drank it to its very dregs. On Calvary his distress reached its height, and drew from him the bitter exclamation, ‘My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?’ . . . Mysterious dereliction! only to be accounted for by the nature of his death. . . . He at last expired under the curse, not so much in consequence of the exhaustion of nature by bodily pain and the loss of blood . . . as in consequence of the extreme pressure of mental torture . . . This was too racking, too exquisite, for nature to support -it literally broke his heart.” [62]

Another writer said of Christ’s death: “The immediate cause of death appears, beyond question, to have been the rupture of His heart, brought about by mental agony.” [63]

On pages 781, 782, the same writer gives a description of the physical sufferings of crucifixion based on history and medical science. Joseph Renan, in his *Life of Jesus*, said:

“The peculiar atrocity of crucifixion was that one could live three or four days in this horrible state upon the instrument of torture. The bleeding from the hands soon stopped, and was not fatal. The real cause of death was the unnatural position of the body, which brought on a frightful disturbance of the circulation, terrible pains in the head and heart, and, finally, rigidity of the limbs. Victims with strong constitutions died simply of hunger. . . . Everything tends to show that the instantaneous rupture of a vessel in the heart killed Him.” [64]

Besides the forecasts of prophecy, there are several evidences in connection with His death which prove that Jesus died of a ruptured heart. The first is the fact that He died within six hours. This was so unusual that Pilate marveled because it came so soon, since most persons lived on the cross for days; and on at least one occasion, a victim lived more than a week. Another evidence is that He died suddenly in the midst of terrible agony when there was no apparent evidence that death was near. His death immediately followed a loud cry, indicating physical strength that could be suddenly terminated only by the rupture of the heart. According to medical authorities, when death is the result of heart rupture, “the hand is suddenly carried to the front of the chest, and a piercing shriek uttered.” When the heart is punctured immediately after such a rupture, coagulated blood and a water like serum flows out of the pericardium, sometimes in large quantities, and this happened when the soldier pierced the side of Jesus with a spear to make sure He was dead.

After quoting a number of medical authorities in regard to known cases of death from heart rupture resulting in the separation of the blood in the pericardium into coagula and serum, Dr. William Stroud sums up the evidence in the following statement:

“In conclusion, it may therefore with certainty be affirmed, that between the agony of mind which the Savior endured in the garden of Gethsemane, and the profuse sweat mixed with clotted blood which so rapidly followed it, violent palpitation of the heart must necessarily have intervened; this being the only known condition which could have been at once the effect of the former occurrence, and the cause of the latter. . . . The cause now assigned for the death of Christ, namely, RUPTURE OF THE HEART FROM AGONY OF MIND, has been proved to be the result of an actual power in nature, fully adequate to the effect, really present without counteraction, minutely agreeing with all the facts of the case, and necessarily implied by them, this cause must, according to the principles of inductive reasoning, be regarded as demonstrated.” [65]

We shall conclude this phase of our study with a statement from *The Desire of Ages*.

“In yielding up His precious life, Christ was not upheld by triumphant joy. All was oppressive gloom. It was not the dread of death that weighed upon Him. It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony. . . . With the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father’s reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Savior in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was His agony that His physical pain was hardly felt. . . . It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s wrath upon Him as man’s substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.” [66]

The Atonement in Experience

Experimental religion is the only kind worthy of the name. One of the distinguishing characteristics of last-day professed Christians is that they will have “a form of godliness” without “the power thereof,” or they “will keep up a make-believe of piety and yet live in

defiance of its power.” (Weymouth.) A mere form of religion without the vitalizing power of godliness in character and conduct is of no more value than a “valley of dry bones.” To those whose religion is a mere profession without possession, Christ says: “Thou has a name that thou lives, and art dead.” “You are supposed to be alive, but in reality you are dead.” (Weymouth.)

Organization and a form of doctrine and service are essential, provided they are vitalized by the presence and power of Christ through the Holy Spirit. Otherwise they are lifeless and therefore useless. Said the messenger of the Lord:

“The messages to the church of Ephesus and to the church in Sardis have been often repeated to me by the One who gives me instruction for His people. . . . Let us read and study those portions of God’s word that have special reference to these last days, pointing out the dangers that will threaten God’s people.” [67]

The Ephesians had lost their first love and relaxed their love works, and the Sardians had a mere form of religion without spiritual life. Both are pointed out as warnings to God’s remnant people. This is in harmony with scores of similar warnings, of which the following are samples:

“A formal round of religious services is kept up; but where is the love of Jesus? Spirituality is dying. Is this torpor, this mournful deterioration, to be perpetuated? Is the lamp of truth to flicker and go out in darkness because it is not replenished by the oil of grace? . . . Shall we meet the mind of the Spirit of God? Shall we dwell more upon practical godliness, and far less upon mechanical arrangements?” [68]

“But I have been shown that there is danger of having this work too mechanical, so intricate and complicated that less will be accomplished than if we were more simple, direct, plain, and decided. We have neither time nor means to keep all parts of this machinery in harmonious action. . . . I tell you frankly that Jesus and the power of His grace are being left out of the question. Results will show that mechanical working has taken the place of piety, humility, and holiness of heart and life. The more spiritual, devoted, and humble workers find no place where they can take hold, and therefore they stand back. The young and inexperienced learn the form and do their work mechanically; but true love, the burden for souls, is not felt. Less dwelling upon set forms, less of the mechanical, and more of the power of godliness are essential in this solemn, fearful day of responsibilities.” [69]

Can anyone doubt that this warning is needed as much today as when it was written more than threescore years ago, or even more?

We are told that “in many hearts there seems to be scarcely a breath of spiritual life.” [70] All who come in close contact with our people know that this is true. Of this class it is said that “though an angel from heaven should come down and speak to them, his words would do no more good than if he were speaking into the cold ear of death.”

“The Holy Spirit’s power will move upon hearts when this dead, lifeless monotony is broken up.” [71]

“None are further from the kingdom of heaven than self-righteous formalists, filled with pride at their own attainments, while they are wholly destitute of the spirit of Christ. . . . Such persons are among us, unseen, unsuspected. They serve the cause of Satan more effectively than the vilest profligate; for the latter does not disguise his true character; he appears what he is.” [72]

Of this class we again read: “They are more ready for active labor than for humble devotion, more ready to engage in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show.” [73]

The importance of this warning is emphasized in the following statement:

“One Christ-loving, devoted member will do more good in a church than one hundred half-converted, unsanctified, self-sufficient workers.” [74]

Concerning the condition of God’s chosen people at the time of Christ’s visit we are told:

“As they departed from God, the Jews in a great degree lost sight of the teaching of the ritual service. . . . But the Jews lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to the dead forms.”

“Priests and scribes and rulers were fixed in a rut of ceremonies and traditions. Their hearts had become contracted, like the dried-up wine skins to which He had compared them. While they remained satisfied with a legal religion, it was impossible for them to become the depositaries of the living truth of heaven. They thought their own righteousness all-sufficient, and did not desire that a new element should be brought into their religion. . . . It was this that proved the ruin of the Jews, and it will prove the ruin of many souls in our own day.

A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion.” [75]

The utter uselessness of a religion of mere form and intellectual assent is strikingly set forth in the following statement:

“There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character, and secure salvation. Their hearts are not moved by any deep sense of the love of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing. . . . Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With earnest desire they yield all, and manifest an interest proportionate to the value of the object which they seek. A profession of Christ without this deep love, is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery.” [76] (*Italics supplied.*)

Only spiritual people can discern and understand spiritual things. To others they may even appear as foolishness.” But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. It is therefore not at all strange that spiritual truths and appeals make such little impression upon so many in the church. They are far more interested in stories, anecdotes, informative preaching, orthodoxy in theology, and in dry doctrinal sermons that call for assent only, with no change in character and conduct, than in deeply spiritual instruction in lessons of practical godliness. This is the reason why the message of righteousness by faith met such antagonism in apostolic days, Reformation times, and again in this movement in the latter years of the nineteenth century, and from some ever since. When that which “lays the glory of man in the dust” is presented, it can hardly be expected to please the legalist with a mere form of religion.

Let us apply these principles to the subject under consideration. First of all, we must recognize the fact that the atonement cannot be made clear to all, including some leaders. The following statement gives the only basis on which the subject can be understood:

“The soul must be cleansed from vanity and pride, and vacated of all that has held it in possession, and Christ must be enthroned within. Human science is too limited to comprehend the atonement. The plan of redemption is so far-reaching that philosophy cannot explain it. It will ever remain a mystery that the most profound reasoning cannot fathom. The science of salvation cannot be explained; but it can be known by experience.” [77]

This is stated too clearly to be misunderstood. The plan of redemption cannot be understood or explained on a merely intellectual basis. Its truths can be comprehended only as they are put into practice and applied to the everyday experiences of life, so that we become living epistles, “known and read of all men.” The best of all the translations of the Scriptures are the texts that have been translated into experience. From these we preach our best sermons, in fact, the only ones worth listening to.

“Let us remember that a Christ like life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Christianity, and that a cheap Christian character works more harm in the world than the character of a worldly person. Not all the books written can serve the purpose of a holy life. Men will believe, not what the minister preaches, but what the church lives. Too often the influence of the sermon preached from the pulpit is counteracted by the sermon preached in the lives of those who claim to be advocates of truth.” [78]

Although full provision for reconciliation was made on the cross, the application to the individual life is a work that will continue till the close of probation, when Christ’s priestly ministration ceases. Therefore the oft-repeated statement of the happy man who, when asked when he was saved, declared that it happened two thousand years ago, but that he had just found it out recently, is true only in part. It is a fact that the ransom price was paid on Calvary, but salvation is a fact only when the sinner accepts the provision made by the atoning death of Christ and experiences the cleansing power of the gospel in his own life; otherwise we would have to believe in universal salvation. Atonement must include the mediatorial ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

When the sinner came out of the camp of Israel into the court of the tabernacle and confessed his sins over the head of the lamb and then took its life as an indication that his sins would cost the life of the Lamb of God, his part was finished, and he could return to his tent happy in the knowledge of justification. But his joy would be in vain if the priest did not do his part by ministering the blood in his behalf, and if, later, the high priest did not make the atonement in the holy of holies in a service that made an end of sin in a symbolical sense. If this were not true, the service in the court would be all that was necessary. Likewise, if the atonement was complete with the death of Christ on the cross, His ministry as priest in the sanctuary in heaven would be unnecessary. Here is the reason that the mediatorial work of Christ as set forth clearly in the book of Hebrews has been so neglected in the religious world. Seventh-day Adventists are almost alone in emphasizing this important truth.

The apostles knew the meaning of the atonement by experience and were therefore able to more fully explain it to others. This is evident from many scriptures, of which the following is a sample:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus. Where is boasting

then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law!" Romans 3:24-28.

The apostle is here dealing chiefly with justification, or imputed righteousness, which is one of the blessed fruits of Christ's atoning sacrifice. It is the only means of taking care of the "sins that are past," or "of the sins previously committed." (Weymouth.) The word propitiation is translated "expiation, mercy-seat," and "sacrifice of reconciliation," in other versions. The conclusion is that there is absolutely no room for boasting on the basis of human works, because "the observance of the Law has nothing to do with it." (Goodspeed.) "Where then is there room for your boasting? It is for ever shut out. On what principle? On the ground of merit? No, but on the ground of faith. For we maintain that it is as the result of faith that a man is held to be righteous, apart from actions done in obedience to Law." (Weymouth.)

Our text tells us that Christ's death "as a sacrifice of reconciliation" was necessary to "vindicate his own justice." (Goodspeed.) Christ had to satisfy the justice of the law on man's behalf both by perfect obedience and by meeting the penalty for transgression. In other words, God could not declare man guiltless through justification without making full provision for his sins. All the sins committed through the millenniums before Christ were passed "over, in God's forbearance," or were forgiven on condition they would be atoned for by the blood of Christ.

"The law requires righteousness,-a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. . . . God can 'be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.' God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. . . . By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed." [79]

To pronounce the unrighteous to be righteous and the guilty to be guiltless would actually be an act of injustice had Christ not met the penalty of the broken law in man's behalf, which is declared to be a demonstration of His righteousness, which is available to man on the basis of faith. just as a judge is duty bound to uphold the honor and integrity of the law by enforcing its demands, so God can be consistent as far as justice is concerned and at the same time pardon the repentant sinner only in the light of the atoning sacrifice of His Son." The Cross reconciled two seeming incompatibilities-jealousy for the Law, and judicial acquittal of the guilty." [80]

True justification always implies sanctification, imparted righteousness, or spiritual growth. Paul shows the uselessness of works without faith, and James shows the uselessness of faith without works, and in this there is no contradiction. Profession without possession or practice is worthless." Being justified" indicates not only "at the present time" but also at any time in the future when it is needed and faith is exercised. One can maintain his title to heaven through justification, while at the same time he is being fitted for heaven through sanctification. In other words, he can "be ready" all the time he is getting ready by making further preparation through the slow process of Christian growth, which is the work of a lifetime. justification is the work of a moment, as with the thief on the cross.

Again the apostle of faith wrote: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our

Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Romans 5:1, 8-11.

"Reconciliation" is the marginal reading for "atonement. Through whom we have now obtained that reconciliation." (Weymouth.) In 1 John 2:2, Christ is declared to be "an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (Weymouth.) Atonement is defined as reparation, expiation, propitiation, amends, satisfaction, and reconciliation.

We are to be reconciled to God rather than God to us, for man is responsible for the alienation." Therefore" indicates that the apostle takes it for granted that his readers had understood his arguments concerning justification by faith." Peace" is the fruit of justification. We are justified by His death, but saved by His life. This refers not only to His life in the flesh but also the fact that He "ever lives to make intercession" for us. The life of Christ lived out in its is essential to sanctification and salvation. The peace of reconciliation is not an armed truce or an armistice, but a peace based on trust and restored confidence, a peace that "passes all understanding." It is possible to live in the dispensation of reconciliation and at the same time be absolutely ignorant concerning it as far as experience is concerned, and for such "Christ is dead in vain."

In the priestly service of reconciliation, those who have experienced the atonement may have a part: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. . . . reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath

committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:18-21." Hath given unto us the office to preach the atonement." Verse 18, Tyndale.

Reconciliation to God is possible only on His own terms and through the means which He has provided. Christ, "who knew no sin," was made "to be sin for us," so that "We might be made the righteousness of God in him." This paradox is a moral miracle," and explains Christ's cry on the cross, MY God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" God had to treat His Son as a sinner in order to uphold the righteousness of the law and the justice of the divine administration. The Innocent One was punished as if He were guilty, in order that the guilty ones could be treated as if they were innocent.

"Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His." [81]

"The only way in which he [the sinner] 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." [82]

This is almost too good to be trite. It indicates that where sins are blotted out of the books of record, there will be written in what Christ would have done if He had been in our place. In this way His life and character and conduct will be imputed to us. Is it any wonder that the Father loves us as He loves His Son, since as far as the record goes it is the life of His Son?

Reconciliation to God is also the only means of being reconciled to our fellow men.

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." Ephesians 2:15-17.

"His design was to unite the two sections of humanity in Himself so as to form one new man, thus effecting peace, and to reconcile Jews and Gentiles in one body to God, by means of His cross-slaying by it the mutual enmity." (Weymouth.)

Christ is the great magnet and the only means of unity between all classes. He said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." As all classes are drawn toward the great Center they are at the same time drawn toward one another. Christ destroys not only sin, the enmity between God and man, but also prejudice, the enmity between man and man, which is called "the middle wall of partition." This union is accomplished by the cross. The Scriptures know nothing of a cross less gospel, or of a cross as a mere accident that brought about an untimely death of Christ.

That this reconciliation by means of the cross includes the sinless universe is evident from Colossians 1:20-22:

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."

Reconciliation means "to take back into favor," and indicates a previous alienation, or estrangement. Man is "alienated" by "wicked works," and has departed "from the living God." (Hebrews 3:12) Paul declared that "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7), and James said that the friend of the world is "the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Paul descends from the generalization of "things in earth, or things in heaven," to "you," the individual who was alienated but is now "reconciled." It is another way of saying, "whosoever will," which makes salvation available to every human being. Richard Baxter said: "Thank God for that 'whosoever.' If He had said 'Richard Baxter,' I might have thought He meant some other Richard Baxter, but 'whosoever' means me even though I be the worst of all the Richard Baxters that ever lived." Not only did the death of Christ wipe out forever the last vestige of sympathy for Satan and his angels in the minds of angels and sinless beings of other worlds, but it also provided the means of reconciliation for fallen man, so that he can eventually be presented "holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight." These are legal terms indicating that no charges can be brought against those reconciled. The question, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" is answered by the statement, "It is God that justifies," and the question, "Who is he that condemns?" by the assertion that "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." Therefore, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" The answer concludes with the statement that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (See Romans 8:33-39.) That the incarnation was necessary as a prerequisite to reconciliation is evident from Hebrews 2:17,18: "Wherefore in all things it

became him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself bath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." "In order to atone for the sins of the people," is the Weymouth translation. Christ became Emmanuel, the God-man, being both truly divine and truly human, in order "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest," for only one who had known sin by personal contact could possibly qualify as a mediator between God and man." For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:15, 16. This could be said only of one who came "in the likeness of men" and was a partaker of human flesh and blood.

The apostle of love thus describes the completeness of the work of atonement: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2¹, 2." Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10." He is an atoning sacrifice for our sins," is the Weymouth translation in both texts." Little children" is a term of affection used seven times by the apostle of love. The very purpose of this letter is to give the necessary instruction, so that Christians may "not sin." Sin is chiefly due to ignorance of the plan of salvation." My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," is a Scriptural statement found in Hosea 4:6. The purpose of the gospel is to prevent sin as well as to remove it. It is a preventive medicine as well as a remedy.

The power of the gospel to keep us from falling is further set forth in the same epistle:

"No one who continues in union with Him lives in sin: no one who lives in sin has seen Him or knows Him. Dear children, let no one lead you astray. The man who acts righteously is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who is habitually guilty of sin is a child of the Devil, because the Devil has been a sinner from the very beginning. The Son of God appeared for the purpose of undoing the work of the Devil." 1 John 3:6-8, Weymouth.

"We know that no one who is a child of God lives in sin, but He who is God's Child keeps him, and the Evil one cannot touch him. We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the Evil one." 1 John 5:18, 19, Weymouth.

The phrase "if any man sin," is preceded by, "I write unto you, that you sin not," so that none will take advantage of it and look upon sin as inevitable and a matter of course. John does not address Christians as sinless beings, but sets before them the ideal goal of sinlessness, and then tells of the provision made for an emergency, so that they will not become discouraged in the case of failure. In such an emergency "We have an advocate with the Father," who "is able . . . to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." This advocate, or added voice, stands ready to take care of any sin through justification. We are all exposed to temptation, and the Lord recognizes the possibility of even a good man sinning. Not only is this liability here expressed, but it is testified to in the experience of the best of men, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, David, Peter, as well as in our own lives. Christ "the righteous" pleads the cause of the unrighteous, and places His own obedience and merits to the sinner's account.

The text under consideration makes it clear that although sin is not a light matter, it is not incurable. Christ "is not an advocate who wishes to set aside the law but to carry it out and apply it." [83] In John's statement there is no license to sin, or an indulgence to sin, but a provision in case of a fall after every possible effort has been made to avoid it. Life belts and lifeboats on a ship do not indicate a plan for a shipwreck, but are a provision in case of need. The same is true of a fire escape on a tall building. Christ came to "save his people from their sins," and "he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." In order to make provision for sin, God "spared not his own Son." Provision was made for "the sins of the whole world," but the atonement applies only to those who accept the provisions of the gospel and apply them to their own lives on the basis of faith.

However, salvation is not dependent on a full knowledge of the plan of salvation, including the death and priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Christ is declared to be "the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." This indicates that enough light reaches every human being to bring salvation if he walks in it. We are told that even the heathen will be "without excuse" in the judgment, because through the book of nature, "the illustrated edition of the Bible," they have learned of "his eternal power and Godhead." (See Romans 1: 18-20) This must be so, for God is "no respecter of persons." In Zechariah 13:6 we are told that some will come up to Christ in the kingdom and ask, "What are these wounds in your hands?" and He will answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." This implies that many will be saved who never heard of the crucifixion. In Prophets and Kings, in the chapter "Hope for the Heathen," we are told that many will reach the kingdom who have never heard of the written law or the written word, but through the lessons of nature and the influence of the Holy Spirit they "do by nature the things contained in the law," and will be saved. The conclusion is that the "plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world." Nevertheless they are all saved through the name or character of Christ, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Because of the crisis that resulted from the teachings of the Judaizers, the apostle Paul seems to have reached the height of inspiration and logic on the subject of the atonement and the cross in his epistles to the Romans and the Galatians, and especially in his epistle to the latter:

“For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.” Galatians 2:19-21, RSV.

The apostle had been crucified with Christ and could therefore say, “I . . . am dead-; in fact, in one sense he was still on the cross with Him who is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” On another occasion he said, “I die daily.” On the cross Christ tasted “death for every man,” and “died for all” and we are told that “if one

died for all, then were all dead.” (See Hebrews 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15) It is through this crucifixion that the old man of sin dies and is buried, as symbolized by baptism, and as a new man rises to “walk in newness of life.” Paul’s statement indicates the acceptance of a fact already accomplished, which makes possible a continuous experience.

Two thieves were crucified with Christ, but on separate crosses. He died for both, but only one accepted the provisions of the plan of salvation and experienced the crucifixion of the lower nature, without which eternal life is impossible. The only road to Paradise is by way of the cross, without which there is no Christianity. Unless the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ becomes a spiritual experience in our own lives, “Christ is dead in vain” as far as we are concerned.

Crucifixion with Christ involves a threefold death. The first is death to the law, so that its curse, condemnation, or penalty no longer terrifies us. The second is death to sin, so that it “shall not have dominion over” its, and therefore “death bath no more dominion over” us, The third is death to the world. Paul declared that through the cross of Christ “the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Christ was the secret of the more abundant life and the hope of future glory. A note on Galatians 2:20 in The Cambridge Bible reads as follows:

“This verse strikes the key-note of the Epistle, and is the summary of the whole Christian revelation subjectively considered. St Paul here discloses to our view the secret of his life as a Christian and as an Apostle, the mainspring of his wonderful activity, the source and the object of the enthusiasm by which he was inspired. We know something of his life and his labors. Here he tells us how that life was lived, and why those labors were undergone. A full record of his teaching has been preserved to us. Here is a summary of it all.” [84]

Paul’s being able to say “I . . . am dead,” and at the same time, -nevertheless I live,” constitutes one of the many paradoxes found in his writings. The apostle was “alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:11. He was so completely identified with his Master that their separate personalities were merged. Christ was to him “all, and in all.” It was “not I, but Christ, in every look and action, not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.”

“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.” [85]

This new life in Christ is to be lived, not in heaven, but “in the flesh,” or in the present world while our flesh is still “vile” and “sinful.” The conflict between the Holy Spirit, working through the higher nature, and Satan, working through the lower nature, is described in Galatians 5:16-25. Paul said:

“Let your lives be guided by the Spirit, and then you will certainly not indulge the cravings of your lower natures. For the cravings of the lower nature are opposed to those of the Spirit, and the cravings of the Spirit are opposed to those of the lower nature; because these are antagonistic to each other, so that you cannot do everything to which you are inclined.” Verses 16, 17, Weymouth.

Here is set forth the chief difference between a Christian and a worldling.

The result of the control of the Spirit is shown in the following statement:

“When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.” [86]

This new life is lived “by the faith of the Son of God.” Those who experience it have “the faith of Jesus.” But genuine faith always manifests itself in good works, which are the fruit of faith and love. Martin Luther said:

“Good works ought to be done, not as the cause, but as the fruits of righteousness; and when we are made righteous, we ought to do them, but not contrariwise, to the end that when we are unrighteous, we may be made righteous. The tree makes the apple, but not the apple the tree.”

The experience pictured in Galatians 2:20, 21, is that of the imparted righteousness of Christ, or sanctification. The following on the essential Christian experience is taken from The Pulpit Commentary:

“ (1) This is death. The old life is killed out. The passions, lusts, habits, and associations of the life in sin, self, and worldliness are mortified. Christianity is not simply educational. It is first of all militant -purging, scourging, killing. (2) This is crucifixion-a painful, violent death; for it is no light matter to destroy the life in sin, so full of pleasant attractions, and so deeply rooted in our inmost nature. . . . (3) This is crucifixion with Christ. Our union with Christ necessitates this death of the old life and brings it about. The new wine bursts the old bottles. Conscience and the Law fail to destroy the old life, though they reveal its hideous deformity. But when we come to Calvary and reach out to the dying Christ, entering into his experience by faith and vivid sympathy, the old self receives its mortal wounds. Then we can live the former life no longer. . . . St. Paul feels that he has so given himself up to Christ that the ruling power in him is no longer self but Christ. This is true Christianity. (1) It is life. We die that we may live. . . . (2) This life is Christ's. It derives its power from Christ, it is swayed by the will of Christ, it seeks the ends of Christ, it breathes the spirit of Christ, it is lived in personal communion with Christ. Selfish aims and self-devised resources are gone, and in their place the grace of Christ is the inspiration, and the mind and will of Christ are the controlling influences of the new life. This is not a future possibility, but a present attainment. . . . Though grace does lead us to conformity with Law, it can only do so in its own way by changing the heart and planting principles of righteousness.” [87]

Paul declares that an attempt to obtain righteousness on the basis of human works frustrates, makes void, or nullifies the grace of God, and therefore for such His death was in vain, or for naught. It was a mistake, a tragedy. Grace always leads to conformity to the divine law, for the gospel writes the law in the mind and on the fleshy tables of the heart so that we “do by nature the things contained in the law,” with a delightful obedience.

Perhaps one more text is sufficient to show that unless the atonement becomes an experience in our lives it is of no avail: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Galatians 6:14, 15. Dr. Adam Clarke declared that “Christ's cross is the touchstone of Christianity.” Through it Paul, the former Pharisee, was delivered from the bondage of legalism and ceremonialism unto “the glorious liberty of the children of God.” To him it was the very essence and core of Christianity. To the Corinthians he said, “For I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” 1 Corinthians 2:2. Whatever others may boast about, Paul refused to glory in anything except the atoning death of Christ on the cross. Therefore boasting on the basis of human works and merit is forever excluded.

When Paul was a proud Pharisee he gloried in his birth, his superior education, his devotion to religious ceremonies, and even in his zeal in persecuting Christians. After his conversion he might have gloried in his calling and apostolic authority, his marvelous accomplishments in the mission fields, his courage in meeting opposition, and his fortitude in enduring persecution. But the things that were once so valuable to him were now mere refuse in comparison with the priceless privilege of knowing Christ and Him crucified. Some men glory in their own crosses and sufferings, but Paul gloried only in the cross and sufferings of Christ. With him it was “not in my sufferings for Christ, but in His sufferings for me” (Lightfoot). That which was the emblem of evil, shame, and ignominy to the world, had become the object of glory and the sign of righteousness and salvation.

Virtually the same thought is expressed in Jeremiah 9:23, 24: “Thus said the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, said the Lord.”

Wisdom, power, and might are the chief reasons for human boasting, but such glorying is in vain, for “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,” and “every man at his best is altogether vanity.”

In genuine Christian experience there is a twofold crucifixion. We are crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to us. We are dead to the world, and the world is dead to us. The world has no more attraction for the Christian, and the Christian has no attraction for the world, for they have nothing in common. This changed relationship is thus stated in The Cambridge Bible:

“The world with its passing interests, its narrowly limited aims, its sordid gains, its perishable treasures' its hollow show, its mockery of satisfaction-is to me like yon felon slave, nailed to the cross dying a certain and shameful, if a lingering death. And I too am so regarded by the world.” [88]

Commenting on Galatians 6:14, 15, Martin Luther said, “The world and I are well agreed. The world cares not a pin for me, and I, to cry quittance with it, care as little for the world.”

“The world regards him as a dead man, who has no longer any attractions that it should desire him. It regards him no longer as its own, and therefore hates him to the point of persecution. This inter crucifixion came about through his union with Christ, and that union was effected by the cross. Well, therefore, might the apostle glory in the cross!” [89]

“There are some who would dispense with the doctrine of the cross; but a crossless Christianity will be a mutilated, impotent gospel, robbed of all efficacy, shorn of all glory.” [90]

The Lord’s messenger wrote: “To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. . . . Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Savior’s love; and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.” [91]

Even though the cross becomes the means of glory, it is still the instrument of torture and death. It is to the Christian what it was to Christ, for Christianity is union with Christ, which includes “the fellowship of his sufferings” as well as a share in His glory and triumph. As we behold the cross, the power of the world over us is broken, and its fascinating pleasures lose their charm. Self dies, and the lower nature surrenders its control to the sovereignty of the Spirit; the earthly lusts and passions give place to heavenly desires and affections. This experience is so basic and important that all else, including religious ceremonies, fades into the background. The all-important thing is the new creation, by which “all things. . . become new.” Nothing counts except a renewed nature, or “a new nature in everything,” according to other translations.

Outward rites and ceremonies are meaningless without the inward spiritual experience. A religious rite or ceremony is of value only as a symbol, or sign, of an inward state. If the experience is lacking, the symbol is nothing better than “a fair show in the flesh.” Sabbath observance and baptism are false signs unless they are outward evidences of Christian character and regeneration. Membership and position in the church, doctrinal orthodoxy of the strictest order, or the most ardent pretensions of piety are useless and meaningless unless there has been a new creation. What we are is far more basic and fundamental than what we do and say. Righteousness is first of all right being, the fruit of which is right doing and right living. We are not what we are because we do what we do, but we do what we do because we are what we are. This principle is clearly set forth in the following statements:

“If the heart is right, your words, your dress, your acts, will all be right.” [92]

“You must be good before you can do good. You can not exert an influence that will transform others until your own heart has been humbled and refined and made tender by the grace of Christ. When this change has been wrought in you, it will be as natural for you to live to bless others as it is for the rose-bush to yield its fragrant bloom, or the vine its purple cluster.” [93]

This new creation by which all things become new is the result of the atoning death of Christ:

“As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require!” [94]

“Reflections of Calvary will awaken tender, sacred, and lively emotions in the Christian’s heart. Praises to God and the Lamb will be in their hearts and upon their lips. Pride and self-esteem cannot flourish in the hearts that keep fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary. . . . Many who profess to be Christians become excited over worldly enterprises, and their interest is awakened for new and exciting amusements, while they are coldhearted, and appear as if frozen, in the cause of God. Here is a theme, poor formalist, which is of sufficient importance to excite you. Eternal interests are here involved. Upon this theme it is sin to be calm and unimpassioned. The scenes of Calvary call for the deepest emotion. Upon this subject you will be excusable if you manifest enthusiasm. . . . The contemplation of the matchless depths of a Savior’s love should fill the mind, touch and melt the soul, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. . . Some have limited views of the atonement!” [95]

Speaking of Calvary, Dorothy Sayers said: “If this is dull, then what, in Heaven’s name, is worthy to be called exciting. . . . If we call this dull, then words have no meaning.”

A vision of the atoning death of Christ will play an important part in preparing God’s remnant people for the latter rain and the loud cry. This is evident because of the marvelous transformation of character produced by such a vision as is described in the previously quoted statements. The same vision by the early disciples in the upper room brought the refreshing showers of the early rain. In speaking of the purpose of the message of righteousness by faith which came to this people in 1888, the messenger of the Lord said:

“Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in large measure. . . . The efficacy of the blood of Christ was to be presented to the people with freshness and power, that their faith might lay hold upon its merits. As the high priest sprinkled the warm blood upon the mercy seat, while the fragrant cloud of incense ascended before God, so while we confess our sins, and plead the efficacy of Christ’s atoning blood, our prayers are to ascend to heaven, fragrant with the merits of our Savior’s character.

The blood of the spotless Lamb of God the believers apply to their own hearts. Looking upon the great Antitype, we can say, ‘It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ’ The Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of Jesus Christ.” [96]

Another evidence that a vision of Christ and Him crucified will mark the beginning of a new and triumphant experience in the history of this movement is found in the fact that such A vision constituted the turning point in the wilderness sojourn of ancient Israel in their journey from Egypt to Canaan. Israel began a victorious march from the serpent infested wilderness to the banks of the Jordan. That the experiences of ancient Israel were typical of those of modern Israel is evident from 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, as well as from many statements in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy, of which the following are only a few samples:

“You are following the same path as did ancient Israel.” “Modern Israel are fast following in their footsteps.” “We are repeating the history of that people.” [97]

“The history of the wilderness life of Israel was chronicled for the benefit of the Israel of God to the close of time. The record of God’s dealings with the wanderers of the desert in all their marching to and fro, in their exposure to hunger, thirst, and weariness, and in the striking manifestations of His power for their relief, is fraught with warning and instruction for His people in all ages. The varied experience of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people in these days review with a humble heart and teachable spirit the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan.” [98]

We are told that in the journey around Edom.” the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. -This led to murmuring and criticism, especially of their leader, and “the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.” This led to an acknowledgment of sin and a request for prayer. The prayer of Moses brought instruction from the Lord to make a fiery serpent of brass and set it up on a pole in the midst of the camp, so that “if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” Jesus declared that the uplifted serpent was symbolic of Himself on the cross of Calvary: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:14, 15. The serpent was symbolic of sin, and Christ came “in the likeness of sinful flesh.” He was made “to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. He came “in the likeness of sinful flesh” in order to destroy the author of sin and death and “deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:15.

The announcement of the remedy to ancient Israel was glad tidings to the helpless victims:

“The joyful news was sounded throughout the encampment, that all who had been bitten might look upon the brazen serpent and live. Many had already died, and when Moses raised the serpent upon the pole, some would not believe that merely gazing upon that metallic image would heal them; these perished in their unbelief. Yet there were many who had faith in the provision which God had made. . . . They could not save themselves from the fatal effect of the poison of their wounds. God alone was able to heal them. Yet they were required to show their faith in the provision which He had made. They must look, in order to live. It was their faith that was acceptable with God, and by looking upon the serpent their faith was shown. They knew that there was no virtue in the serpent itself, but it was a symbol of Christ; and the necessity of faith in His merits was thus presented to their minds. . . . That look implied faith. They lived because they believed God’s word, and trusted in the means provided for their recovery.” [99]

The results of this vision of Christ on the cross are pictured in Numbers 21:10-35 and Deuteronomy 2:17 to 3:17. The Israelites were no longer “discouraged because of the way,” but were filled with hope and faith and courage, and they “pressed forward,” buoyant and hopeful. Of the mighty giants and impregnable fortresses the Lord said, “You shall not fear them: for the Lord your God he shall fight for you.”

“Filled with hope and courage, the army of Israel eagerly pressed forward, and, still journeying northward, they soon reached a country that might well test their courage and their faith in God. Before them lay the powerful and populous kingdom of Bashan, crowded with great stone cities that to this day excite the wonder of the world. . . . The inhabitants of this land, descendants from a giant race, were themselves of marvelous size and strength, and so distinguished for violence and cruelty as to be the terror of all

surrounding nations. . . . The hearts of many in Israel quaked with fear. But Moses was calm and firm. . . . The calm faith of their leader inspired the people with confidence in God. They trusted all to His omnipotent arm, and He did not fail them. Not mighty giants nor walled cities, armed hosts nor rocky fortresses, could stand before the Captain of the Lord's host. The Lord led the army; the Lord discomfited the enemy; the Lord conquered in behalf of Israel." [100]

Satan's final effort to stop the triumphant march of the Exodus movement to the banks of the Jordan was through an apostate, Balaam. This false prophet, motivated by a love of gain and prestige, attempted to curse Israel, and learned to his chagrin that he could not curse "whom God hath not cursed," nor defy "whom the Lord hath not defied." His curse was turned into a blessing. While the apostate prophet sought to point out the defects of Israel, the great invisible Leader of the movement did not behold "iniquity in Jacob, nor see "perverseness in Israel." The Lord was with them, and the shout of a king was among them.

This experience will also have an anti type in the Advent movement just before the end, when apostates and offshoot movements will try to stop the progress of God's work by cursing the movement and its leaders, but their criticisms will be turned into blessings when the Lord sets His hand to finish His work and cut it short in righteousness. The increasing efforts of these anti types of the ancient Balaam is another evidence that the Advent people are nearing the end of their journey to the heavenly Canaan. Our great need now is a vision of the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross of Calvary, with the accompanying latter rain and loud cry.

A careful study of the parallels between ancient and modern Israel reveals the nearness of the end. Those who live close to the people and know their spiritual condition are cognizant of the fact that many are "much discouraged because of the way," and are falling out and casting away their confidence in the coming of Christ and the Second Advent movement and its leadership. This situation would be changed quickly by a vision of Christ and His atoning sacrifice as the only remedy for sin. The following instruction deserves our most careful and prayerful consideration:

"Do not try to draw the attention of the people to yourselves. Let them lose sight of the instrument, while you exalt Jesus. Talk of Jesus; lose self in Jesus. There is too much bustle and stir about our religion, while Calvary and the cross are forgotten."

"A spirit of worldliness and selfishness has deprived the church of many a blessing. . . . A clear, steady view of the cross of Christ would counteract their worldliness and fill their souls with humility, penitence, and gratitude. . . . A deadly spiritual malady is upon the church. Its members are wounded by Satan, but they will not look to the cross of Christ, as the Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, that they may live. The world has so many claims upon them that they have not time to look to the cross of Calvary long enough to see its glory or to feel its power." [101]

"Let none look to self, as though they had power to save themselves. Jesus died for us because we were helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. . . . Look and live. Jesus has pledged His word; He will save all who come unto Him. Though millions who need to be healed will reject His offered mercy, not one who trusts in His merits will be left to perish. . . . It is our duty, first, to look; and the look of faith will give us life." [102]

Let us pray that as leaders in modern Israel we may more fully experience the results of a vision of Calvary and then uplift Jesus before the people as the Lamb of God and the One "altogether lovely," "the chief among ten thousand," so that the church, which is "the apple of his eye," and "the only object of "His supreme regard," may soon become "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," as she goes forth -conquering, and to conquer- under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain.

8. The Covenants And The Law

EDWARD HEPPENSTALL

The Covenants and the Plan of Redemption

1. Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been entrusted with the Word of God. The Word of God presents both gospel and law. The great responsibility of the church has always been and still is to teach and to preach the Word of God as both law and gospel. The great task of Seventh-day Adventists can be seen in contrast with the antinomian teachings through the centuries, and with the decline of true righteousness in our time.

The problems and issues connected with the relationship of the law and the gospel appear exceedingly complex. The first problem centers in the place and function of the covenants in the great controversy. The Bible describes two covenants, one everlasting, the other temporal; one new, the other old; one perfect, the other faulty. The problem is whether these reveal two methods of God in dealing with men.

The position has often been taken that Israel's readiness in accepting the Sinaitic covenant presented to them by God implies that they accepted without due consideration, and without realizing their utter inability to fulfill the terms of this covenant. It is believed, further, that "the old covenant" experience predominated for the next fifteen hundred years, until the time of Christ, when the new covenant became the constitutional basis of the church.

These two covenants have been interpreted by many Christians to represent two dispensations—one, a dispensation of law, which continued until the cross; the other, a dispensation of grace, when Christians are no longer under law but under grace. In the fullness of time, when man's utter inability to keep the law had been demonstrated perfectly, when the dispensation of law was proved incompetent for salvation, Christ came to fulfill both the law and the prophets. Hence, the law has no longer any rights or claims. The Ten Commandments, we are told, was abrogated at the cross, and is part of that covenant which "lead to bondage."

It is further believed by some that although the Ten Commandments was part of the old covenant, which has passed away, God has given a new law as the basis of the new covenant of grace, designated variously as the law of the Spirit, the law of Christ, or the law of love.

Seventh-day Adventists have held that the law of God has been at the heart of the controversy from the very beginning. That the Christian Era is pre-eminently the age when the law of God, as revealed in the Ten Commandments and as constituting the standard of righteousness, is to be kept as never before, not as the means of salvation, but as the fruit of a life that is hid with Christ in God. We further believe that there never was a time when men were saved by law, that the covenant of grace was established from before the foundation of the world; that all men are saved by grace alone.

We also believe that there is no such thing in the plan or purpose of God as a dispensation of law and a dispensation of grace; that whatever changes and transitions are made throughout the history of man, are based upon progressive revelation and the unfolding of God's purpose; that the Old and the New Testament are wholly complementary and not antithetical or antagonistic.

2. Meaning of Covenant

Throughout the Bible the relationship between God and His people is designated by the word covenant. Whatever is involved or experienced in this covenant relationship makes up the content of the Bible. God chooses individuals or a nation to be His people. To these people of His choice God commands His covenant. The people who accept the terms of this covenant become conscious of a special contractual relationship existing between themselves and God. This relationship carries with it certain obligations, the keeping of which is a life-and-death matter.

In ordinary parlance, we mean by the term covenant, "an agreement or contract between two parties." Either party is free to enter into the agreement or not as he chooses. But the Biblical term is somewhat different in meaning. The Hebrew word *berith* means "to bind," "to fetter," "a binding or a bond." The relation of God's people to Him is expressed in a *berith*. The Greek word *diatheke* implies a free promise on the divine side and an undertaking of obligations on the human side. In both cases it implies an obligation imposed by a superior upon an inferior. The initiative is taken by God, and only in a secondary way does man have any initiative at all. Man has freedom as to whether he will enter into a covenant relationship. But he has no privilege to reject the terms or to suggest others. God the Creator is in an altogether different position from man the creature." I alone am God" is the fundamental statement of all divine revelation. It reveals the absolute barrier that separates the divine God from man. All relationships between God and man are a gracious condescension on the part of God.

The first characteristic of God's covenant relationship is that of Lordship. God remains Lord. He is the Sovereign. The covenant is an expression of God's will, not man's. It is man's responsibility to listen to God, to seek to understand His terms. In God's first covenant with Adam, Adam instituted nothing. The Israelites at Sinai instituted nothing. They did, however, exercise their privilege in choosing to obey the covenant.

When God reveals His covenant, there is inevitably a call to unreserved obedience and surrender to God. There is no place for a bargaining relationship. The covenant of God places man on probation. Man has life only if he obeys and meets the terms of the covenant. The second characteristic of God's covenant is fellowship.

"I will be your God, and you shall be my people." Leviticus 26:12." They saw God, and did eat and drink." Exodus 24:11. This was the covenant meal, when God and the people sat down together, as it were, in a symbol of communion and fellowship. The identical idea is found in the Lord's supper." This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 1 Corinthians 11:25, RV.

Hosea represents the relation of Israel to God under the figure of marriage. Jeremiah uses also the figures of father and son, shepherd and sheep. So God, through His covenant, seeks to establish a personal fellowship with

man. This communion is offered as a gracious gift of God. The covenant is a relation of grace. In Genesis

17:2, God gives a covenant, nathan berith He bestows it as a gift of grace.

The tragic mistake of Israel was that they came to regard the covenant as a juridical relationship, a legal transaction. The fundamental reality of God's covenant is that men enjoy the favor and blessing of God irrespective of their past, without discharging any formal debt or performing any special work to secure the favors of God irrespective of their past. Grace and truth do not come through legislation.

The vital responsibility of the church is to lead sinful men into a covenant relationship with God, acknowledging Jesus as Lord, at the same time enjoying a fellows of love and unity.

3. The Sinaitic Covenant

In God's covenant with Israel at Sinai, just what is the relationship between them? Are there two covenants held out to Israel or only one? Did God make a covenant that He knew could not be kept, in order that Israel might learn the folly of trying to keep the law in their own strength? Is God actually offering to make the old covenant with Israel the gateway to the everlasting covenant, indicating two stages in God's dealing with men?

Mrs. White states that "the covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense," and that it is of "just as much force to-day as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel." [1] Why, then, is the Sinaitic covenant called the-old covenant"?

In the actual operating of the covenants of the Bible there are two parties. Each enters into a relationship with the other. Each has some response to make in relationship to the covenant's promises and terms. The judgment of the New Testament on the Sinaitic covenant is that it was faulty. It is obvious that there can be nothing wrong from God's side. He cannot be charged either with desiring or planning a faulty covenant. He makes everything perfect. Therefore the fault must lie with Israel.

What kind of covenant was God seeking to make with Israel? Was the "old covenant" at Sinai one of divine appointment, or a divine adjustment to Israel's faulty response? Is not God limited by the nature of sinful man?

1. In the first place, the covenant that God planned to make with Israel at Sinai was none other than the same covenant He made with Abraham. Three times in Genesis, chapter seventeen, the covenant made with Abraham is called the everlasting covenant. Nine times it is designated "my covenant." The occasion for God's plan to deliver Israel from bondage is that "God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." Exodus 2:24. In calling Moses to lead the children of Israel, He states that His purpose in delivering Israel is to establish "my covenant." (Exodus 6:3-5)

In Exodus, chapter 19, there is the record of the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. Israel is led to Mount Sinai. Moses makes the first of eight ascents to receive instruction from God. God tells Moses that before proceeding with the giving of the law, He requires a positive commitment on the part of the people. They are to pledge themselves to keep "my covenant." (Exodus 19:5)

Surely, it was not in the mind of God, when the children of Israel came to Sinai, to say: "Now I will make a different covenant with them from what I made with Abraham. I am going to teach these people by giving them a covenant they cannot keep. I intend to show them how impossible it is for them to keep My laws, My statutes, and My judgments. I will therefore offer them, at least to begin with, something less than I did Abraham." If He did, then Israel lived up completely to His expectations. If Israel broke the old covenant when they sacrificed to the golden calf, there is no case to be made. Was not the old covenant made to operate that way? How could Israel be held responsible?

Israel had to meet the same requirements as Abraham. They received the same sign of circumcision that God gave to Abraham. Both Abraham and Israel were brought face to face with the same covenant. Yet both experienced the old covenant in their lives. Abraham failed when he distrusted God regarding His promise to give him an heir, and had a child by Hagar. Paul states in Galatians that this represented the old covenant experience of Abraham. The reason for Israel's failure was not that they were given a different covenant from that given to Abraham. God is no respecter of persons. Where is there any indication that Israel were conscious they were under a different covenant from that of their father Abraham?

The Old Testament knows nothing, about covenants in the plural. The word is always found in the singular. There is constant reference to one covenant designated by God as "my covenant," "his covenant," phrases that occur throughout the Bible.

2. In the second place, the Lord was pleased with the response that Israel made at Sinai when they said, “All that the Lord hath said will we do,” Exodus 24:7. Moses declared that God told him it was the right response to make.” And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when you spoke unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.” Deuteronomy 5:27, 28.

3. In the third place, the whole tenor of God’s approach, His attitude and relationship, definitely indicated the everlasting covenant in an adapted form to be the one that confronted Israel at Sinai.

Was there the element of stern command that was supposed to mark the old covenant? On the contrary, before any revelation of the law was given, Israel was reminded of God’s gracious and loving dealing with them. In Exodus, chapter twenty, even as God began to speak the words of the Ten Commandments, Jehovah reminded them that He is their Redeemer, who brought them out of the land of Egypt. But the fulfillment of God’s gracious promises was conditioned by obedience. Thus we see here that the gospel precedes obedience. The principles of salvation and of becoming children of God are the same here as they have always been. It is imperative that grace conserve law.

The covenant was entirely reasonable. Nothing was forced upon them or done in haste. Negotiations were prolonged, so that the people might have the opportunity of pondering well the character of the proposed engagement. Three times the children of Israel declared: “All that the Lord hath said will we do.” Intervals of time ensued between responses. Moses carefully recited to them “all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments.” Exodus 24:3. The second time they promised full obedience. Even then the matter was allowed to stand over till the next day. Then Moses appeared with the written book, the book of the covenant, and they were finally asked whether they would adhere to what they had said. (Exodus 24:7.) Greater precautions against any rash committal could scarcely have been taken.

Furthermore, the fulfillment of the terms of God’s covenant was not impossible or exceedingly difficult. God had done everything to render it possible of fulfillment. Israel were told by Moses that the commandments were not hard to be understood or to perform. They were not to think of the fulfillment of the terms as an inaccessible height they could not scale. Nor was it something too deep for them to understand, like the depths of the sea. It was near to them, even in their mouths. (Deuteronomy 30:11-14.)

The testimony of the writers of the Old Testament is that Sinai was a glorious demonstration of the love of God. Moses’ final words regarding the giving of the law at Sinai are significant: “The Lord came from Sinai. . . , and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.” Deuteronomy 33:2, 3.

Hosea undoubtedly refers to the Sinaitic covenant as follows: “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. . . . I taught Ephraim to walk. I took them on my arms.” Hosea 11:1-3, A. R. V.

What beautiful figures are used here. God is embracing His children with one arm while giving them a fiery law with the other. Here we see the fatherhood of God taking His children, the subjects of His covenant, into His arms in order that He might instruct them in the right way.

To say that God is responsible, even indirectly, for the faultiness of the faulty response of the people, which led to a hopeless covenant of works, makes God also responsible for the apostate judaism of Jesus’ day. Moses’ interpretation of Sinai is anything but that. (Deuteronomy 4:12, 13, 23, 31, 36, 37)

“Those who claim that Christ came to abrogate the law of God and to do away with the Old Testament, speak of the Jewish age as one of darkness, and represent the religion of the Hebrews as consisting of mere forms and ceremonies. But this is an error. . . . Never has He given to the sons of men more open manifestations of His power and glory than when He alone was acknowledged as Israel’s ruler, and gave the law to His people. . . . The stately goings forth of Israel’s invisible King were unspeakably grand and awful.

“In all these revelations of the divine presence, the glory of God was manifested through Christ. Not alone at the Savior’s advent, but through all the ages after the fall and the promise of redemption, ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. ’ . . . Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man’s Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Savior who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face. . . . Jesus was the light of His people . . . before He came to earth in the form of humanity.” [2]

4. In the fourth place, the covenant which God sought to make with Israel at Sinai and with which He confronted Israel was based upon righteousness by faith.

Great care was taken to safeguard Israel from what is referred to as the old covenant experience. Clear and definite warnings were given against self-righteousness.

Moses was, it appears, as much enlightened on righteousness by faith and righteousness by the works of the law as was Paul. One of the great passages on this grand theme is found in Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Paul quotes this entire passage in Romans chapters 9 and 10 in explaining Israel's failure, as support for the doctrine of righteousness by faith. (See also Deuteronomy 9:1-6)

In other words, both Moses and Paul emphasized the same truth. They both proclaimed the gospel of the everlasting covenant. Both of them met with opposition and unbelief. Both saw much the same results among the Israelites. Always a remnant knew that God would provide Himself a lamb. Always the law of God was written upon the heart of the remnant. Always the majority failed to enter in because of unbelief. Always God held them responsible for breaking the covenant. The reason God held them responsible was that He had done everything that could be done to give them cause for living the life of faith.

5. In the fifth place, the numerous appeals by leaders and prophets to return to God's covenant were but a call to renew the original covenant made with God at Sinai and previously with their fathers, the patriarchs. As it was with God at Sinai, so it was with Israel's leaders and prophets. All were in harmony in seeking to lead the people in righteousness under the holy covenant of the Lord.

The word covenant is used almost 250 times in the Old Testament. Seven times it is used with reference to the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; 74 times miscellaneous to covenants in human relationships; and 159 times directly to the Sinaitic covenant. If the covenant at Sinai was but a covenant of works, and this is how it is interpreted by the New Testament writers, how could Israel hope to produce any other kind of record than the one they had? Men become like what they hear and what they think. If the leaders and prophets were continually calling them back to the old covenant, then why blame the Jews and Israel for making such a failure?

There were several occasions in the later history of Israel when God reminded His people through the prophets of their covenant obligations and privileges.

The first occasion was the public rehearsal of the law and the Sinaitic covenant by Moses at the close of his life as contained in the book of Deuteronomy. Moses appealed to Israel to be faithful to the Sinaitic covenant, and by so doing, to fulfill the covenant made with their fathers.

"After the public rehearsal of the law, Moses completed the work of writing all the laws, the statutes, and the judgments which God had given him, and all the regulations concerning the sacrificial system. The book . . . was for safe-keeping deposited in the side of the ark." [3]

This book of the law is first mentioned in Exodus 24:7. There it contained only the Ten Commandments and the seventy laws and judgments. Later additions were made, including also the book of Deuteronomy. The whole thing came to be known as the law of Moses, the book of the law, the book of the covenant, the book of the law of God. (Deuteronomy 4, 5, 7, 9, 26 to 33)

The question may be raised that Deuteronomy distinguishes between the Abrahamic and Sinaitic covenants." The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." Deuteronomy 5:2, 3. Moses is not emphasizing the difference between covenants. He is saying that each man must renew that covenant for himself. God made a covenant with Abraham; nevertheless both Isaac and Jacob renewed that holy covenant for themselves. And it must be renewed by their descendants. They cannot be excused by saying that God made this covenant only with their fathers, and so it is not binding. No, he made it with them, 11 with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." What avails it to be children of Abraham according to the flesh, since God is able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham? This is a covenant that needs to be ratified by every individual for himself apart. Similarly, we urge our own children to seek and to gain a Christian experience for themselves, for they do not inherit it from their parents. This is exactly what Moses was asking the Hebrews to do just before he died.

The second occasion for the renewal of the covenant was under Joshua, when Israel had come into possession of the land of Canaan. Again a solemn appeal was made at the close of the life of one of Israel's great leaders. The occasion was especially significant. The tabernacle had been removed to Shechem, the scene of God's first covenant with Abraham. The location was well calculated to inspire the Israelites, not only with deep emotions, but with a deep sense of responsibility. Joshua briefly reviewed the history of Israel from the call of Abraham. Israel was charged "to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses." Joshua 23:6. Three times Joshua called upon them to serve the Lord, and three times, just as at Sinai, the people responded, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." (Joshua 24:16, 21, 24)

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there. . . . And Joshua said unto all the people. . . . It shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest you deny your God." Verses 26, 27.

This occasion had many points similar to Israel's experience at Sinai, except for a time it showed better results." And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over lived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel." Verse 31. It is evident that many of these people knew something better than the "old covenant experience."

The third occasion for the renewal of the covenant was during the reign of Josiah, when the lost book of the covenant was discovered. Josiah called for a public recitation of the covenant." And all the people stood to the covenant." 2 Kings 23:3. A great revival followed as king, priests, and people stood to the covenant of the Lord.

The fourth occasion-was on the return of Israel from exile. Under Ezra and Nehemiah this was undoubtedly the greatest attempt since Sinai to call Israel to stand by the covenant of the Lord. The book of the covenant was read day after day before the people. Synagogues were established throughout the land, in order that the people might receive instruction from the book of the covenant every Sabbath. Again there followed a great religious revival. (Nehemiah 8 to 10) Yet between Ezra's time and the time of Christ, a period of more than four hundred years, Israel retrograded into a legalism that surpassed anything in all of their history, and which reached its nadir in that system that Christ met and utterly repudiated when He came to earth.

The final occasion constituted a prophecy for the Christian church. Almost the last words in the Old Testament are an appeal to the Sinaitic covenant." Remember you the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." Malachi 4:4. Its connection with the work of John the Baptist under the figure of the return of Elijah is particularly significant, indicating the reverence and respect for the ancient covenant that all God's true servants and prophets had manifested through the centuries.

6. In the sixth place, the testimony of the Spirit of prophecy is conclusive as to the spirituality and the permanency of the Sinai covenant.

"I have been instructed to direct the mind of our people to the fifty-sixth chapter of Isaiah. This chapter contains important lessons for those who are fighting on the Lord's side in the conflict between good and evil. 'Thus said the Lord, keep you judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. . . . Every one that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain. ' This is the covenant spoken of in . . . [Exodus 19:3-8]." [4]

"The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense. . . . 'And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words. ' 'And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. ' This covenant is of just as much force to-day as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel." [5]

What shall we say, then, as to the God ward side of the Sinaitic covenant? Since God's attitude and approach are identically the same in both covenants, why not say that there is, in the mind of God, but one covenant? And since that is true, then the covenant is none other than the one everlasting covenant.

Let us now examine the human factor at Sinai and the nature of the response. From the man ward side, how came the Sinaitic covenant to be spoken of as the old covenant?

4. The Old Covenant

If we accept this interpretation of the God ward aspect of the Sinaitic covenant, then certain questions remain yet to be answered: In view of the evidence in the Scriptures and in the Spirit of prophecy, how can one deny that the old covenant was made by God at Sinai? Does not Paul testify in Galatians to the old covenant "from mount Sinai, which leads to bondage"? Galatians 4:24. And again in Hebrews, "In that he said, A new covenant, he hath made the first old." Hebrews 8:13. Surely it must be concluded that there are two covenants, since the new covenant is to take the place of the old, indicating two plans of God's dealing with man, two ways of serving God, one a preparation for the other.

Exactly what constitutes the difference between the old and the new covenants?

First, since the -new covenant writes the law of God on the heart, it must be concluded that - under the old covenant the law was not written on the heart. Paul defines this condition in 2 Corinthians 3, indicating that the old covenant was of the letter and not of the spirit. Under the old covenant man's heart was not right with God. This was remedied under the new covenant.

Second, the old covenant is based upon works of law, the new covenant upon faith." Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:2. These Galatians had already received the work of the Holy Spirit in their heart at their

conversion. Jewish leaders had led them away from righteousness by faith into legalistic works of righteousness. They had been led to believe that they were now fitted and able to fulfill the law as a natural duty.

Third the-old covenant stands upon the faulty promises of men, whereas the new covenant stands upon the eternal promises of God. (Hebrews 8:6-8; Romans 10: 3, 4) Under the new covenant, God promises to do all. To keep the heart, to give all power to men, in order that they might obey His will and His law. Under the old covenant, man endeavors of himself to attain righteousness.

Fourth, those who leave the new covenant to live under the old covenant fall from grace. As long as they remain under the new covenant they are under grace. Grace means two things: the quality of Christ's character and the divine power of that character which God makes available for the salvation of men. When man lives according to the "old covenant," he is under the condemnation of the law, because of his own failures. To live by the covenant of grace means to enter into personal fellowship with God.

When and-how did the old covenant originate? It grows out of the very nature of man. That God made a covenant with Adam is obvious from Hosea 6:7: "They like men ["like Adam," margin] have transgressed the covenant." This covenant with Adam was a covenant of works. It is also called a commanded covenant, also a covenant of life. A covenant of works before sin entered would be both acceptable and in harmony with the character of God and the nature of man. There would be no conflict between the law of God and the nature of Adam. It is called the covenant of works, because by the terms of it man was to have life or death in accordance with what he did.

The entrance of sin still left man face to face with God's requirements of obedience but with no power to obey. Even with his loss of freedom and his ability to do what God commanded, he still possessed a strong desire to be justified by his own efforts.

"The spirit of Phariseeism is the spirit of human nature. In the days of Christ the Pharisees were continually trying to earn the favor of Heaven, in order to secure the worldly honor and prosperity which they regarded as the reward of virtue." [6]

But more important than this, Satan is the originator of the spirit of the old covenant. The basic premise of sin itself is the work of Satan in leading Adam to place his own ego at the center of his existence instead of Christ.

"The principle that man can save himself by his own works, lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin." [7]

The Sinaitic covenant, then, from the man ward side is based upon the will to owe man's life to himself, and is manifested in that pride which does not want to live by grace but by man's own doing. This is that phase of the old covenant that Paul calls the righteousness of the law. This spirit is deeply ingrained in all men. It is not the sole prerogative of the Israelites. They are but an illustration of what can happen to any man and in fact to every believer. And until self is crucified it will inevitably happen.

This spirit of pride, independence, and self-effort toward the law was the outstanding sin of Israel. The revelation of the law at Mount Sinai was to lead them to Christ. This was in harmony with God's plan, even as it is today. But salvation by works never was.

The reason the old covenant takes such prominence at Sinai is the people's spiritual condition. Adam was conscious of his fall as were the rest of the fathers. There were but eleven patriarchs before the Flood. It needed only four of them to span the period from creation to Abraham. By the time Israel had spent more than two hundred years in slavery, sin had almost obliterated the impressions of the law written in their hearts. The instructions and laws of their fathers had almost faded from their minds. When such a thing happens the commandments of God become a stern command, not a delight. The law entered that Adam's offense might abound.

"If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt. They would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai, or engraved upon the tables of stone." [8]

Why did the Lord see it needful for a new declaration of the law from Sinai? The sooner to compel Israel to come to Christ for salvation. But this particular function of law is just as significant today as in the days of Israel. At Sinai God provided them with the opportunity of making a response by promising to keep His law. But the nature of that response is entirely the responsibility of man.

The old covenant experience of Israel sprang just as much out of their relation to the ceremonial law representing the gospel as it did out of their relation to the Ten Commandments. They used the ceremonial law in the same way they used the Ten Commandments. They looked upon their sacrifices without discerning their true significance. They thought that the cold, formal presentation of a sacrifice was acceptable unto God. They conceived that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin, so what they lacked in

fulfilling the moral law, they thought to make up in the ceremonial law. Thus they separated Christ from both the moral and the ceremonial law. They rested in the works of the law, both moral and ceremonial.

For the few, the ceremonial law had real significance. They apprehended Christ in the sacrifices. Such were Abel and Abraham. It is obvious that this ceremonial law, consisting of those sacrifices that pointed forward to Christ, did not arbitrarily belong to the old covenant any more than circumcision arbitrarily belonged to the everlasting covenant. For by the time of Christ and Paul, circumcision had become the hallmark of the old covenant. Neither does baptism nor the Lord's supper belong arbitrarily to the new covenant. Such classifications depend entirely upon the attitude and response of the worshipers in both the Old and the New Testament eras.

The fact that God gives men the law to live by does not mean that the law constitutes the old covenant." Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler." If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," was Christ's reply. Does this sound anything like the stated requirements at Sinai? What was Christ counseling the young man to do? Try the impossible? Or was He telling him the truth?

Failure to see Christ in the law is the failure of faith. The failure is not so much a lack of mental and intellectual understanding of the will of God. Christ rebuked the two disciples for being slow of heart to believe, not stupid of mind to perceive. It is in heart apprehension of God and in living faith that men are seriously retarded. In mental and hairsplitting differences in theology, men have always been far ahead of heart experience; hence the animosity and persecution in the name of Christianity.

The psalmist points to the sin of Israel: "How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." Psalm 78:40, 41.

If the law presented at Sinai was intended to lead them to Christ, why did Israel fail, and fail so continually through their history?

"It was their own evil heart of unbelief, controlled by Satan, that led them to hide their light, instead of shedding it upon surrounding peoples. It was that same bigoted spirit that caused them either to follow the iniquitous practices of the heathen, or to shut themselves away in proud exclusiveness, as if God's love and care were over them alone." [9]

But are there not many sincere Christians today who live in the spirit of the old covenant and yet whose righteousness is not that of the Pharisees? As an elemental stage of Christian growth resulting from ignorance and spiritual immaturity, that is one thing. But the willful and persistent offering of an external and formal religion of self-righteousness in the face of the revelation of righteousness by faith, that is something else. It is stubborn unbelief in the face of light that becomes a serious sin before God.

The revelation of God at Sinai was of such a marvelous character as to present to the Israelites the full knowledge of the everlasting covenant. The sin that destroyed them was that in the face of all that God had done and revealed to them, the leaders molded a people in the rigid orthodoxy of pharisaical righteousness, and set forth to the world a totally false picture of the character of God, until the name of God was blasphemed and despised among the nations and the Jewish nation became a byword.

There is nothing clearer than this: that God will judge the level of one's Christian experience and development by the measure of God's revelation. What made Christ's judgments of Israel so final and irrevocable was that the Jews throughout their history had received increasing revelation and counsel through the prophets on the true meaning of the everlasting covenant, and still came out with a religion known as Pharisaism.

There can be no more serious charge made than that the Laodicean church is following in the footsteps of ancient Israel. The full revelation of the glory of God in the third angel's message leaves us without excuse. Such light is both our privilege and our sacred responsibility.

"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth to-day. He has 'let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen,' even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully 'render him the fruits in their seasons.' Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people." [10]

5. Why Called the "New Covenant"?

If the covenant mentioned in the Old Testament, from Sinai to Malachi, is none other than the everlasting covenant, why should there be need for those days spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah, "Behold, the days come, said the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel"? Jeremiah 31:31. Surely this indicates that the covenant existing in Jeremiah's day is to be abrogated by the coming of the new covenant. Otherwise, why not continue with the same covenant found all the way through the Old Testament?

What is the force of Paul's words: "In that he said, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away." Hebrews 8:13.

The answer is contained in the correct understanding of the term "new covenant" and the reason for its being called new.

In the first place, the established interpretation is that it was ratified by the blood of Christ at the cross. Daniel declares of Christ, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." Daniel 9:27. The word "confirm" means to cause to prevail. During the brief period of His earthly ministry, Jesus fulfilled the terms of the ancient covenant made with the seed of Abraham. Paul says of this: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Romans 15:8. Thus Christ secured the benefits of the ancient covenant to "many," that is, to the believers in Israel.

In the second place, this covenant is called new because God's everlasting covenant had been so completely lost sight of that it appeared to be an entirely new covenant. This text is taking cognizance of the fact that while both God and His servants the prophets thought mostly in terms of the everlasting covenant, the nation of Israel thought in terms of the old covenant of works.

"Even the people of Israel had become so blinded to the precious teaching of the prophets concerning God, that this revelation of His paternal love was as an original subject, a new gift to the world." [11]

The Jews had lost sight completely of the everlasting covenant. The new covenant was to write the law of God in their hearts, but writing the law in the hearts of men was not new. Isaiah spoke of it as scaling "the law among my disciples." (Isaiah 8:16.) The whole of Hebrews chapter 11 is a historical record of it.

"Through the grace of Christ they may be enabled to render obedience to the Father's law. Thus in every age, from the midst of apostasy and rebellion, God gathers out a people that are true to Him, a people in whose heart is his law." [12]

It is this writer's suggestion that the later prophets and the New Testament writers were obliged to deal with the utterly mistaken conceptions concerning the Sinai covenant. We must never forget that the Judaism of Christ's day represented a perversion of the economy and testimony given by God to Moses. It is to offset these

misrepresentations of the old covenant idea that the gospel writers are strong in their assertions of an opposite tenor and direction. This swing away from Judaism in the New Testament has been falsely interpreted as the abrogation of the law of God. The New Testament writers are compelled under the circumstances to press home the differences on account of Jewish errors and their hardness of heart. The real battle of Christ, John, and Paul was to deliver the church from every shred of Jewish legalistic bondage that had been fastened on Israel during the previous fifteen hundred years.

In the third place, the use of the term "new covenant" is occasioned by new revelation that came with Christ's incarnation, life, death, and resurrection. Progressive revelation is an important part of the Bible record.

"God's work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development, and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption." [13]

"Christ in His teaching presented old truths of which He Himself was the originator, truths which He had spoken through patriarchs and prophets; but He now shed upon them a new light. How different appeared their meaning! A flood of light and spirituality was brought in by His explanation. And He promised that the Holy Spirit should enlighten the disciples, that the word of God should be ever unfolding to them." [14]

The Law in Christian Doctrine and Experience

1. Introduction

The most burning question ever since the birth of Christianity has to do with the relationship of the law and the gospel. Throughout the great controversy it has been the purpose of Satan to destroy the authority of God by casting His law aside, and to pervert the righteousness of God by perverting the truth about the law. He has sought to do this in two ways:

First, by an antinomianism brought about either by an out-and-out rejection of the law or by the erroneous concept of the dispensation of law as opposed to the dispensation of the gospel.

Second, Satan has through the principle of salvation by works not allowed the law to function according to God's design.

Luther declared that one of the most important trials of theology concerns its ability “rightly to deal law and gospel.” The result of blinding men’s minds as to the true position of the law of God has resulted in the inability of both the law and the gospel to act according to God’s purpose and plan.

In these last days Satan’s efforts are increased in this direction. Even in many professed Christian churches today there is widespread opposition to the Ten Commandments as an essential part of the everlasting gospel. This particular position receives its strongest support from dispensationalists.

1. Those who declare that the Ten Commandments is not intended for the Christian church and was abrogated at the cross point to various scriptures for vindication.

a. They point to the opposition of Christianity from its very beginning to the Jewish religion as one of law.

b. They insist that many of the New Testament writers speak directly against the law in favor of grace.

Christ

Luke 16:16.” The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it.”

John

John 1:16, 17.” And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Paul

Galatians 2:19.” For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.”

Galatians 3:18-25.” For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. . . . Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. . . . But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

Galatians 5:14, 22, 23.” For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.” “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

Romans 3:21.” But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”

Romans 6:14.” You are not under the law, but under grace.”

Romans 7:1-6.” Know you not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he lives? . . . Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. . . . But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

2 Corinthians 3:7.” But if the ministration of death, written and engraved in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away.”

It is important to bear in mind at this point that the teaching of the New Testament certainly does reveal an opposition to law. And it is the misinterpretation of this opposition that has led to the great error of antinomianism in the professed Christian churches through the centuries. It is the province of this paper to seek the correct interpretation.

2. Now, Seventh-day Adventists believe that the everlasting gospel cannot be preached or rightly interpreted unless the law of God be considered binding upon all men in all ages. Furthermore, in order that the issue may be rightly understood, Adventists believe that a careful distinction must be made at two points:

First, a distinction must be made between the two laws the ceremonial law and the moral - law. Perhaps the strongest texts on this point are Daniel 9:27, speaking of the coming of Christ, “in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,” and Matthew 27:51, showing which law was abrogated at the cross.

Second, there must be a distinction made between the term “law” as it is used in the New Testament and this term as it is used in the Christian church.

Actually, what constitutes the real issue over the law of God, and how is that issue resolved? Is it concerned with a distinction between two laws? Or is it over the use and function of all those God-given requirements that come under the term “law”? Only the Scriptures can tell us. I believe it can be shown that it is the second of these which constitutes the major problem. For the problem of the relationship of the law and the gospel cannot be resolved by centering attention upon the ceremonial law as opposed to the moral law. Certainly one does not get the impression, in reading the above passages, that this is what Paul and the other writers are particularly concerned about.

For example, the question of which law is referred to in Galatians has long been a point of controversy even among Seventh-day Adventists. But we no longer need to spend our days arguing over which law is referred to for Mrs. White wrote:

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ’ In this scripture the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

“An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longs to impart to them.” [15]

“I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of Ten Commandments.” [16]

It is obvious from these two articles by Mrs. White that the issue in Galatians is no longer between these two laws, the moral and the ceremonial, and which one was done away. There is a much bigger problem than that. Paul declares it to be “another gospel.” (Galatians 1:6) The gospel is a way of salvation. This other gospel Paul speaks of must be another way of salvation. One is genuine; the other is counterfeit. The symptoms of the problem arise in the use and place of the moral law, the ceremonial law, circumcision, and other Jewish traditions and practices.

2. The Meaning of Law

The role that law fulfills in relation to the gospel is twofold. First, law is God’s standard of what is right and true; it is the standard of obedience to the will of God. As a standard the law does certain things. It expresses the mind of God: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. It also declares the whole duty of man: “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13. And again as a standard, the law reveals sin: “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” I had not known sin, but by the law.” Romans 3:20; 7:7.

Not only is the law a standard, however; it is a method by which God works. Law cannot run anything. It never sets anything in motion. It merely explains how a thing works with constant regularity and permanency. Law is merely the revelation of universal principles by which God works, how God runs the universe, how men are created by God to live. The law of gravitation runs nothing. When Sir Isaac Newton discovered what he called the law of gravitation, he did not create it. He merely discovered one of the ways God runs the universe, and then he wrote it down.

The law of the circulatory system of the blood simply declares the way the blood circulates in the body and has circulated in all men since creation. Similarly, the Ten Commandments constitute a way of obedience, a way of life for moral and spiritual beings. They represent God’s eternal principles, declaring to us the way God runs the universe morally and spiritually. The universe does not run on a lie. It does not run on impurity. It runs on truth, on honesty, on reverence for God, on unselfishness. Try any other method than that declared by God, and it will not work. God has created us in the image of God. We live as God intended only as our lives follow God’s method of obedience to His will.

“Obey and live, disobey and perish” is still the method of the law of God. The law is suited to produce holiness and happiness in the soul of any and every man who lives in harmony with it. So far as the purpose of God is concerned, the Ten Commandments are perfectly adapted to fill the soul with peace and purity provided everything in man had remained as it had been created.” And the commandment I which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.”

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Romans 7:10, 12.

The original relation between man's nature and the law of God was precisely like that between material nature and the material laws. There has been no apostasy in the system of matter. The law of gravitation, this very instant, rules as peacefully and supremely in every atom of matter as it did on the morning of creation. The methods that God ordained for material laws are in perfect harmony with the methods of nature herself.

Thus for scientists, their authority and their methods of investigation rest upon those natural laws that are but God's way of running the stars, the planets, the earth, and all things in the natural world with a constancy like the unchangeableness of God Himself. For Christian men and women, their authority rests upon the Creator and those moral and spiritual laws that are but the standard of God's own character, and upon the way He wills that we are made to live in relationship to Him and to our fellow beings.

But original conditions no longer prevail. Man must continue to accept the law of God as a standard of righteousness, but he can no longer use the law as a method of becoming righteous. Man is not standing where he was when created. He is out of his original relation to the law and the will of God. Therefore, that which was ordained to life for Adam before he sinned, he now finds to be a ministration of death.

If man had not sinned, he could easily have accepted the terms "Obey and live, disobey and perish," knowing that he would be perfectly capable of living in harmony with those requirements. There would have been no need of urging him to "become dead to the law," or to seek no longer to live by law but only by grace.

It is at this point that we find the crucial issue over the law throughout the Bible. God can never change His law as a standard; but because of man's sinfulness, He has to change His method of attaining righteousness from the method of righteousness by works of law to the method of grace. In seeking righteousness, man must now choose to live by God's method of salvation by grace or he has no other alternative but to try to use law as a method.

The problem becomes acute at the point where professed Christian men and women want salvation by grace at the expense of throwing out both the law as a standard and the law as a method. The result is antinomianism. On the other hand, the effort to keep the law both as a method and as a standard leads to legalism and Pharisaism. In both cases there is what Paul calls "another gospel."

The Seventh-day Adventist position is simply this: that the law of God is unchangeable and immovable as a standard. In order to attain to that standard, law as a method must be rejected, and men must live by grace alone, by faith that works by love.

Adventists insist upon the same standard of righteousness given to Adam in the Garden of Eden." God requires at this moment just what He required of Adam in Paradise before he fell-perfect obedience to His law." [17]

There are only two ways to bring about harmony in the soul of man, who is out of harmony with God's law. One is to alter the divine law so that it would agree with man's sinful inclination, and thus remove the cause for inner conflict. This would transmute the law of holiness into a law of sin. It would make evil good. It would destroy the eternal distinction between right and wrong. This is impossible. There can be no transmutation of the law of God or any part of it as a standard of righteousness. The other method of bringing harmony between man and the law is to change the sinful nature of man, so that it becomes again in accord with the divine law. There is only one method by which this can be done. That is the method of free grace, or righteousness by faith.

Therefore, if we depend upon God's power, the method is one of grace. If we depend upon our efforts at obedience, the method is one of law. If we appeal to God, the method is grace. If we appeal to our own strength, the method is one of self-justification. If we use the method of grace, the law has no more a voice in the matter of our salvation. If we use the method of obedience to the law, whatever law it might be, we are under the dominion of law. If we depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit, we are under grace.

Thus the law of God and the everlasting gospel are united in a firm alliance. Because the gospel as the only way to God rules supreme apart from every legalistic method, the law as the eternal standard of righteousness is completely liberated to work according to God's purpose. When we no longer use the law in a false way to bring forth human merits and self righteousness, then the law of God appears in all its true sovereignty, majesty, and power. Now, by the law of the Spirit, the law of God has become our friend. It stands as an eternal bulwark against sin and wickedness. It becomes the basis of a glorious fellowship with Christ in that we live in harmony with His great law and with God Himself.

In the light of this definition of law, the use of the term "law" throughout the Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament, must be clearly understood. It is imperative to know whether the reference to law is to law as a standard or to law as a method of salvation.

The new covenant experience as set forth in Hebrews 8 declares the law of God to be written on the mind and heart by the Holy Spirit. The old covenant is stated to be faulty, and the fault is declared to be with the people themselves. The exact nature of that fault is brought to view in Romans 9:30 to 10:8.

Here Paul presents two groups of people, the Gentiles and the Jews. The Jews who have lived by the old covenant have not attained to the law of God as a standard of righteousness; “for they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:3.

Then the Scripture continues, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.” Verse 4. How is the term “law” used in this verse, as a standard or as a method? The context reveals that Paul is contrasting two methods of seeking righteousness, one by works of law and the other by faith. Hence Christ is the end of the law as a method of salvation to everyone that believes.

In Romans 6:14 Paul declares that we are no longer under law but we are under grace. Grace is God’s method of salvation. Grace is God’s power made available by the free gift of God in order that men may attain to the righteousness of the law. Grace is not a standard but a method. Being under grace as a method is contrasted with being under law as a method.

What does the term “under law” mean? It is usually interpreted to mean “under condemnation.” Paul, in addressing the Galatians (4:21), asks the question: “Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?” Paul cannot have in mind “under condemnation.” No one desires to be under condemnation. Romans 7:1 reads, “Know you not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he lives.” Here the law is declared to have dominion over a man. To be under law means to live under the dominion of law rather than under the dominion of grace.

It is quite evident that the attitude of the New Testament writers toward law is a two-sided one. On the one hand there exists a dominion where law has no rights and no authority. As a way of salvation the law has no more any authority or validity. Salvation by grace through faith forever dethrones the law as a method of salvation, for “the law is not of faith.” (Galatians 3:12.) From another point of view, there exists a dominion where the law remains, in all its power and authority, as a standard of righteousness. Salvation by the loving power of God means a radical and most accentuated opposition to all legalistic methods of salvation. The two are incompatible. This is the explanation of the opposition to law found in the New Testament. It is an opposition that all Christians should take, particularly Seventh-day Adventists. For this church the responsibility is a double one: to make vital the law of God as a standard of righteousness in the hearts of men; at the same time to show ourselves a relentless foe of all pharisaical religion and righteousness by works. The pendulum has swung either to one extreme or to the other in the history of the Christian church, either to abrogate the law of God or to formalize it.

The evidence that God’s method of salvation by grace establishes the law as a standard is conclusive.” Do we then make void the law [as a standard] through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law [as a standard].” Romans 3:31.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law [as a standard] might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:3, 4.

‘I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God [as a standard]; but with the flesh the law of sin.’ Romans 7:25.

“For this, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not bear false witness. Thou shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. . . . Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law [as a standard].” Romans 13:9, 10.

That the Adventist position has always been clearly stated may be concluded from many authoritative statements.” We ourselves owe everything to God’s free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Savior effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heir ship with Christ.” [18]

“Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practice, He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God’s great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will-be the test of character in the judgment.” [19]

3. The Function of the Law

The proper function of the law is imperative to the work of the gospel.

“It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people.” [20]

1. What is that rightful position? Two passages of Scripture explain thoroughly the proper function of the law in the plan of salvation. On the negative side, Romans 7:7-13 reveals how the law kills, how it brings man under condemnation, how sin is revealed and made to “become exceeding, sinful.” On the positive side Galatians 3:19-26 shows that the law leads us to Christ by shutting us up to one method of salvation, faith in Christ.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” The word “schoolmaster” in the original is paidagogos. It means “slave master.” He was the slave who accompanied the children to school, to see that they did not play truant. If they attempted to run away, he was there to prevent it. He was given authority to use physical punishment if necessary to see that the children arrived at school. On arrival at the school, they were handed over to the care and instruction of the teacher.

“But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” The figure here used by Paul is that of being shut up in prison. The law acts as their jailer. It is the law that shuts them in and will not let them off. God is merciful and gracious, but He will not clear the guilty by calling evil good. Men are imprisoned for breaking the law that they cannot keep. If the man tries to escape by appeals to the law, he finds only further restrictions and condemnation. The law declares to him: “There is no freedom by men, for you have sinned and broken the law.” Man may try to change and lessen the claims of the law, but all the time the law stands as firm as the everlasting hills. Man comes to realize that the strength of sin is the law.” (1 Corinthians 15:56) There is one door and one door only out of the prison house, and that is the door of faith. There is no escape except through faith in Christ. Man is hopelessly shut up under the law until he finds the door of faith.

It is interesting to notice at this point that the Jews preached the law, but it never seemed to have this effect described in either Romans or Galatians. Seventh-day Adventists have also preached the law far more than any other professed Christian body, preached it until “we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain.” The result has been half warmness and self-satisfaction. In both cases the effect seemed to be the opposite of what the law was declared to produce.

Kant the philosopher said that he knew of but two beautiful things: the starry heavens above his head and the moral law within his heart. Kant felt the moral law to be a beautiful thing in his heart. Why did he not feel as Paul felt? Because he knew only mere morality. If he had seen the law of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he would have felt as Paul did when he cried out: “For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” “O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:9-11, 24.

Here are two men, Kant and Paul, upon whom the effect of the law was totally different. Kant had substituted ethics for the law and the gospel. Paul declared of his relation to the law even before he had come to know Christ, as “touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” Philippians 3:6.

Hence the significance of Mrs. White’s statement:

“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.” [21]

When men substitute ethics for the law and the gospel, when men do not see Christ in the law, the end is

pride and self-satisfaction before God. But when the eye of God and the power of Christ are seen and felt in the law, men are smitten to the ground. Declares the psalmist: “When thou with rebukes does correct man for iniquity, thou makes his beauty to consume away like a moth.” Psalm 39:11.

We feel the guilt of an evil action far more sharply when we know that someone saw us commit the sin, than when we know that no one but ourselves is cognizant of the deed. How much more sinful, then, do we feel, when we look into the face of Christ and say, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.” The constant appeal to Israel was to hear and obey God’s voice, not merely to observe the letter of the law. It was the Jews’ failure to see Christ in the law that led them to that perverted religion known as Pharisaism.

The pious legalist and the legalistically religious good man are farthest away from God because they stand over against God on their own two feet, feeling “rich, and increased with goods,” and in -need of nothing.” Legalism is the practical outcome for the man who seeks to fulfill the demands of the law in his own strength.

Nothing is in greater opposition to the holy and loving God, who saves men by grace alone, than this self-satisfaction, this half warmness, this complacency of men who are too sure of themselves. They see only the letter of the law, and conform to it.

To see Christ in the law leads to repentance and salvation, because it leads to trust and faith. Faith does not simply depend on learning something that is true, even though it be the entire Bible. An unbeliever may pass the stiffest theological examination and yet, in the

sense of spiritual fellowship with Christ, he has understood nothing. The devil himself could pass with distinction the most rigorous test in dogmatic and Biblical theology. Real Christian living is not something a man can learn on the intellectual level. Correct doctrine alone can be learned by anyone with a good brain. It is dangerous for the church to confuse that which is the gift of the Holy Spirit with that which anyone with a good brain can learn or seek to accomplish by his own efforts. Faith that sees Christ in the law and the gospel does not depend on logical arguments.

“The Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind. It is not the conviction that logical reasoning produces; . . . a deeper meaning is grasped, and the sublime, spiritual truths of the written word are impressed on the heart.” [22]

“A knowledge of the truth depends not so much upon strength of intellect as upon pureness of purpose, the simplicity of an earnest, dependent faith. To those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance, angels of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is given to open to them the rich treasures of the truth.” [23]

To see and to preach Christ in the law is vital. Simply to hold fast to intellectual ideas in the law of God without the deeper meanings and convictions of the Holy Spirit, leaves a man wholly untouched, unredeemed, and not transformed, and utterly incompetent to know God.

2. Because of the danger of misuse of the law, it is important that the law be maintained in its proper-function and correct relationship with the entire plan of redemption.

“Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” Galatians 3: 19.

Where did Paul get the idea that “the law was added till the seed should come,” and what does he mean by it? Christ Himself makes a similar statement in Luke 16:16.” The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it.”

If we can understand Christ’s meaning, then it should not be difficult to believe that Paul had the same idea. Are Christ and Paul teaching that the dispensation of law ends with them since Christ has now established the dispensation of grace? After making this statement in verse 16, Christ is very careful to let His hearers know that the law of God is still binding. Lest anyone should get the idea that the law is now at an end, He says, “And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Verse 17. Christ is saying, “Think not that, though some things are changing, the divine law will ever change. No, not even the smallest part of one letter of the divine moral law will fail.”

As an illustration of the point He has made regarding the eternal nature of the law, Christ turns to one of the Ten Commandments of which there has been much violation in His day. This is the seventh commandment. There has been comparatively little tampering with the Sabbath, so there is no need to mention that. He refers to the one that has been most seriously affected in His day.” See,” He says, “the new state of things which I am now advocating, instead of lessening the importance of the law, will magnify it. Instead of a weaker code on divorce being submitted, I bring you a severer one. My law of divorce is much more severe than that written by Moses.” (Luke 16:18)

What, then, does Christ mean by His statement that “the law and the prophets were until John”? He is saying: “You Jews for fifteen hundred years have maintained an attitude toward law and have established a dominion of legal righteousness which is no longer to prevail. Your system is dethroned with My coming. The consequence is that men everywhere are pressing into the kingdom of God.” Thus men are shut up to one way, the way of faith in Christ.

“But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” Galatians 3:25. Many have interpreted this text to mean that man was under law until a certain fixed time in the history of the race; that there was a definite time for faith to come in to free men from the law.

Suppose this to be so, that all men were in bondage to law until Christ; then they had no chance or opportunity to be saved. If a man were born during the period from Moses to Christ, it was just too bad. Then a man’s salvation would depend simply on the accident of birth. God had been using the Jews as guinea pigs and had kept them under a system that He knew would not work, simply for the benefit of other generations to follow His own ministry.

Paul is not speaking of a fixed, definite point of time when faith came. The galaxy of Old Testament saints recorded in Hebrews 11 shows that men were saved by faith from the very beginning. Whenever a man receives the Word as the voice of God to his soul, whenever man sees Christ in the law, then faith comes, for “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10: 17.

3. Finally, the function of the law sets forth the inescapability of obedience to it. The choice is still a matter of life or death, blessing or cursing.” So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Galatians 3:9, 10.

The choice of the law and of the gospel is either a blessing or a curse. The blessing comes through faith, whereas the law brings a curse. Who are those under the curse? Not those who do the law, for “cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” “The law works wrath.” Romans 4:15. But wrath comes only upon the children of disobedience. (Ephesians 5:6)

These texts declare that it is disobedience to God’s law that brings the curse. Disobedience means separation from fellowship with God. The curse that belonged to us was laid upon Christ as He cried out: “My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?” Some exclaim that we no longer need to keep the law, because Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. But the curse is disobedience, not obedience; otherwise the text should read: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of obedience to the law.” But the text declares, “Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Thus Christ hath redeemed us from all disobedience of the law.

It is this inescapability of obedience as it is in Christ that makes the law to do its work in every age. The law must be used faithfully and fearlessly within its own limits and in accordance with its proper function. Let Christian men and women apply the law of God to personal character and conduct. But look not to the law for salvation.

“Many who call themselves Christians are mere human moralists. The heavenly principles that distinguish those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost indistinguishable. The professed followers of Christ are no longer a separate and peculiar people. The line of demarcation is indistinct. The people are subordinating themselves to the world, to its practices, its customs, its selfishness. The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is being converted to the world.” [24]

“His [God’s] professed followers should be more marked for their fidelity to His holy law. . . . The very contempt that is shown to the law of God is sufficient reason why His commandment-keeping people should come to the front and show their esteem and reverence for His downtrodden law. . . . Soon God’s people will be tested by fiery trials and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal.” [25]

The first law of revival is the withering work of the Holy Spirit through the application of God’s eternal standard in our lives. It holds good through all generations. It is certain and sure. This humbling work of the law of God seen in the light of Christ is always the first gleam of a spiritual awakening. The standard of the law demands of us perfection in Christ. There is only one door.” I am the door,” “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” “If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.”

The Law and the Gospel United for Christ’s Righteousness

1. Introduction

Ever since the fall of man the great question has been one of righteousness. How can a man become righteous before God?

It is the belief of Seventh-day Adventists that the righteousness of God is disclosed when the law and the gospel are united in the life through the divine power of the Holy Spirit. We believe that both the Old and the New Testament see the law of God as a requirement within faith and love. The law of God is not to be externalized in formal rigid codes. It can be experienced only in a life that is born of the Spirit and lived in fellowship with God. For Seventh-day Adventists the law remains the guardian of the gospel. It tells us what God requires of us, not in our own power but in His power. It reveals to us our sinfulness and, therefore, our need of grace and of His righteousness, both imputed and imparted.

Seventh-day Adventists oppose as altogether un-Scriptural any position that abrogates the law of God, or any part of it, or seeks to substitute any other law for it. There are many professed Christian churches and people today who believe that the Ten Commandments belongs to the Jews under a dispensation of law; that Christ instituted a new law, variously known as the law of the Spirit, the law of love, which is the basis for the new covenant. They declare that the Ten Commandments is not intended for the Christian church. This leads to the claim that the Seventh-day Sabbath is exclusively Jewish; that Christ set apart the first day of the week as the new rest day in honor of His resurrection.

2. Old and New Testament Eras United on the Law and the Gospel

Seventh-day Adventists insist upon the unity of the law and the gospel for both Old and New Testament eras. In replying to the question of dispensationalism, that the dispensation of grace has, with the coming of Christ, superseded the dispensation of law, the fundamental issue is: Does the Christian church fulfill the plan, the purpose, and the covenant of God as revealed throughout the Old Testament. Or does it displace that which has become decadent and outmoded?

Paul (Titus 2:14) and Peter (1 Peter 2:9) declare the purpose of Christ to “purify unto himself a peculiar people,” a people for His own possession. They both quote from the Old Testament, from the covenant which God made with Israel at Sinai. Why do these leaders of the Christian church appeal to this ancient covenant except for the purpose of calling attention to the close and vital connection that exists between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church? Or has God had two peculiar peoples that are to be carefully distinguished? Does the God of Israel have one peculiar people that are to be obedient to one set of laws, and does the Lord Jesus Christ have another peculiar people with another set of laws? Seventh-day Adventists believe that God, who is the only Redeemer of God’s elect throughout the past six thousand years of earth’s history, has one and only one peculiar people. They are made up of Old Testament saints and New Testament saints without distinction.” We are all children of Abraham in Christ Jesus.” We further believe that there has been and still is one law, one covenant, one gospel, one Sabbath, “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Ephesians 4:5, 6.

Furthermore, Paul likens the true Israel of God, in both Old and New Testament eras to an olive tree. Both Jews and Gentiles are grafted onto the same olive tree. The tree represents true Israel. Some of the natural branches are broken off because of unbelief, representing literal Jews. Branches of a wild olive are grafted in among them. These are Gentiles who have accepted salvation. It would be difficult to state more clearly that the Gentiles entering the Christian church become members of one body, one church that has existed through all the years of earth’s history.

After illustrating this truth, Paul draws two important conclusions: the first is that since unbelief caused the breaking off of some of the natural branches, the branches of the new graft owe their status solely to faith. The second conclusion is that since the Gentiles owe their present status of salvation to grace alone, it is only to be expected that the same grace which has spared them, will also restore the natural branches representing the literal Jews who repent. Only in this way is Abraham the father of all those who believe. They are the true Israel of God, those who are saved by faith. No one is saved by law whatsoever, and never has been. The Bible knows of no distinction between law and grace in the matter of the saved. Both Jew and Gentile possess the same righteousness, the righteousness of Christ. They become citizens, not of the new state of Israel, but of that holy city, the New Jerusalem.

Those who believe that the law of God or any part of it was abrogated or changed at the cross misread Moses and credit God with having instituted the old covenant of righteousness by works of the law for meritorious acceptance with God. The Jews through their history as a nation misread Moses the same way. Paul declared of their blindness, “But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.” 2 Corinthians 3:15. They rejected the everlasting covenant and substituted for it a covenant of works, which neither the law nor the prophets gave any recognition to at any time. For Paul declares in Romans 3:21, 22, that “now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.” Christ also calls upon Moses for confirmation of His position and to expose the errors of

the Jews.” Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me.” The Old and the New Testament are in complete harmony. Through stubborn pride and hardness of heart, the Jews rejected God’s great plan and crucified the Lord Jesus. A hard heart is impossible under the everlasting covenant, for God is able to write His law upon it.

3. The Ten Commandments and the New Covenant

The unity of the law and the gospel constitutes the major premise of the new covenant. The new covenant is none other than the everlasting covenant ordained from before the foundation of the world. It is also referred to as the covenant of grace. They are all one and the same.

1. The new covenant contains blessings of the highest value. First of all, in its negative aspect, it removes the weakness and faultiness of the old covenant. This is definitely indicated in Hebrews 8:6-8: “By how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he said, Behold, the days come, said the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.”

What was this weakness? The fault was in man, in his promises to keep the law. Man was depending upon his own will power, which led to failure and condemnation. Man could not fulfill what he had promised to do, to keep the commandments.

A more complete detailed explanation of the Jewish failure is recorded in Romans 9:31-33.” But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, bath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the

works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.” They failed because, instead of trusting wholly in Christ, they trusted in themselves. Theirs was a failure of faith. They depended upon the arm of flesh.

Again, Paul illustrates this failure In 2 Corinthians 3:14-16 as like unto a veil which was upon their faces and which had remained there even unto Paul’s day. The veil which is said to cover their faces symbolized their unbelief, “because only through Christ is it taken away. . . . But when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed.” (RSV.) The Jews had insisted on trying to keep the law by their own efforts, and had arrived only at self-righteousness. The first blessing of the new covenant then is to take away all self-righteousness.

2. The positive aspect of the new covenant concerning the unity of the law and the gospel makes very specific the work of Christ for man: “I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.” Hebrews 8: 10.

a. Immediately we are led to ask: What law is it that is to be written on the mind and heart? Again Paul is very conclusive.

(1)2 Corinthians 3:3, 6 states that the law that was written on tables of stone is now to be written in the fleshy tables of the heart, “not of the letter, but of the spirit.”

(2)In Romans 7:6, 7.” We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet.” Here is an obvious reference to the Ten Commandments, which we should now “serve in newness of spirit.”

(3)The work of the Holy Spirit in writing the law in the minds and hearts of Christians is given to us by Paul in the eighth chapter of Romans. In the first sixteen verses, life after the Spirit and life after the flesh are contrasted, particularly as these two ways of living are related to the law of God.

It is first pointed out that the law is weak, not through any defect in itself, but due to the flesh; “for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.” Verse 3.” Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Verses 7, 8. When men are so biased and sinfully determined by the very nature of their depravity that they are totally unable to keep the law of God, the strength of the law is weakened. On the contrary, the text declares that the only way to keep the law is by the power of the Holy Spirit: “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” Verses 3-5.

It is the province of this passage to show that the law that was weak through the flesh is the same law whose righteousness is now fulfilled. This work of the Holy Spirit in us evidently means more than that Christ’s righteousness may be imputed unto us. We do not remain as we were except for our justification. The gospel, or good news of Christ’s victory over sin, is now united in our hearts with the law of God, in order that there may be obedience and holiness of life. Our union with Christ under the new covenant is so real and vital as to bring our lives into full harmony with the law of God. The law is stronger than ever before.” Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

In all of these passages of Scripture which so clearly depict Christian experience by the power of the Holy Spirit, the law that is written upon the mind and heart can be none other than the Ten Commandments. Many believe that Christ instituted a new law or changed the old one, which they designate as the law of love or the law of the Spirit. But the New Testament nowhere reveals such a law. The law of the Spirit is a new way of life, not a new law from God. There is revealed a wholly different and more effective method of keeping the law of God. It is the full revelation through Christ of the only way of securing the loyal adherence of every believer to the commandments of God.” For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:2.

3. What is meant by writing the law of God upon the mind and heart?

a. In the first place, through the work of the gospel, the law comes to have a more vital connection with the life of the Christian than hitherto. Previously, it has been written merely on stone. Now, it is stamped into the life. The law, as Isaiah declares, is sealed among Christ’s disciples. (Isaiah 8:16) “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . With the mind I myself serve the law of God,” exclaims Paul. Romans 7:25.

This was what Christ came to do for us, and what we could never have done for ourselves.” Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Matthew 5:17. So what victory Christ has wrought out on the cross, the

Holy Spirit makes real in the life. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4.

Isaiah prophesied concerning Christ that He would “magnify the law and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42:21. No longer is the law discredited by the weakness of the flesh. It is now exalted to a place of honor. We are enabled to do honor to God’s eternal code by living in complete harmony with it. As God once honored the two tables of stone by writing upon them His eternal law, He now honors our hearts and minds by inscribing this same law upon them. This time He writes the law, not with His finger, but by His Holy Spirit. The law of God is magnified as never before. It receives its greatest honor in the work of the Holy Spirit by being written upon the minds and hearts of men.

b. In the second place, to have the law of God written on the mind and heart means to know that “the law is spiritual” “and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” (Romans 7:14, 12.) The law is seen in all its spiritual and vital meaning. It is no longer rendered in external forms. Its underlying principles are clearly apprehended.

A principle is that to which the whole bears testimony. In contrast, a detail is that which garnishes the principle. In the coordination of the whole, the principles are constant and not contradictory.

“The law of Jehovah dating back to creation, was comprised in the two great principles, ‘Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like namely this: Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.’ These two great principles embrace the first four commandments, showing the duty of man to God, and the last six, showing the duty of man to his fellow-men. The principles were more explicitly stated to man after the fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligence. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression.” [26]

As the Ten Commandments are based upon the two great commandments, or principles, of love, so the sermon on the mount is a spiritual interpretation of the same Ten Commandments. (The Ten Commandments is the sermon on the mount stripped of all the spiritual interpretations.) The law finds its full expression from a heart quickened by the Spirit. The standard and requirements of the sermon on the mount are an expression of a heart and mind on which the Spirit has written the law of God.

This becomes obvious the moment we read the sermon on the mount.” You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” Matthew 5:21, 22.” You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Verses 27, 28.

Certain principles for the right understanding and interpretation of God’s law become apparent at once.

First, all those commandments and statutes and precepts, which are found in both the Old and the New Testament, and are concerned with the regulating of our lives and actions in relationship to God and to our fellow men, although they are not to be found expressly mentioned in the Ten Commandments, yet they may very aptly be reduced under one of the Ten Commandments.

Second, the affirmative commands include in them the prohibition of the contrary sin. The negative commands include the injunction of the positive duties.

Third, the same precept that forbids the external and outward acts of sin, forbids likewise the inward desires and motions of sin in the heart. The same precept that requires the external acts of duty, requires likewise those holy affections of the soul.

Fourth, the connection between the commandments is so close and intimate and they are so linked together that whosoever breaks one of them is guilty of all. When we infract one of these laws, we are apt to regard God’s authority in respect to others in the same careless manner.

It is here that we come to understand the great difference between Christ’s interpretation of the law and that of the Jews.

“But Israel had not perceived the spiritual nature of the law, and too often their professed obedience was but an observance of forms and ceremonies, rather than a surrender of the heart to the sovereignty of love.” [27]

Under the new covenant the law of God becomes married to the gospel by the Holy Spirit. Obedience is no longer a mechanical process, but a complete fulfillment through faith which works by love. The law and the gospel become inseparable as light and heat in the sun. God demands obedience under the law. God works obedience through the gospel. The law of God demands holiness of men.

The gospel works holiness in men. As long as the law remains written merely on stone, men find the commandments hard to obey. While the heart is stony, the commandments appear stony.

A man upon whom the Holy Spirit has written God's law, readily consents unto the law that it is "holy, and just, and good." He no longer wishes to change either one jot or one tittle of the law. He no longer desires that the commandments were other than what they are. He is willing to call hate, murder. He is willing to call lust, adultery. He no longer wishes that God had ordained some other day of the week for the Sabbath. He consents with all his heart and mind unto the law of God.

Not only does man give consent unto the law that it is good, but he exclaims with the psalmist: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law does he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:2. The Holy Spirit has done a great work for a man when his heart delights in the law of the Lord. Then every violation of the law becomes hateful to him. Every transgression causes intense agony and sorrow, because God has written His law in the heart. The new covenant now becomes the clearest test of how genuine is a man's Christian experience-what a man delights to do.

c. In the third place, the fact that the Holy Spirit writes the law of God on the mind and heart proclaims in no unmistakable terms that this experience comes only by supernatural means and never by naturalistic means. The issue between letter and spirit, between righteousness by works and righteousness by faith, is this: Does man save himself, or does God save Him? The union of the law and the gospel in the life is something that God does for man, and that man cannot possibly do for himself. Mrs. White declares that the greatest deception in the church is that mental assent to religion constitutes righteousness.

"He [Christ] declared that the righteousness upon which the Pharisees set so great value was worthless. The Jewish nation had claimed to be the special, loyal people who were favored of God; but Christ represented their religion as devoid of saving faith. All their pretensions of piety, their human inventions and ceremonies, and even their boasted performance of the outward requirements of the law, could not avail to make them holy.

"A legal religion is insufficient to bring the soul into harmony with God. The hard, rigid orthodoxy of the Pharisees, destitute of contrition, tenderness, or love, was only a stumbling-block to sinners!" [28]

Some things we can do for ourselves, but we cannot shift our spiritual center of gravity by our own strivings. We cannot ourselves break the power of self-love." Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23. The power that works through the new covenant is divine, not natural. We know that we have passed from the natural man to that of the spiritual.

d. Finally, to have the Holy Spirit write on our hearts the law of God means that we have shifted from self as the center of our lives to Christ. Here is the crux of the everlasting covenant. The greatest enemy of God is the pride of self-righteousness. The root problem of all self-righteousness is the inordinate importance that man attaches to himself. He magnifies himself, and consequently fails to magnify Christ.

The man who lives under the old covenant feeds on the sense of his own importance, and thereby exaggerates it. Nothing is so sweet to human ears as words that tell of one's beauty or strength or intelligence or virtue. Men hang on words that magnify them.

"In their professed service to God, the Jews were really working for self. Their righteousness was the fruit of their own efforts to keep the law, according to their own ideas, and for their own selfish benefit.

Hence it could be no better than they were." [29]

The reason the ancient prophets found their most difficult task of securing genuine repentance from the Jews was that they actually believed they were obeying the law when they were not. The Jews continually sinned against the law even in their devotion to it. This is always the sin of self righteousness, of salvation by merit. The form becomes more important than the spirit." Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is a commandment of men which hath been taught [them]: . . . the wisdom of their wise men shall perish." Isaiah 29:13, 14, margin.

Repeatedly Christ stressed the need for inner spirituality in the life." A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit." Matthew 7:18, RSV." For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil." Matthew 12:34, 35, RSV." For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, slander, pride, foolishness." Mark 7:21, 22, RSV.

It is the essence of the new covenant that man's responsibility to God is altogether unintelligible except in personal fellowship with God, in putting Christ at the center of his life. The warping, distorting factor in man's life is precisely his dependence upon and worship of his own inherent powers of mind, soul, and body. Thus man magnifies himself rather than his Maker and Redeemer.

The deceptive character of separating the law and the gospel in life is extremely difficult to grasp. Man clothes his actual motives with reasons compatible with his own self estimate. He does away with the law of God while claiming to defend it. In the ministry of the church too often the desire for prestige and power is greater than love for the Lord Jesus Christ. In education it is the Doctor's degree, and the great institution graduated from, not what they represent, that motivates much of our graduate study. It is the recognition rather than the quality of our work that is so often our chief concern.

To the degree that all this pride possesses a man, he is unable to hear or rightly understand the true experience of the law of God which is offered to him." How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" John 5:44, RSV.

"As a golden treasure, truth had been entrusted to the Hebrew people. . . . Yet when Christ came, the Jews did not recognize Him to whom all these symbols pointed. They had the word of God in their hands. . . . The spiritual import of the sacred writings was lost. The treasure-house of all knowledge was open to them, but they knew it not."

The Sabbath the Seal of the Everlasting Covenant

4. Once again in these last days the ancient covenant of Jehovah, once delivered unto Israel, is now delivered unto us to be "our refuge and strength." That covenant unites law and gospel. This is our task as the remnant church.

"It is only as the Law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people." [31]

"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth to-day. He has 'let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen,' even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully 'render him the fruits in their seasons.' Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people." [32]

One notices in the study of all the revivals and the renewals of God's covenant, beginning with Sinai, also with Joshua, Josiah, Hezekiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah, that two classes of people develop. Those who were true to the ancient covenant, as were the Levites; and those whose stubborn pride and rebellion led to Pharisaism and ultimately to the destruction of the nation of Israel. Always there is a remnant who submit to God and exercise the faith of Abraham. Always there is a majority who do the opposite. Never is there a change in the law, but there is a change in the nature of the people of God.

Mrs. White discussed the great revival that came to Israel under the leadership of Ezra after they had returned from exile.

"They saw the sacredness of the law spoken at Sinai, and many trembled at the thought of their transgressions. . . .

"Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. '

"This was the beginning of a wonderful reformation. . . . Above all else, Ezra was a teacher of the law; . . . he sought to impress the people with the holiness of this law, and the blessings to be gained through obedience.

"Wherever Ezra labored . . . the law of the Lord was exalted and made honorable. . . .

"In this age of the world . . . there is need of men who can cause many to 'tremble at the commandment of our God.' There is need of true reformers, who will point transgressors to the great Lawgiver, and teach them that 'the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' . . .

"Between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah will come the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. Upon this battle we are now entering, a battle not between rival churches contending for the

supremacy, but between the religion of the Bible and the religions of fable and tradition." [33]

As we examine the law of God in the light of the everlasting covenant, we find that it is the Sabbath commandment that sets God's seal upon it, and at the same time becomes the symbol and test of the new covenant experience.

“Thus said the Lord, Keep you judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it; that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil. . . .

For thus said the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant.”
Isaiah 56:1-4.

Isaiah’s reference here is to the everlasting covenant. The Sabbath is connected in some way to the righteousness of Christ that is to be revealed with His coming, and is an indispensable part of the covenant.

The Sabbath commandment, more than any of the others, signifies the unity of the law and the gospel. It signifies the rest of the completed work of God in the soul, the rest of righteousness by faith. It is the seventh-day Sabbath that is appealed to throughout Israel’s history as the test of the work of the Spirit through the everlasting covenant.

The principal book in the New Testament concerned with the new covenant is the book of Hebrews. At the heart of it we find the message of the rest of God, signified by the seventh-day Sabbath.

a. First, a most serious warning is given against failing to enter into the rest of God.” Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest remains, let us fear lest any of you be judged to have failed to reach it.” Hebrews 4:1, RSV. Failure to enter into God’s rest is here considered of the greatest concern, so much so that it calls down the wrath of God.” As I swore in my wrath, They shall never enter my rest.” Verse 3. God is not rejecting people for not attaining to perfection. Something else is primary, that of entering into the rest of God; for this rest is the highway to perfection and to Christ’s righteousness.

b. Second, just what is it that constitutes the rest of God? “For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, . . . although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way, ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.’ “ (Verses 3, 4, RSV.)

In these verses the rest of God into which the Christian is to enter, is related to three things: first, it is related to faith-one cannot find this rest without faith; second, it is also related to the creation week; and third, it is related to the seventh-day Sabbath.

Why is this so? Surely it is not merely a matter of keeping holy the seventh day of the week. Verses nine and ten give us the key: “So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God’s rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his.” The text declares that the significance of the Sabbath is related to the completed works of God at creation. God completed His works of creation in six days with nothing more to add to it. Then God rested. God’s rest, then, is the rest of the completed work of God either in creation of the world or in the re-creation of the human soul.

c. Third, Christians are to enter into that rest-a rest like unto God’s.” There remains therefore a rest [or a keeping of the Sabbath] to the people of God. . . . Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” Verses 9-11, A. V. Christians enter into the rest of God when they enter by faith into the finished work of God for them. They do it when they rest and trust in His completed work of salvation, and when they cease from their own works as God did from His.

d. Fourth, this chapter states that God has offered this rest from the very beginning of creation down to Paul’s day, and for all time. The rest was set forth from the first Sabbath at creation. God has offered it every day since then. It is more than keeping a day. Israel had kept the seventh day Sabbath throughout their history, yet they had failed to enter into the rest of God. Time and again, in Joshua’s and David’s day, He had offered His rest to them. He still offered it to them in Paul’s day.

The reason for Israel’s failure is indicated plainly. It was never God’s plan to have Israel work or fight for the Promised Land. It was called the Promised Land because God had promised it to them. Therefore it was already a completed work, just like the work of creation. They did not rest in God; they rested in the law. (Romans 2:17) They tried to add to God’s work; they sought it not by faith but by works of the law. Consequently, they never entered into God’s rest. In Hebrews 3:7-11 God does not condemn Israel for all the sins of immorality and idolatry. He charges them and holds them responsible for not entering into that rest of faith, righteousness by faith.

The rest of God, even though it is signified by the seventh day Sabbath, is not something which comes one day a week.” Now is the day of salvation.” The Christian is to experience this rest of God’s completed work of salvation every day. Only in this way can God’s Sabbath truly be kept.

This rest of God signified by the seventh-day Sabbath is very definitely indicated at the cross, when Christ completed the work of re-creation. Just before the sun went down on Friday, Christ cried out: “It is finished.” Then He rested in the grave on the Sabbath

according to the commandment. Nothing more was to be added to the work of redemption. It was completed once and for all. The Christian is to enter into the finished work of redemption and cease entirely from his own works.

e. Fifth, if true rest of soul depends upon entering into the finished work of Christ, if true rest means that the law and the gospel are united in the heart through the Holy Spirit, how can the Christian hope to possess this rest when His work is not completed in the life?

When Christ imputes and imparts His righteousness unto me, He sees in me at this moment the completed work of redemption. I can rest in God, because He will complete the work He has begun in me. How did Paul enter into that rest? Romans 7 pictures Paul's great unrest and struggle of soul. He was held up by a law whose tendency was meant to be spiritual, but instead of the law giving him peace and rest, it revealed to him how sinful and incomplete he was. Finally, Paul declares that rest came to him from Jesus." I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 7:25; 83.

"Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28.

As the Christian enters into the completed work of Christ, God guarantees to complete the work in him. Perfection is not arrived at all at once. But we have confidence in the great Redeemer, who always completes His work. He has never left incomplete any work that He has begun.

The rest of God signified by the Sabbath means continual communion. Since Christ's completed work of re-creation for me is not yet fully realized in my soul, there is need for continual fellowship and communion. The seventh-day Sabbath stands for eternal communion. There is relief from all anxiety, fears, and struggle. I enter into God's rest.

That such a commandment is to be found in the law of God reveals how closely are the law and the gospel tied together in the work of salvation. The message of the Sabbath promises that God will write His law in my mind and heart more and more each day until I reflect the image of Jesus fully, for He will work in me "both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Then when we stand before the great white throne, we shall exclaim: "Not unto me, but unto thy goodness and thy love and thy wisdom be the praise of my salvation for ever and ever."

9. Life Only Through Christ

W. L. EMMERSON

Introduction

At a critical moment in the history of the children of Israel, when their divinely appointed leader had brought them out of bondage to the border of the land in which the kingdom and throne of the Lord was to be set up, the now-aged Moses gathered the people together to receive his final counsels. He spoke, under the guidance of God, of many things pertaining to their material and spiritual welfare, and then, in his concluding exhortation, he set before the assembled congregation the most elemental of all issues, the question that merited their supreme concern." I call heaven and earth to record this day," he said, "that I have set before you life and death. . . : therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deuteronomy 30:19.

Life and death! These are indeed the fundamental opposites that have exercised the mind of man from the very beginning. And rightly, for life is the very heart and essence of his existence, whereas death seemingly is the loss of all being. Only as man can gain an understanding of their nature and meaning can he hope to pierce the curtain that bounds and encloses his earthly and temporal sphere.

What is life? Whence came it? What is its purpose? What is death? Does it really break the continuity of life? What lies beyond?

That there must be something beyond is a well-nigh universal and certainly immemorial conviction. It seems inconceivable that life in all its diversity and wonder can be but a thing of a moment, appearing, tarrying for a brief span, and then dissolving into nothingness forever.

"If there be nothing after Now," life is indeed hollow, purposeless, futile. But what is there?

When we begin to seek an answer to that question, as Isaac Taylor has said, "a controversy will ensue, in the progress of which it will be discovered that . . . we and our predecessors have been so walking up and down and running hither and thither, among dim notices and indications of the future destinies of the human family, as to have failed to gather up . . . much that has lain upon the pages of the Bible, open and free to our use." [1]

Therefore, we turn at once' as with every subject of our study and meditation, to the authoritative Source of all knowledge and wisdom, to the Word of God, which is also significantly designated the "word of Life." (Philippians 2:16: cf. 1 John 1:1)

Whence Came Life?

The first book of the Bible is appropriately called the "Book of Beginnings," for in its earliest chapters we have, categorically stated, the primary facts concerning the origin of the material world and of the living creatures upon it.

"In the beginning," we read, "God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1. And from the earth there sprang forth through His creative fiat first vegetable life (verses 11, 12), then animal life (verses 20-25), and finally man, a "living soul" (Genesis 2:7) after God's own "image" and "likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

From its humblest forms to the crown of creation man, all life had a single source-the creative activity of God. The second basic fact that emerges from the creation story is that the continuance of the life given to man (and as a consequence the life of the lower creation over which he was set in authority) was dependent upon his willing and perfect obedience to the Giver of life.

To keep this vitally important condition before our first parents, there was placed in the garden that was to be their home "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Of this tree only, of all the trees of the garden, they were warned not to eat." For," said God, "in the day that thou eats thereof thou shall surely die." Genesis 2:17.

The Conflict Begins

For a while all was well, but looking down upon this lovely world fresh from the hand of God and upon the happy pair in Eden, was a being of a higher order than man, in whose heart had been engendered a fearful enmity against God and all His works. This once-exalted but now fallen being, who had lost in heaven his first battle against the government of God, now determined to make this earthly province of the divine kingdom a new scene of conflict, and to this end he at once set out to undermine the loyalty of its first inhabitants.

Making contact, through the medium of a beautiful denizen of the garden, with Eve, who had for a brief moment become separated from her husband, Satan spoke." Hath God said," he began, "you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Genesis 3:1.

The woman, attracted by the appearance and intelligence of the "serpent," admitted that there was one tree of which they had been expressly forbidden to partake, "lest" they "die." (Verse 3)

Then "the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die." Verse 4.

The first round of the conflict of the ages had begun. The first "lie" on earth in opposition to the "truth" of God had been spoken, which was to bear so universal and baleful a fruitage.

By way of further explanation of this new and startling thought, Satan went on: "For God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Verse 5.

The messenger of the Lord comments: "The tempter intimated that the divine warning was not to be actually fulfilled; it was designed merely to intimidate them." [2]

Sad to say, our first parents "accepted the words of the serpent, that God did not mean what He said," and, following the will-o'-the-wisp subtly proffered by Satan, Eve and her husband ate of the forbidden tree.

To their horror, the outworking of the threatened retribution at once began to be manifest. God had said, "In the day that thou eats thereof thou shall surely die," literally, "dying thou shall die," and the guilty pair were immediately conscious of a diminution and restriction of the life that was in them. In the created things around they saw the first evidences of decay and death. The satanic deception was only too clearly revealed, and our first parents could but throw themselves upon the mercy of God. That mercy was at once revealed in the opening of a way back into the life of God through the seed" of the woman. (Verse 15)

Satan's plan was seemingly foiled by the announcement of God's gracious plan of redemption, but insidiously he set his emissaries to work to follow up his initial lie by another even more subtle.

"After the fall, Satan bade his angels make a special effort to inculcate the belief in man's natural immortality." [3]

Men may seem to be dying, as God had said ‘ but, suggested Satan, death is not really what it appears to be. Death may come to man’s body, but this does not involve his inner “self,” which is unaffected by the death of the body, and survives its dissolution. In fact, it is immortal and cannot die.

Thus out of the Edenic world there emerged two hopes -one true and the other false; one of life from the dead, the other of life through death. And so attractive has the satanic doctrine of natural immortality proved to be that not only did it become the basis of the whole system of paganism, but in its backwash it has permeated the thinking of the greater part of Christendom, until today the doctrine of life through death has well-nigh supplanted the truth of life from the dead in Christian thinking.

Well, therefore, will it be for us to seek to disentangle the “lie” from the “truth” and exhibit in all its divine glory the one true way of life.

What Is Man?

To examine the basic premise of the doctrine of natural immortality, we cannot do better than go back again, first of all, to the story of the creation of man to see whether there is any justification for the contention that man comprises a mortal and corruptible shell in which is an immortal, incorruptible “self” capable of surviving physical death.

“And the Lord God,” we are told, “formed man of the dust of the ground.” Genesis 2:7. The human body, then, was fashioned in its entirety from the elements of which every other material object and living thing was made. In all its marvelous complexity the human frame was built up from the dust” by the wisdom and skill of the divine Artificer.

Although perfect in organization, “fearfully and wonderfully made,” as David expressed it on a later occasion (Psalm 139:14), man was, however, still inert and lifeless. The inspired account then continues: “And . . . [God] breathed into his nostrils the breath [neshamah] of life [literally “the breath of lives”]; and man became a living soul [nephesh chayyah].” Genesis 2:7.

Right here the advocates of the doctrine of natural immortality set up their first strong point. Here, it is suggested, man’s nature diverges from that of other creatures of the dust by reason of the fact that through this act God gave to man a “something- that was not vouchsafed to the animal body.

This initial assertion, however, is quite unwarranted, for the “breath” (neshamah) thus introduced into the lifeless human frame was no different from the “breath” communicated to all other living creatures. All, in fact, are associated together in the twenty-first and twenty-second verses of the seventh chapter of Genesis: “All flesh. . . both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath [neshamah] of life.”

Elsewhere in the early chapters of Genesis another word, ruach, is used for the “breath” of life, but it, too, we find, is shared by “all flesh,” both man and beast. (Genesis 6:17; 7:15) This is very definitely confirmed by the writer of Ecclesiastes, who states that both the “sons of men” and the “beasts- have one “breath [ruach].” Ecclesiastes 3:19.

If, therefore, the “breath” (ruach or neshamah) communicated to man was a separate entity or “soul,” then all living creatures down to the humblest creeping things of the earth must be equally possessors of independent “souls.”

Conversely, if this conclusion is set aside as untenable, the idea that, with the “breath of life,” an independent immortal “soul” was given to man must also be abandoned.

Clearly the “breath” given to man and beast was simply the principle of life that animates all creatures, enabling them to develop to the extent to which their respective organizations permit.

Did God Give a Unique “Soul” to Man?

This essential identity between the lower creation and man in body and in “breath” is further confirmed when we note, in the original Hebrew, that the expression “living soul” is precisely the same term used for the other sentient creatures created by God, though this identity is obscured by the diverse renderings of the expression in verses twenty, twenty-one, and twenty-four of the first chapter of Genesis. Actually, the expression in every case is nephesh chayyah, which means simply living creature,” or “creature that hath life.”

Both animals and man are, in fact, grouped together in the thirtieth verse of the first chapter as “every beast of the earth, and . . . every fowl of the air, and . . . every thing that creeps upon the earth, wherein. . . is life [“a living soul,” margin] [nephesh chayyah].”

Thus whatever a “living soul” means in the case of man it means equally the same in the case of every other living creature. There is no added “something” in man that is not possessed by other living creatures.

Into the creation of man went the same constituent elements that went into the creation of the beast of the field no more, no less. And both Old and New Testaments consistently regard man as akin to, though on a higher level than, the animals as the angels are higher than man. (Psalm 8:5)

The Uniqueness of Man

In what way, then, does man differ from the lower creation, for differ he clearly does? For answer we note the words used by God when He announced His intentions respecting His crowning work of creation." Let us make man," He said, "in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion. . . upon the earth." Genesis 1:26.

Man differs from the lower creation, not in his essential nature, but in his infinitely higher organization, which makes him, on the one hand, capable of dominion over all other created things and, on the other, of knowing and entering into fellowship with his Maker.

Just as Adam's children were "in his own likeness" and "after his image" (Genesis 5:3) in form and in mental and moral nature, so man is akin in his moral and spiritual nature to God.

This does not, however, mean that upon man was conferred God's inherent perfection, such as immortality; otherwise it could be argued that man is also omnipotent, omniscient, and the rest.

Paul expressly excludes any idea that the "image" of God in man connotes his immortality by contrasting the "immortal" God (1 Timothy 1:17) with mortal man (Romans 1:23) and by the further distinction between God, who inherently and only possesses immortality (1 Timothy 1: 17), and man, for whom immortality is still a future goal, which he may "seek for" (Romans 2:7) but has certainly not yet attained.

We can thus come to no other conclusion from the Biblical account of man's creation and later comments on his nature than that there is not the slightest evidence of his possession of any nonmaterial "something" that assures to him a survival of physical death not credited to the rest of the animal kingdom.

What Happens When We Die?

From the Biblical account of man's creation and animation we turn to the Biblical descriptions of the death of man to see whether we can find there any hint that a part of man survives his physical dissolution.

The psalmist describes the death of man thus: "His breath [ruach] goes forth, he returns to his earth." Psalm 146:4. In this inspired declaration death is portrayed as a complete reversal of the animation of man in the beginning. In another passage the wise man declares that the "breath," or principle of life, "shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7.

There is no suggestion in either of these statements that the ruach has acquired personality during its sojourn in the flesh and that it has become an entity capable of a separate and independent existence in some place determined by God." The spirit," or ruach, which "returns" is precisely the same spiritual principle that God originally "gave."

In his pronouncement of death upon our first parents in Eden, God declared that what is left after the withdrawal of the life principle, or spirit of life, would dissolve into its original "dust." (Genesis 3:19) With this agrees the writer of Ecclesiastes: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." Ecclesiastes 12:7.

In regard to death, therefore, the Scriptures consistently teach that man has no more advantage over the animal kingdom than he has over the animation of his physical being." For that which befalls the sons of men befalls beasts; even one thing befalls them: as the one dies, so dies the other; yea, they have all one breath [ruach]; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast." Ecclesiastes 3:19.

Death the Complete Dissolution of Being

The language of Scripture can thus bear no other meaning than that death, whether of man or beast, involves a complete dissolution of being. And this, of course, is in complete harmony with the threat of death given to our first parents before they sinned. God did not say, "In the day that thou eats, thy body shall die, but thy soul shall live on." He said, "In the day that thou eats thereof thou [the whole man] shall surely die." Genesis 2:17.

So Adam must have understood his sentence before the way of escape from this fate was made known to him. So also believed every other Bible writer, including the prophet Ezekiel, who warned, "The soul [nephesh, or personality, not merely the body] that sins, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20), and the apostle Paul, who categorically stated, "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

The apostle Paul, in fact, used the very strongest word that he could find to describe the dissolution at death when he said that apart from God's revealed plan of redemption those who have died are "gone to nothing" (apolonto). (1 Corinthians 15:18)

However, that there should be no shadow of a question in any mind as to the survival of any part of man in death, the Inspired Word takes the constituent elements of human personality and categorically declares that each and every one has been extinguished by the dissolution of death.

1. The essence of the life of a living person is thought. So it is declared that the dead are incapable of thinking. The psalmist, for example, says, "His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psalm 146:4." The living," similarly asserts Solomon, "know but the dead know not any thing." Ecclesiastes 9:5. Then, itemizing some of the typical "thoughts" of man, he says concerning the dead: "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Verse 6.

2. Life expresses itself not only in thought but in activity. The dead, on the other hand, have not "any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Verse 6. A few verses later Solomon links together these two aspects of life, thought and activity, declaring them both to be totally absent in the state of death: "There is no work, nor device," and there is neither "knowledge nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goes." Verse 10.

3. Linking man's inner thought life and his outward activity is his faculty of speech. The dead, however, are devoid of any such capacity. They "go down into silence." Psalm 115:17.

4. Highest of the capacities of living man, and the one which is not shared in any degree with the lower animal creation, is his capacity for a knowledge of, response to, and fellowship with God. This faculty would surely be the part of man that would survive if indeed there were any part of him that was immortal. But the Scriptures forestall any such suggestion by declaring, "The dead praise not the Lord." Psalm 115:17. The dead, in fact, have no "remembrance" of God (Psalm 6:5), they have no present experience of God, and they cannot hope" for any future contact with God (Isaiah 38:18).

The conclusion cannot therefore be resisted that the state of death is the antithesis, in every respect, of the state of life, and that everything connoted by life is absent in death; man dies wholly and completely.

How Was the Bible View Obscured?

In view of the consistent testimony of Scripture to the complete dissolution of the being of man at death, one cannot help asking how it has come about that Judaism and Christianity have both been almost entirely won over to the idea of the survival of the "soul" of man at death. History provides a ready answer as we note the gradual modification of the Bible view through the influence of the pagan conceptions of the state of the dead among the peoples by whom ancient Israel was surrounded and by the popular thought of the Greco-Roman world into which the infant Christian church was born.

It is surely one of the most striking evidences of the inspiration of the Mosaic writings that, though they were composed by Moses after he had been educated in all the "wisdom of the Egyptians," their references to the subject of death stand out in striking contrast with elaborate speculations of the Egyptian religion on the afterlife.

Equally evident is the inspiration of the later books of the Old Testament when one considers the close contact Israel had, during and after the second captivity, with Babylonian and Persian conceptions.

As Dr. S. D. F. Salmond remarks: "This aloofness of the Old Testament from ways of thinking of a future life, which are familiar to us in other literatures, demands the first attention of the student. It is a thing of the utmost moment." [4]

It is likewise a matter of the greatest moment to note the change that begins to appear in Jewish thinking in the centuries immediately preceding the birth of Christ, when the philosophical conceptions of Greece, which had gathered up the thinking of both Egypt and the ancient East, came to bear upon the Jews through the Hellenizing of the Mediterranean world.

According to Plato the "soul" was a separate entity that had an eternal pre-existence as well as a future immortality, whereas the body comprised no more than a shell in which the soul came for a period to dwell. At death the soul left its temporary abode to assume a succession of other forms, ever ascending until it once more reached the sublime heights from which it had originally descended. According to this teaching, therefore, life in the body was an imprisonment. The soul's real life began again when it succeeded in divesting itself of its "muddy vesture of decay."

Intimations of the intrusion of these new ideas on the afterlife and immortality first begin to appear in the Jewish apocryphal writings of the Hellenistic period, and the virtual capture of the greater part of Jewish thought by them is evident in the New Testament references to the Jewish sects in the time of Christ and in the fuller descriptions of these groups in the writings of Josephus.

Of the two principal sects, the Pharisees had almost completely capitulated to the teachings of Plato.” They [the Pharisees] say that all souls are incorruptible,” states Josephus. [5]

The Essenes, another important Jewish sect in the days of Christ, though not specifically mentioned in the New Testament, also accepted the Greek teaching on the immortality of the soul, and in its most extreme form.

The Sadducees, on the other hand, opposed the Pharisees and the Essenes.” The doctrine of the Sadducees is this, says Josephus: “That souls die with the bodies.” [6]

To this extent they were truer to Scriptural teaching than the Pharisees, but not much credit can be bestowed upon them for this, since, following the Aristotelian rationalists, they denied also the “resurrection.” (Mark 12:18; Acts 23:8) Jesus, therefore, bade His disciples beware of the leaven of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees. (Matthew 16:11, 12)

Influences Introduced by Jewish and Gentile Converts

Like the Jewish people, the early Christian church was exposed to the pagan philosophies of the Greco-Roman world and of the Eastern mystery religions, and indeed the first Gentile converts were drawn from the adherents of these faiths. It is easy to see, therefore, how the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul began early to modify the Biblical teaching, just as, for precisely the same reasons, the Sunday of the pagan world began to displace the true Sabbath of the Bible. Not without reason did the apostle Paul warn the young minister Timothy against the oppositions of “science [gnosis] falsely so called” (1 Timothy 6:20), and portray the Christian teachings of the afterlife in terms diametrically opposed to those of philosophy and the mysteries.

Struggle Between the “Truth” and the “Lie”

But as in the case of Judaism the struggle between the truth” and the “lie” in the early history of Christianity went steadily against the truth as the “spirit of antichrist” gained ground. Says the servant of the Lord:

“Many who professed conversion still clung to the tenets of their pagan philosophy, and not only continued its study themselves, but urged it upon others as a means of extending their influence among the heathen. Serious errors were thus introduced into the Christian faith. Prominent among these was the belief in man’s natural immortality and his consciousness in death.” [7]

Rome, “Baptized Paganism”

Most potent of all the influences that fixed the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in Christian thinking was, of course, the Roman apostasy, which entirely deserves the designation it has received of “baptized paganism.”

“The theory of the immortality of the soul,” says the messenger of the Lord again, “was one of those false doctrines that Rome, borrowing from paganism, incorporated into the religion of Christendom.” [8] A comparison of Roman Catholic teaching with the corresponding teachings of the Greco-Roman world reveals, in fact that it has often been lifted almost bodily from the philosophy of Plato and the mystery religions of the East.

According to The Catholic Encyclopedia, for example - “The human soul is a substance or substantial principle. It is a simple, or indivisible, and also a spiritual being, that is, intrinsically independent of matter. It is naturally incorruptible. It cannot be annihilated by any creature. God is bound to preserve the soul in possession of its conscious life, at least for some time, after death. Finally, the evidence all leads to the conclusion that the future life is to continue for ever.” [9]

This teaching bears absolutely no relation to Bible doctrine. It is nothing but a rehash of the pagan speculations of the Greek philosophers and their disciples.

Truth Re-emerges in the Reformation Movement

So powerful, however, was the authoritarian teaching of Rome during the Middle Ages that in Christendom, as in Judaism, the Biblical teaching of the nature of man was practically obliterated. And not until the Reformation movement of the sixteenth century did the Bible truth of the nature of man re-emerge with other vital teachings of the Christian faith.

So we find during that momentous period in the history of the Christian church great Reformers, like

Milton, Tyndale, and Luther, reaffirming, in contrast to the Roman doctrines of purgatory and the invocation of saints, the unconsciousness of the dead and new life only through Christ. Luther, in fact, went so far as to say that the immortality of the soul was a “monstrous opinion” to be relegated to “the Roman dunghill.”

Sad to say, the Reformer Calvin, in his book *De Psychopannychia*, held rigidly to the Catholic and pagan view of the state of death, and the Protestant groups stemming from Calvinism have, for the most part, followed this false lead. Nevertheless, since the Reformation, one of the most vital distinctions between Catholic and true Protestant theology has been in their teachings on the state of man in death and the afterlife.

The Intermediate State

Having established the truth and exposed the satanic lies concerning the nature of man and the phenomenon of death, we are in a position to discuss what is commonly called the “intermediate state,” or the period between death and the recovery of life through the redemption of Christ. And the very first thing we notice when a comparison is made between the Biblical and pagan conceptions is the vast literature that has grown up in the pagan religions on the false foundation of natural immortality, and the comparatively scant attention to the “intermediate state” in the Scriptures, and particularly in the teaching of Jesus.

Dr. S. D. F. Salmond remarks: “The fourth point in Christ’s teaching on the Future is His silence on the subject of the Intermediate State. . . . His words fix our thoughts on the present life and the final issues. They know nothing of the speculations of later Judaism on the condition between death and the resurrection. They know nothing of the immense structure of doctrine which certain schools of Christian theology have erected on this infirm foundation. They give little or no place to the thought of an intermediate state.” [10]

This is, of course, precisely what we would expect, for whereas, according to the satanic lie, the afterlife begins at death, or in other words it is continuous with earthly life, the Scriptures declare that death interposes a gap between this life and the life to come which requires no detailed or elaborate description.

Seeing then that the fantastic descriptions of the intermediate state of the pagan religions and philosophies are purely imaginary and utterly false, it might be considered unnecessary to give them another moment’s thought. There is, however, a definite value in a brief survey of their ramifications, for it will serve to reveal very plainly the subtle use Satan makes of these teachings to distract the minds of men from the true God and His salvation.

In the earliest form of survivalism it was conceived that the soul lived on in close association with the corpse, from which it could not stray very far, and on the preservation of which its own continuance was dependent.

The soul dwelling in its tomb house was believed also to have feelings and needs identical with those of the person in life; so the relatives of the deceased had to place in the tomb appropriate jewels, utensils, furniture, arms, et cetera, as well as regular gifts of food and drink, for the “soul’s” sustenance.

Constant attention to these requirements of the dead was imperative to keep them satisfied and happy. Thus did Satan hold those who accepted his devilish doctrine securely in his clutches, and so fully occupied with attendance on the dead that they were unable to learn of the true way of life.

Preparations for the Afterlife

The next development of speculation concerning the “life” of the dead was that the soul did not remain in the narrow confines of the tomb but descended into vast caverns beneath the surface of the earth, of which the tomb became the antechamber.

At first the life of the dead in the underworld was conceived as identical with the life lived in the flesh, without any thought of rewards or punishment, but in due course the idea developed of the soul’s subjection to pleasure or pain, tribulation or blessedness, in the subterranean regions according to their preparation for the afterlife during the earthly phase of their existence. Their destiny was not based upon moral considerations, but upon whether they had possessed themselves of instructions for their subterranean journey through devotion to the appropriate deities who controlled the way they must pass.

So there grew up in the various pagan religions a detailed topographical literature of the infernal world, its delectable pastures and its dark and dismal regions, and a vast body of instructions that the living needed to possess at death in order to avoid the dangers of the underworld and finally reach the abode of the blessed.

All this information was, of course, a monopoly of the various pagan priest hoods and was released by them only to those who conformed to their religious requirements and who offered appropriate tangible incentives!

Thus as the journey through the underworld became more complicated, the living were kept ever more busy meeting the demands of the pagan priests and preparing themselves for their safe passage. Subtle, indeed, are the ways by which untold millions down the ages have been and still are held in the arch deceiver's fearful grip!

In contrast to the underworld of Egypt, the Eastern astral cults pictured the journey of the soul, not as a descent into a nether world far beneath the earth, but as an ascent into the stellar realms. In this case, lack of knowledge of the soul's "upward way" would condemn it to successive reincarnations in fleshly prisons or arrest its progress at the barriers to the successive spheres. A safe and speedy passage of the soul to celestial realms, on the other hand, was assured to those who possessed the requisite knowledge, or gnosis.

This knowledge was, on the one hand, dispensed by the priests of the "mysteries," and on the other by the philosophers. The tremendous popularity of the mystery religions just before and just after the time of Christ was by reason of their offering protection and immortality not only to kings and heroes but equally to slaves and men of low estate.

The philosophers, of course, despised alike the crude materialistic cults of Egypt and the "mysteries," with their sacrifices and sacraments, and urged devotion to the philosophic gnosis, which they claimed could alone guide the soul in its ascent to its eternal abode.

But whether through the mysteries or through the philosophic gnosis Satan kept his devotees occupied in the amelioration of the afterlife of their predecessors and in their own personal preparation for the supposed journey they must make. And in so doing he closed the minds of nearly all to a knowledge of the salvation of God.

The Bible and the "Sleep" of the Dead

In complete contrast with the imaginations of the heathen, the intermediate state revealed by God is represented in the Scriptures as a period of unconscious and untroubled "sleep."

Job expresses his conviction that in death he will "sleep in the dust." Job 7:21. The psalmist likewise expected at the close of his earthly life to "sleep the sleep of death." Psalm 13:3.

The Lord told Moses, "Thou shall sleep with thy fathers" (Deuteronomy 31:16), and the formula, "So X slept with his fathers," is repeated upon the death of each of the kings of Israel and Judah. (1 Kings 2: 10, et cetera.)

In the New Testament Jesus refers to the deceased daughter of Jairus and to Lazarus as sleeping. (Matthew 9:24; John 11:11.) The first martyr, Stephen, was stoned to death and "fell asleep." Acts 7:60. Paul likewise commonly describes the dead as "asleep" (1 Thessalonians 4:13; 5:10; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 15:20,51) and the saints as asleep "in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). From this conception of the state of death comes our word cemetery, or literally, "sleeping chamber."

Other expressions in the Scriptures confirm their teaching that death is not a state of feverish activity, but one of total "rest" from all the experiences of life." Thou shall rest," declared the angel to the aged Daniel as he was about to lay down his life task, "and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel 12:13. The martyrs in the sixth chapter of the Revelation were to "rest . . . for a little season" (verse 11), in death, as also will those who witness unto death in the final crisis of time (Revelation 14:13).

Not only does death bring "rest" for weary saints, but the wicked will also "cease from troubling" others as they have done in life, by reason of their forcible rest in death. (Job 3:17.)

How Deep Is the Sleep of Death?

It was, of course, only to be expected that Satan, who first inculcated into the human mind the lie that death is not death, should foster the parallel delusion that "sleep" does not mean total unconsciousness, but only an unconsciousness to the life of the world from which the dead have passed.

It is suggested that the fact that a sleeper is unconscious of the material world around, yet retains an inner subconscious life, may have its parallel in death. The dead may be unconscious of the world they have left, but they may live on consciously in another sphere.

Coupled with this psychological argument respecting a degree of life in the "sleep" of death is another intended to get around the theological problem of Paul's statement that the dead are "gone to nothing" (apolonto). (1 Corinthians 15:8.)

Thus Edward White, after a most forthright exposition on the nature of man and the phenomenon of death, virtually destroys the strong foundation he has laid by taking tip this curious position on Paul's words:

“He [S. Paul] . . . teaches [in this text] what would have happened if Christ had not been raised; if there had been no redemption, and no justification by His death. In that case doubtless death would be the end of man, since the ‘soul’ of any being, made as Adam was, a ‘living animal,’ does not naturally survive in death. But S. Paul does not teach this of the destiny of human souls in death, now that redemption has occurred, and Christ has risen: especially not of the dead in Christ!” [11]

According to this argument, therefore, survival now is not the survival of natural immortality that the Scriptures expressly deny, but “must be attributed to the supernatural action of redemption alone, which operates to the abnormal preservation of the spiritual essence in the dissolution of the man, both for judgment and reward.” [12]

And so instead of the question of life and death being settled at the time of natural death, the issue is deferred, as it were, by the interposition of the plan of redemption, and all men, the righteous and the wicked, are granted a new lease of “life” in “death,” called “sleep,” until their arraignment before the final judgment session, when eternal life and eternal death will be dispensed according to man’s acceptance or otherwise of the plan of redemption.

But neither of these arguments for “life” in the “sleep” of death will stand the test when set against the known facts of psychology and the language of Scripture.

Taking first the argument from the viewpoint of psychology, we conclude that the plea for the existence of the “sleeping” disembodied soul is equally as baseless as that of the “virile” and “active” disembodied soul of the pagan religions. G. D. Rosenthal remarks:

“Neither reason nor revelation offer us any ground whatever for supposing that the soul without the body is personal. Nothing is more common than to hear it assumed that the soul is the real self. Yet, as soon as we begin to reflect on the matter we perceive that the only self of which we are conscious is made up of soul and body. The working of these two is absolutely inseparable; we cannot contemplate the independent action of either of them. Our present personality involves the mutual association of soul and body; one element is not more needful to it than the other. Thus it is impossible for us to think of personality without embodiment.” [13]

The inconceivability of a disembodied soul is similarly stressed by J. H. Leckie:

“The alternative idea of a disembodied existence exceeds all that is conceivable. The notion of a mind without an organ of expression, of a soul without a local habitation, is a mere rational abstraction, and is unable to support itself by any appeal to imagination or experience.” [14]

A “sleeping” soul is thus just as inconceivable as a virile, active” soul. The “person” exists so long as he is possessed of the body, its organ of expression. Without this there is no “person.” Paul is therefore right when he says that the dead are “gone to nothing” (apolonto).

The theological argument on the temporary suspension of dissolution in death pending the outworking of the plan of redemption is equally as baseless as the psychological argument, for it makes nonsense of all the unqualified statements respecting dissolution in the Scriptures.

The plan of salvation, as Peter tells us, was conceived “before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20), and Christ was virtually slain “from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). If then it was a foregone conclusion at the entrance of sin that death would not be a state of “nothing-ness,” Satan’s dictum would be proved true and all the inspired statements to the contrary would become lies! Which conclusion, of course, is not only absurd but blasphemous. The plan of redemption is not a plan for the temporary modification of death by making it a kind of life, but for those who accept it, it is a plan for recovery from the only kind of death there is, namely, the complete absence of life!

What “Sleep” Implies

The use of the term “sleep” for death does not therefore suggest a subconscious life as the psychological argument avers, nor does it mean temporary suspension of dissolution as some theologians try to argue. It is intended to stress two aspects of the “first death” resulting from the sin of our first parents.

First, that death is a state of complete inactivity in contrast with the multifarious activities of life. This is borne out by the fact that the common word for the sleep of death in the New Testament is koimaomai, which means literally “to lie down in sleep,” whereas in the Old Testament the Hebrew word used in the formula that this or that patriarch, prophet, or king “slept with his fathers” is shakab, which also means “to lie down.” Sleep is thus indicated in the Scriptures to be a state of rest (Job 3:13,17; Revelation 14:13) or repose in contrast to the activity of life, and that contrast is absolute and complete.

In the second place the first death is called a sleep to indicate that by reason of the plan of redemption it is not an irrevocable fate, but a period of quiescence from which all will one day awake. The second death is never called sleep (unless qualified by the term “perpetual”), because from it there will be no awaking.

The Question of Identity

One further question may still remain about the intermediate state as portrayed in the Bible. If the individual who dies is literally “gone to nothing,” what identity can there be between the “person” who dies and the “person” who comes alive through the divine plan of recovery? Edward White poses this question as a basis for his argument on temporary survival in death mentioned above. “If no spirit survived,” he says, “it might truly be said that a wholly new being was then created to suffer for the offences [or alternatively to enter into the bliss] of another long passed away.” [15]

Admittedly we cannot fully understand this divine mystery, just as we are impotent to understand many others, but here again the metaphor of sleep comes to the help of our understanding. As Dr. C. J. Shebbeare puts it: “If I am the same man after sleep as I was before it, it is not nonsense, nor self-contradictory, to suggest that my identity may continue through death.” [16]

“Your life,” declares the apostle Paul, “is hid with Christ in God,” and this inspired dictum the messenger of the Lord makes the believers’ final answer to the questions of unbelief.

“Christ represents death as a sleep to His believing children. Their life is hid with Christ in God. . . until the last trump shall sound.” [17]

Again, commenting on the statement of Christ, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Matthew 22:32), Ellen G. White says:

“God counts things that are not, as though they were. He sees the end from the beginning, and beholds the result of His work as though it were now accomplished. The precious dead, from Adam down to the last saint who dies, will hear the voice of the Son of God, and will come forth from the grave to immortal life. . . . This condition, which is anticipated in His purpose, He beholds as if it were already existing. The dead live unto Him.” [18]

And when the voice of the Archangel calls forth the sleeping dead the interval since the thread of life was snapped will seem no greater than a single night of dreamless sleep and the consciousness of the awakening personality of its identity will be no less real and full.

How Life Was Given

Life was given to man in the beginning when God breathed into Adam the “breath of life.” (Genesis 2:7) It was forfeited through sin and is lost completely and utterly in death. It naturally follows, therefore, that it can be recovered only by an act of grace on the part of the original Giver, God. This is the “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised,” through the plan of redemption, actually “before the world began.” Titus 1:2.

It was this hope of a resurrection from the dead that sustained our first parents after the tragic murder of Abel by the hand of his wicked brother, which hope was confirmed in the translation of the godly Enoch “without seeing death,” and which thereafter claimed the faith of the true children of God in striking contrast with the false hope of survival inculcated by Satan into the minds of the “ungodly” and heathen.

In the line of the righteous, cherishing the resurrection hope, was Job, who, meditating upon the common fate of man through sin, expressed the confident conviction: “For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” Job 19:25-27.

Faith of Patriarchs and Prophets

Certainly Abraham believed in the resurrection, for he was assured that if he had been called upon actually to sacrifice his son, Isaac, “God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” Hebrews 11:19.

Though Moses “was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” he had no word to say concerning the survival of the dead, of which they made so much, but pinned his faith on the resurrection power of God, which would raise Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the faithful to new and enduring life. (Exodus 3:6; cf. Luke 20:37, 38)

King David sang of the resurrection hope in his psalms." God," he declared, "will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me." Psalm 49:15." As for me," he testified in another song of praise, "I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17:15.

Among the prophets, both Elijah and Elisha cherished the resurrection hope, in token of which they were able to raise the dead. (1 Kings 17:23, 24; 2 Kings 4:34, 35)

Isaiah assured the faithful in Israel: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Awake and sing," he cried, "you that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19.

"They shall come again," declared God to Jeremiah of the innocent victims of Satan's wrath, "from the land of the enemy." Jeremiah 31:16.

"I will open your graves," God told Israel through His prophet Ezekiel, "and cause you to come up out of your graves. . . . And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves." Ezekiel 37:12, 13.

Through the prophet Hosea, God declared: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Hosea 13:14.

Daniel not only referred to the awakening of the righteous from "the dust of the earth" on the resurrection morn, but also made it clear that the wicked too would rise in their lot - not, however, to "everlasting life," but to receive their sentence to "shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2.

So, coming down to the time of Christ, we find Martha sorrowing over the death of her beloved brother Lazarus, yet confessing to Jesus her confident faith, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24), and Paul telling the Roman governor Felix of the "hope toward God, which they [the Jews] themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

It was, however, in the period between the close of the Old Testament canon and the first century of the Christian Era that the false teaching of survival derived from the pagan Greco-Roman world took root in Jewish thought and began to obscure the truth of the resurrection in many minds, as can be glimpsed from the discussions of Jesus with some of the sectarian groups of His day.

The Essenes, who are not actually mentioned in the Bible, seem to have accepted the Platonic philosophy lock, stock, and barrel, even to believing in the pre-existence of souls.

The Pharisees occupied an intermediate position between the Biblical view and the completely Hellenized teaching of the Essenes, for although they had adopted the Platonic idea of the immortality of the soul, they continued to retain a belief also in a resurrection at the end of time.

The Sadducees, at the other extreme, had absorbed the teaching of the materialistic philosophers like Aristotle and Epicurus, which led them to deny both the natural immortality of the Platonists and the Bible doctrine of the resurrection.

Thus not only was it appropriate that a new and fuller revelation of the resurrection hope should be communicated to men by Him who was Himself "the resurrection, and the life," but this revelation was divinely timed to counter the growing menace of the false teachings of paganism among the Jews and in the infant Christian church.

Why Jesus Came

From the lips of Jesus Himself we learn how the "living Father" (John 6:57) sent His Son, through the incarnation, to manifest the true "life" (John 1:4, 1 John 1:2), and to impart - it to men.

Apart from divine imparting, Jesus declared, "you have no life in you." John 6:53. But, He added, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10.

"In our Savior," says the messenger of the Lord, "the life that was lost through sin is restored: for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality." [19]

The sole condition upon which this precious gift of life is bestowed upon men is belief in Christ. As the best-known text in all the Bible so beautifully puts it: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

Believing in Jesus, however, does not mean just mentally assenting to His teachings. It means “taking hold on and entering into so close a relationship with Him that the life that is “in him” (John 1:4) is imparted to us.

Jesus’ vivid illustrations of this profound spiritual transaction are recorded for us in several chapters of John’s Gospel. In the third chapter it is pictured as the quickening of a new birth through the operation of the Divine Spirit. In the fourth chapter it is represented as the drinking of the water of life.” The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14. In the sixth chapter Jesus describes Himself as “the bread of God. . . which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.” John 6:33.

An even more intimate relationship Jesus indicated when He went on to say that this “bread” and “water” of life are representative of His flesh and His blood, which He gave “for the life of the world” (verse 51), and of which those who would have life must partake.” Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood,” he declared, “you have no life in you.” Verse 53. On the other hand, “who so eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life.” Verse 54.

The spiritual reality of these words is beautifully symbolized in the Lord’s supper, which Jesus inaugurated on the night before His crucifixion to replace the symbolic Passover of the old covenant.

By this mystical union with Christ, the “believer” is quickened with His life and passes literally “from death unto life.” John 5:24. Says the apostle John, therefore: “He that bath the Son bath life; and he that hath not the Son of God bath not life.” 1 John 5:12.

This spiritual transaction, however, does not imply that the saved sinner will not die or that he now has an imperishable soul, which will survive death.” Jesus never,” says Dr. Salmond, “speaks in terms of an Essene or Hellenic immortality of soul.” [20]

What He does promise is that those who are thus united with Christ in life can no more be held in captivity by death than the grave could hold Jesus, but, like Him, they will come forth in resurrection life in the day of God’s appointing.” Because I live, you shall live also.” John 14:19. The time of this resurrection, He further declared, would be one and the same for all the faithful children of God, and would be in the last day.” (John 6:44)

The dramatic circumstances of this resurrection Jesus described on another occasion: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming . . . when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” John 5:25.

Jesus did not teach that we receive either reward or punishment at death, but that the dead wait unconscious in the tomb until the whole human race comes to the end of its day of grace. Then, in the “last day,” He will return to the earth in triumph to call forth all the righteous dead and gather them, with the living righteous, into His kingdom.” He shall send his angels,” it is written, “with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:31.

Besides Christ’s promise to His faithful people of a resurrection to eternal life, He warned the rejecters of His invitation of mercy that there would also be a “resurrection of damnation.” “Marvel not at this,” He said, “for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28, 29.

But while the former resurrection is a resurrection to endless life, the wicked will come up in the latter only for a brief space, to stand before the judgment bar of God, to receive just recompense for their sins, and finally to perish in the “second” and eternal death.

While Jesus was upon earth He did not go into any further explanation of the chronological relations between these two resurrections and the judgment of the “last day,” but His appeal was ever loving and urgent that men might begin the true “life” here and now and continue it eternally in the “resurrection of the just.”

Paul Preaches “Jesus, and the Resurrection”

These basic facts concerning the hope of life in Christ through the resurrection were still further expanded by the apostle Paul in whose inspired epistles the doctrine of the resurrection finds its full and final expression.

The twin theme of Paul’s evangelism was, in fact, “Jesus, and the resurrection.” (Acts 17:18) Man’s hope of eternal life’ the apostle taught, is through the resurrection, and resurrection life is made available only through Christ.

Beginning with man's state "under the curse," Paul reveals that the carnal man is spiritually "dead in sins" and condemned to utter dissolution with the death of the body. But although "the wages of sin is death," he goes on to say, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. The life that man has lost is recoverable as a gift from God, and that gift is made available to man through Christ, "who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Timothy 1:10.

By a variety of vivid contrasts Paul describes the neutralization of the death sentence resulting from "one man's transgression by the "last Adam," Christ (Romans 5:17, 18), ending with the dramatic statement: "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (verse 21).

Ellen G. White comments on this: "There could have been no hope for the fallen race, had not God, by the sacrifice of His Son, brought immortality within their reach. While 'death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' Christ 'hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.' And only through Christ can immortality be obtained." [21]

In his epistle to the Philippians Paul explains how the life of God was made available to man in Christ. He who was "in the form of God" and "equal with God" agreed with the Father to be made "in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:6-8. Thus Jesus "emptied himself" of the life that was in Him, that it might be given to man, who had lost the precious gift of life.

But for the power of God, Christ's death would have been as eternal as the death man deserved. By the quickening power of the Spirit, however, Jesus was raised to new life, His resurrection becoming the ground and basis of man's resurrection to life in and through Him.

Says the apostle: "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power." 1 Corinthians 6:14. And again: "He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus." 2 Corinthians 4:14.

In his great resurrection chapter, chapter fifteen of First Corinthians, the apostle Paul shows that the resurrection of Jesus is not only the ground but also the token and assurance of our resurrection.

"If Christ be not risen," he asserted, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . You are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished [literally, gone to nothing]." 1 Corinthians 15:14-18." But," he confidently adds, "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits" (verse 20) of the great company who will return from the grave by virtue of the trail that He has blazed, the time of their coming forth being "at his coming" again for the express purpose of gathering unto Himself His own.

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Verses 21-23.

Finally, if the resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus, the ascension and enthronement of Christ at the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 1:20) are the assurance that we now potentially sit in "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6) and, after His coming, we shall actually be forever with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Quickened Through the Spirit

Now, just as death began to operate in Adam from the moment he sinned, so that ever since sinners have been "dead" while they "lived," the imparting of the life of Christ to a sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" likewise brings an immediate quickening of resurrection life. (Ephesians 2:1)

"If", says Paul, "the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you." Romans 8:11. And again: "If Christ be in you," he says, "the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Verse 10.

It is with his profound doctrine of the inhabitation of the Spirit," asserts Dr. Salmond, "that Paul especially connects the doctrine of the Resurrection." [22]

This present passing from death unto life by association with Christ in His death and resurrection is symbolized, according to Paul, by the ordinance of the believer's baptism." Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4, 5.

Having thus revealed how the sinner “dead in trespasses and sins” is “quickened” to new life in Christ through the Spirit, Paul goes on to show how this “taste” of the powers of the world to come will culminate in its bestowal in all its fullness through the resurrection from the dead.

The servant of the Lord comments: “Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave, not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. . . . It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal.” [23]

The time of this resurrection, which Jesus designated “the last day,” is more specifically described by Paul as the “day of the Lord,” when Jesus returns the second time in glory; and in his first epistle to the Thessalonians Paul provides the most detailed account of this dramatic event.

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17.

And if we need any further assurance that the gates of death will swing back at His command, we have it in His words to John the revelator after His return to His Father in heaven: “I . . . have the keys of hell [the grave] and of death.” Revelation 1:18.

The Second Resurrection and the “Second Death”

The apostle Paul did not have much to say concerning that other resurrection to which Jesus referred, in which the wicked will rise for final judgment, but the fact that he invariably refers to the resurrection of the saints as a selective resurrection out “from among” the dead, indicates his recognition that at some later time “the rest of the dead,” not privileged to have a part in the “resurrection of the just,” would be raised to appear before the judgment bar of God.

It was left to John the revelator in the last book of the Bible to set forth the precise chronological relationship between these two resurrections.

In the twentieth chapter of his prophecy he reveals that the “resurrection of the just,” which he calls the “first resurrection,” will take place at the Second Coming of Christ and immediately before the thousand-year period known as the millennium. (Revelation 20:4, 5) The subsequent resurrection of the unjust, he explains, will take place at the close of this period. (Verses 5, 6)

John goes on to explain: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” “This is the second death.” Verses 12, 15, 14.

“Blessed and holy,” John appropriately comments, are they that have part in the first resurrection, and conversely unblessed and unholy are those who come forth in the second. Eternal fellowship with God will be the portion of the former, for “on such the second death hath no power.” Verse 6. Eternal alienation from God will be the fate of the latter upon the execution of the just sentence of God.

Faced with these alternatives of eternal life and eternal death we may well ponder the vital factor which determines who will have a part in the first resurrection and who will remain in the grave until the second.

The blessed company of those who in the first resurrection are clothed with the glorious body of immortality will be the ones who here and now are “quickened” into new life through the operation of the Spirit of God. Transfiguration will clothe these new men and women in Christ with incorruptible immortal bodies and complete Christ’s work of re-creation. Then, indeed, will the saints be ready to enter into their everlasting inheritance. Those, however, who fail to avail themselves of this inward transformation that Jesus now offers to all, prove themselves unworthy of an immortal body. So they must sleep on until the resurrection of damnation, when they will be raised to hear the just sentence upon their neglect of the salvation of God.

Surely, then, while mercy waits, we will listen to the touching appeal of the apostle Paul: “Be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind” in order that in a measure here and now, and hereafter in all its fullness, we “may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:2.

With What Body?

When we begin to think of the new life of the resurrection, the question naturally arises in our minds, as it did in the minds of the apostle Paul's hearers, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" 1 Corinthians 15:35.

That we are here seeking to penetrate into divine mysteries that cannot fully be understood is at once clear when the apostle replies, "Thou fool" (verse 36), or perhaps more gently, "You are unwise" in imagining that you can understand these things even if you are told.

Paul's words are thus a caution to us not to set up barriers against belief because we are not able, with our finite minds, to comprehend the divine technique of resurrection or the physiology and psychology of the resurrected life. It is sufficient for us to believe the words of Jesus, "Because I live, you [the identical persons who died] shall live [as really and tangibly] also." John 14:19.

Nevertheless with this caution respecting our finite understanding, we may profitably inquire what the Scriptures have revealed on the subject of the resurrection body.

From certain texts of Scripture it has been assumed that the resurrection body will be identical as to its material with the body that died. Isaiah, for example, says: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Isaiah 26:19. Job declares, "In my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:26. Paul adds: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body [or the body of our humiliation]." Philippians 3:20, 21. And again: "The Spirit of him that raised up . . . Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Romans 8:11.

Actually, the Biblical statements quoted above do not necessarily imply the physical identity between the body possessed in life and the resurrection body. Rather, they are intended to emphasize that the resurrection will be a bodily resurrection of the "whole man" in contrast with the ghostly afterlife of the survivalists. As a matter of fact, Paul specifically declares: "Thou sows not that body that shall be." 1 Corinthians 15:37.

The assembly of the atoms and molecules of every dead body is really an untenable suggestion, for the dissolved bodies of the dead are taken up by nature and reused, passing in innumerable instances into vegetation and from it into other animal and even human bodies.

G. D. Rosenthal says: "The material particles which compose our present bodies do not belong to us; they have been lent to us by nature for a time, on the strict understanding that when we have done with them we must return them. Nature holds a mortgage on our bodies, and one day she will foreclose; whatever we do we shall not be able to avoid paying her back to the uttermost farthing. The total of Nature's forces remains the same; they are never lost, they are only diverted. When the body is returned to her at death, she at once sets to work to dissolve it, to take down the outworn fabric, and to use up the old material again. The elements composing it are taken up by plants and thus returned again to the kingdom of life, entering into grasses and grains and fruits, and so back to man once more!" [24]

Countless individuals must indeed have been done to death by cannibals, in which cases the material of which the bodies of the dead were composed has gone directly into other human bodies and become mixed up inextricably and beyond hope of recovery.

Some have sought to evade the implications of these facts by the suggestion that only the essential parts are to be restored-i. e., the brain cells, upon which the thought life of the dead was impressed. But there is no more reason whatever for supposing that the atoms and molecules of every human brain have been preserved in independence and isolation than that any other part of the physical frame could be so preserved.

There is another serious difficulty about the physiological identity between the body that goes down into the grave and the resurrection body, because it is merely the last of many bodies that we have had during life and has no special merit over and above any of the earlier bodies we have possessed since childhood." The well-known saying that we have new bodies every seven years is a palpable understatement," remarks G. D. Rosenthal; "the process of change is much more rapid than that." [25]

If, then, but one of man's many bodies is to be raised, why not the one he possessed when he was in the prime of manhood?

There is, however, no need to argue about which of our physical bodies or how much of them will be restored, for identity is not dependent upon particular particles of matter.

If a friend leaves your home town and goes to live at the antipodes for seven years or so, there is probably not a cell in the physical frame of that individual that is the same when you meet him again after his long absence. Yet there is no question in your mind but that the John Smith to whom you said good-bye is the same John Smith whose hand you again clasp.

If, then, God, according to His promise, replaces in the twinkling of an eye” at the resurrection “our earthly house of this tabernacle” with “an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1), even though there be no physical identity between the atoms and molecules of the two bodies, there will be no question of the recognizable identity of the “persons” so “clothed upon” (verse 4).

Characteristics of the Resurrection Body

We next ask, Can we know anything of the differences between the bodies with which we are clothed in this life and those of the life to come?

Here again we are touching profundities almost beyond human comprehension, but Jesus Himself and the apostle Paul must still be our Scriptural authorities, with the resurrection appearances of Christ providing an actual glimpse of the resurrected bodies of the saints of God.

The bodies we now have, explains Paul, are “terrestrial.” The bodies that we shall have, if faithful, will be “celestial bodies.” (1 Corinthians 15:40.)

We can have no certain knowledge concerning the physiological changes involved in this transformation.

We can only rest in the inspired assurance that in the transformation all traces of disfigurement and the debasing effects of sin will be removed.” Behold,” he says, “I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the. . . dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Verses 51, 52.

Paul lists other contrasts between the old body and that in the resurrection in order to portray as far as it is intended for us to understand the nature of the resurrection life. Our mortal bodies, he says, are “sown in dishonor.” They will be “raised in glory.” (Verse 43) In his epistle to the Philippians Paul describes them as “vile,” or literally, “humble,” “lowly,” or “base.” In the resurrection they will be “fashioned like unto” the “glorious body” of Christ. (Philippians 3:20,21) Our mortal body is “sown in weakness.” It will be “raised in power.” It is sown a “natural body”; it will be raised a “spiritual body.” (1 Corinthians 15:43, 44)

Commenting on these expressions, Dr. Salmond says: “He[Paul] gives us to understand that the new body will be our body, and yet will be different from that of which we have experience, superior to it in incorruptibility, in honor, and in power, in freedom from waste, decay, and death, in the glory of perfection, in ability to discharge its functions.” [26]

What further can we learn from the accounts of Christ’s resurrection appearances? We know first that He was recognized by His disciples as the Jesus they knew before He was crucified. We may be sure, therefore, that we shall recognize our loved ones and they will know us.

Says the Lord’s messenger: “The resurrection of Jesus was a type of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The countenance of the risen Savior, His manner, His speech, were all familiar to His disciples. As Jesus arose from the dead, so those who sleep in Him are to rise again. We shall know our friends, even as the disciples knew Jesus. They may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured, in this mortal life, and they rise in perfect health and symmetry; yet in the glorified body their identity will be perfectly preserved. Then shall we know even as also we are known. In the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, we shall recognize the lineaments of those we love.” [27]

Jesus ate and drank after His resurrection, and we are assured that we shall “eat” and “drink” in the kingdom of God. (Luke 24:37-43; 22:16; Matthew 26:29)

At the same time the resurrection body of Jesus had capacities not possessed by His earthly frame that enabled Him to ascend to heaven forty days later. This latter experience we know will be shared by transfigured and resurrected righteous when they are gathered by the angels to return with the Lord to heaven during the millennial period. In the new Earth state some will also be privileged to visit other worlds with Jesus. It may be, however, that the special capacities needed for such journeys may be a temporary conferment only, for the resurrection bodies will be primarily fitted for habitation upon this earth restored to its primeval glory.

Upon the earth the saints will live full lives, engaging in all manner of joyous occupations, and family groups made upon earth will continue in the afterlife. There will, however, be no “marrying and giving in marriage,” for there will be no need for the injunction given in Eden to “multiply, and replenish [literally, fill] the earth.” Genesis 1:28. The new earth will have no empty continents, nor

will it be overcrowded in places as the earth is now. It will have the ideal population, planned according to the purpose of God “before the world began.” (Titus 1:2)

Finally, in the renewed and beautiful earth the resurrected saints will be possessed of the immortal life that they might have had from the days of Eden had not sin entered to mar God’s glorious purpose. Now, with the divine certainty that sin will “not rise up the second time,” the assurance can be safely given: “Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” Luke 20:36.

Then, as the apostle Paul says, there will truly “be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Corinthians 15:54. (Cf. Isaiah 25:8) God grant that we each one may have a portion in this glorious prospect for the saints.

Will Sinners Burn Forever?

It only remains now for us to consider the fate of the rejecters of the mercy of God, who, as we have already discovered, will be raised in the second resurrection, or “resurrection of damnation” (John 5:29), to hear and receive the just sentence of God.

The teaching of the Bible is clear and simple. In the twentieth chapter of the Revelation the scene of final judgment before the “great white throne” is strikingly depicted:

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books

were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” “This is the second death.” Revelation 20:11-15, 14.

According to the Inspired Record, all will be divided at the last into two classes, those who “shall not be hurt of the second death” (Revelation 2:11), on whom “the second death hath no power” (Revelation 20:6), and those who, having judged themselves “unworthy of everlasting life” (Acts 13:46), will be destroyed in this “second death” by the consuming flames of the wrath of God.

Now we have seen that in the first death man would have “gone to nothing” but for the provision made through Christ. The second death, therefore, from which there is no provision for recovery or return, must involve utter and irrevocable annihilation. And this conclusion is supported by a wealth of testimony from almost every book of both Old and New Testaments.

“The wicked,” says the psalmist, “shall perish.” Psalm 37:20.” All the wicked will he destroy.” (Psalm 145:20). Elsewhere we learn that they will be consumed or burned up (Psalm 37:20), devoured (Isaiah 42:14), cut off (Psalm 37:9, 38), rooted out (Psalm 52:5), and blotted out (Psalm 69:28).

By a variety of vivid illustrations this utter destruction is further emphasized. They will be dashed-in pieces [literally, to shivers] like a potter’s vessel.” Psalm 2:9. They will be ground to powder. (Matthew 21:44) Their light will be extinguished. (Job 18:5) “Into smoke shall they consume away.” Psalm 37:20.” As wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Psalm 68:2.” He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matthew 3:12. They “shall be stubble: and the day that comes shall burn them up, said the Lord of hosts that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Malachi 4:1.” Therefore,” writes Hosea, “they shall be as . . . the early dew that passes away.” Hosea 13:3.” He shall fly away as a dream,” declares Job, “and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.” Job 20:8.

So complete will this destruction be that, adds the psalmist, “the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.” “He passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found (Psalm 37:10, 36), for they will “be no more” (Psalm 104:35).

Even the name and memory will be forgotten in the eternal years: “The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Psalm 34:16.” Thou has put out their name for ever and ever.” Psalm 9:5.” They shall be as though they had not been.” Obadiah 1:16.

Finally, we have a whole series of inspired statements that this annihilation will be eternal in its effects. For them the “mist of darkness is reserved for ever.” 2 Peter 2:17. They will “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

No wonder, therefore, that men are warned: ‘Tear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [gehenna].’ Matthew 10:28.

“It is certain,” says Edward White, “that the Hebrew language has no stronger terms to express a ceasing to be what we call annihilation-than those used respecting the fate of the wicked.” [28]

In the same way, he continues, “we are . . . able to state, concerning the Greek, what we have said concerning the Hebrew, that the authors of the Greek New Testament have used the strongest terms at their command, to assert a total extinction of both evil and evildoers.” [29]

Satan’s Culminating Deception

At every previous stage in our investigation we have discovered Satan opposing the truth of God with variations on his original lie, “You shall not surely die.” It is not surprising, therefore, that at this final stage he seeks to foist upon unwary minds his culminating deception. Those whom he has been unable to hold in his grasp by other means he determines to frighten into his power by blackening the character of God and declaring that He intends to condemn those of whom He disapproves to horrible torment forever and ever!

“Thus,” says the messenger of the Lord, “the arch-fiend clothes with his own attributes the Creator and Benefactor of mankind. . . . Thus lie succeeds in luring souls away from their allegiance to God.” [30]

Through the pagan religions based upon Satan’s lie of natural immortality, it was easy to hold over the multitudes the threat of eternal torment. The Egyptian Book of the Dead described the pains of those who despised the precepts of Osiris. In the mystery religions the underworld and the upper realms were divided into Tartarus and the Elysian Fields, one a world of pain and the other of joy. By participation in the rites of these religions millions were falsely persuaded that they could qualify for the abode of the blessed. Without the required gnosis, however, souls might never succeed in achieving eternal bliss, but would be condemned to eternal punishment in Tartarus.

Not only did Satan succeed in foisting the terror of eternal torment upon the whole heathen world, but he was able to follow up his introduction of the survivalist doctrine into Hebrew and Christian thinking with this further devilish invention.

According to The Jewish Encyclopedia the doctrine of the eternal torment of the wicked began to creep into Judaism through “the Babylonians and Persians,” and in the days of Christ it had become an accepted tenet of the Pharisees.

There is no mention of torment in the earliest apostolic fathers, and in the earliest Christian art in the catacombs and elsewhere there are no representations of the sufferings of hell, but by the beginning of the third century of the Christian Era we find the idea of survival taking hold of the thinking of the Christian church and with it the doctrine of the eternal torment of the wicked!

This God-dishonoring doctrine and travesty of truth was built permanently into the church by the Roman apostasy, which made precisely the same use of the terrors of hell for winning and holding converts, to itself as did the priests of the ancient mystery religions. Dante’s *Inferno*, in fact, was derived basically from the terrors of the Orphic books.

There were, however, those in the Christian church who stood out stoutly for the faith of the Bible. Justin Martyr, for example, asserted that “wicked angels and demons and men shall cease to exist” in the “confusion and destruction of the whole world.” [31]

Irenaeus declared that unbelievers will not “inherit incorruptibility,” and that “he who has not recognized God. . . deprives himself of continuance for ever and ever.” [32]

“They cannot endure for ever who have been impious against the one God.” Athanasius asserted, “They should undergo destruction of being in the course of time.” [33]

Arnobius, professor of rhetoric in North Africa at about the beginning of the fourth century, was very emphatic in speaking of the “error of the doctrine of the soul’s natural immortality.” “This is man’s real death-” he says, “this which leaves nothing behind.” [34]

Reformation Fails to Expunge Eternal Torment Doctrine

It was such men as these who passed on the truth to the Reformers of the sixteenth and later centuries, who were thus able to recognize the falsity of the Roman Catholic teaching on the eternal torment of the wicked and to abandon it in favor of the pure teaching of the Word of God.

Tyndale, Milton, Luther, and many others expressed themselves forcibly on this God-dishonoring doctrine of Rome, as also did the Anabaptists, the Socinians, and other reformed churches.

Sad to say, however, it was perpetuated by the powerful teacher Calvin and has returned through Calvinistic influence also to some other churches claiming to be staunchly Protestant.

Some of the great Protestant evangelists of the last century harbored this terrible teaching and-inconceivable as it may seem-used it to frighten sinners into accepting the grace of God through Christ!

General Booth is stated once to have said, "Nothing moves the people like the terrific. They must have hell-fire flashed before their faces, or they will not move." [35]

Spurgeon wrote: "Only conceive that poor wretch in the flames, who is saying, 'O for one drop of water to cool my parched tongue.' See how his tongue hangs from between his blistered lips! How it excoriates and bums the roof of his mouth as if it were a firebrand! . . . Suffice it for me to close up by saying that the hell of bells will be to thee, poor sinner, the thought that it is to be for ever." [36]

Even the good and gentle Isaac Watts wrote such lines as:

"There is a dreadful hell

And everlasting pains;

There sinners must with devils dwell

In darkness, fire, and chains." [37]

Likewise wrote Keble:

"Salted with fire, they seem to show

How spirits lost in endless woe

May un-decaying live." [38]

Supposed Bible Authority for Doctrine

Obviously these great and good men would not have held on to this doctrine unless they had been led to believe that it was supported by Scriptural proof, but Satan is well able to strain an "It is written" to suit his purpose and delude the unwary.

"No wonder," Ellen G. White says, in *Early Writings* "Satan looks with great satisfaction upon those who profess the name of Christ, yet closely adhere to the delusions which he himself has originated. His work is still to devise new delusions, and his power and art in this direction continually increase." [39]

But the Word of God does not contradict itself, and every Bible argument for the eternal torment of the wicked will prove to be a wresting of the Scriptures when carefully investigated.

Daniel, in the Old Testament, is called upon as a supporter of the everlasting torment doctrine when he says that the wicked will be subjected to "shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2.

The prophet, however, does not suggest that the wicked will consciously experience shame and contempt through all eternity, but that they will be so regarded by the God who banishes them forever from His presence.

Jesus spoke of "everlasting" punishment, and His remarks have been construed by some to imply eternal torment. In describing the fate of the wicked, He says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matthew 25:46. Just a few verses prior to this He makes known the sentence He will pronounce upon those who reject His offer of mercy." Depart from me," He will say, "you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Verse 41.

On still another occasion Jesus exhorted: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. Where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:43, 44.

Two or three points in connection with these statements will quickly dispose of any suggestion that here Jesus was teaching the eternal torment of the wicked. In the first place, "everlasting punishment" does not mean the same as "ever lasting punishing," for their punishment will be utter and irrevocable annihilation. The word used for punishment in Matthew 25:46 is kolasis, which literally means "pruned," in the sense of being cut off. To be "everlastingly cut off" can mean nothing other than everlasting deprivation of life.

The second point to note is that everlasting and unquenchable fire is not some absolutely unique kind of fire that tortures without destroying. No one has any experience of or can imagine such fire, and nowhere in the Scriptures is there any reference to such a phenomenon.

Jude uses the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah as an illustration of "the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 1:7. These cities are not burning still. The fires have gone out. But being lighted by divine wrath they could not have been put out until they had fully accomplished the destruction determined by God. This is the literal meaning of the expression Pur asbeston, namely, "such a fire as cannot be extinguished before it has consumed and destroyed all." (Mark 9:43, 45)

A similar interpretation is to be placed upon the reference to the "worm" that "dies not" (verse 44), which feeds upon the carcasses of the wicked. In the earthly Gehenna, or valley of Hinnom, beyond the south wall of Jerusalem, what the fires failed to destroy was consumed by the worms that swarmed over the refuse heaps. These carcasses were not preserved to provide a never-failing supply of food for the worms. In like manner, the bodies of the wicked will not be miraculously preserved-and that in a living state to be continually preyed upon by worms through all eternity. The carcasses in Gehenna were consumed by the fire and the worms, and so will be the carcasses of the wicked in the final judgment. And when they are utterly consumed, the worms, like the fire, will have fulfilled their purpose.

In describing the fate of those who give their loyalty to Satan and his last-day agents, John the revelator says: "And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name." Revelation 14:11.

This everlastingly ascending smoke, which is alleged to imply the eternal torment of these great sinners, is identical with a metaphor taken from the Old Testament that is descriptive of the fate of Idumea. Edom. is not still smoking today. The expression, therefore, when applied to the fate of the wicked, whether in the past or in the future, cannot mean the everlasting smoking of indestructible sinners. It simply suggests that as long as the destruction continues, the smoke will testify to the continuing operation of the destroying fires. And when there is nothing left to destroy, both the fire and the smoke will cease, though their effects will endure "for ever and ever."

That there will be degrees of punishment before the final destruction of the wicked is indicated by the statement that some will be beaten with "few stripes" and some with "many" (Luke 12:47, 48), but not one of these is out of harmony with the multiplicity of Biblical statements categorically declaring the ultimate annihilation of the wicked.

Only One "Way Everlasting"

John the Baptist was thus stating a plain and simple truth when he declared, "He that believes on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believes not the Son shall not see life." John 3:36. (See also John 5:40; Acts 13:46; 1 John 3:15; 5:12)

There is only one "way everlasting," and that is the way that leads past the cross to new life in Christ, and there is only one Guide who can direct us into that way-He who Himself is the "resurrection, and the life."

Well, therefore, may we, with the psalmist, ask of Him: "Lead me," O Lord, "in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:24.

10. The Timeliness Of The Threefold Message

The Historical Setting of the Advent Movement

Throughout our whole history the three angels' messages have been central to our preaching. As James White declared:

"The truth and work of God in this movement, commencing with the labors of William Miller, and reaching to the close of probation, is illustrated by these three angels. . . . These angels illustrate the three great divisions of the genuine movement. . . .

“Seventh-day Adventists hold fast the great Advent movement [of 1844], hence have use for the messages. . . . They cannot spare these links in the golden chain of truth, that connect the past with the present and future, and show a beautiful harmony in the great whole. . . .

“I repeat it. The three [angels’] messages symbolize the three parts of the genuine movement.” [1]

In order rightly to understand or evaluate the Advent movement and its distinctive threefold message, we must study it not only in relation to the world round about it but also in relation to the kind of world that preceded it. Hence this lecture opens with a sketch of the period preceding the rise of Adventism.

Two Great Revolutions in Sixteenth Century

The dividing line between the medieval and the modern world, religiously speaking, was the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. And the most significant feature of that, without question, was the new view as to the source of religious authority. The Protestant Reformers said that the Scriptures, not the church, are the true source.

In those opening years of that century occurred also a scientific revolution. Copernicus, known as the father of modern astronomy, was a contemporary of Luther’s. He was the man who first began clearly to formulate the true theory of the operation of the heavenly bodies. Up until then the earth had been viewed as the center of the universe. Men believed that the sun, moon, and stars moved round the earth. The first reaction to the Copernican theory was that it made this world, and man, seem very unimportant. Historians of science speak of the Copernican revolution, so great was the upheaval produced by the new scientific ideas. We shall presently see that scientific thought, here long, began to impinge on religious thought, first coloring and then dominating it.

About the opening of the seventeenth century there was heard the voice of Galileo, one of the founders of modern experimental science. The idea of experimentation set us to us commonplace, but in his day it was new and revolutionary. The method of establishing the truth of any view had formerly been by an examination of philosophical propositions and by logical deductions. But Galileo proceeded on the theory that the only way to be sure that a proposition is true is to check it against the evidences of our five senses. This prime canon of the modern scientific world here interests us because it gradually came to be invoked also in the religious realm.

The intellectual revolution was not confined to the field of religion and science. In the first part of the seventeenth century lived Descartes, father of modern philosophy, who broke away from the philosophy of the Middle Ages by beginning with the major premise of doubt, rather than of faith and belief. Thus skepticism became dominant in the field of philosophy. When we remember that throughout all the medieval period philosophy and theology had been interwoven, even as they are still interwoven in Catholic thought, we can see how great was the revolution in the philosophical world.

Eighteenth Century Marked by Rationalism

The next great figure that stands out in the realm of scientific thought is Sir Isaac: Newton, who died in 1727. To him goes the credit for the detailed formulation of the laws of celestial mechanics. For the first time there was presented in formal fashion not only the motions of all the heavenly bodies but also the laws that explain the motions. The whole universe took on the appearance of a vast machine operating rhythmically, never failing, each part moving in relation to the other parts like the wheels and cogs of a great machine.

Naturally, that picture of the universe began immediately to affect the thinking of men everywhere. For the skeptically minded, Newton’s view of the universe was used to support a godless, mechanistic theory of the universe.

The eighteenth century saw a rapid development in the field of experimental science. One of the distinguishing marks of that century was its disparagement of dogma and tradition and its exaltation of nature and human reason.

In France rationalism led men on to atheism and the worship of reason, as dramatically illustrated in the French Revolution.

Across the channel, in England, and still farther over, in America, this light of false reason did not shine so dazzlingly. In English-speaking countries men did not become atheists, but rather deists. Deists held that God was the explanation of the origin of this earth and all upon it. But they so fully believed in the idea of unbreakable natural laws that they could find no place for God, once the world was set in motion. So they invented the idea of a kind of absentee landlord God. God created the world and then withdrew into the dim recesses of eternity to commune with Himself, leaving the world to run like a clock wound up.

In his younger years William Miller was skeptically affected by deism, till, as he once confessed, he was not quite sure whether there was a God or whether there was any plan or purpose for the world.

The Scriptures Undermined by Rationalism

The exaltation of human reason and the glorification of nature and natural laws, which can be understood, at least in part, by experimentation, led on to a questioning of the need of revelation. Certainly the God of deism would hardly be concerned to provide a revelation. Furthermore, it is easy to see how men who had come to exalt reason would conclude that the validity of any alleged revelation should be measured in terms of whether it is reasonable to believe.

Now, there is nothing more distinctive in the revelation of the Scriptures than prophecy and miracles. Both naturally came under heavy fire from rationalists. The attack, plausible and militant, was simply that it is unreasonable to believe that events can be foretold or that the miracles of Scripture could have occurred. To eighteenth-century rationalists the Bible account of miracles seemed suspiciously like the wonder stories found in non-Christian religions. Therefore why should they believe the miracles recorded in the Bible? Keep in mind this argument, for we shall find it to be basic in the thinking of allegedly Christian leaders a hundred or more years later.

The very fact that prophecy and miracles are two of the main pillars upholding the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible meant that rationalists put a low estimate on Scripture when they did not altogether discard it.

Chief among the Bible doctrines discounted was that of man's hopelessly sinful state. At the same time rationalists began to conclude that in the discoveries being made in the scientific realm lay the hope of a better world.

The Idea of World Progress

Here we find the roots of the theory of the perfectibility of man and the inevitable progress of the world that was ultimately to dominate all fields of thought. At this point the French philosopher, Rousseau, appears, declaring that man is intrinsically good, yet bad in actuality, and that the paradox is explained by the wrong training that most men receive and the bad environment in which most men must live. If this be true, then it is within the power of man to give release to the increasing good within him and thus produce for himself a kind of secular salvation, by proper education and proper environment.

Rousseau's thinking tuned in with the basic premises of eighteenth-century thought, namely, that advancement is to be found in exploring nature and in educating the mind.

While all this was taking place in the world of secular thought, an idea began to be promoted in the Protestant religious world that was finally to color all religious thought in the century following. A theologian named Daniel Whitby, early in the eighteenth century, set forth the idea that the world was to be converted before the end of time, that there would be a thousand years of increasing holiness before the Advent. It was not long before his idea of world conversion and a millennium of righteousness preceding the Advent was widely accepted.

Whitby's doctrine was in many respects the spiritual counterpart of the secular idea of the perfectibility of man and the inevitable progress of the world. His doctrine also marked a sharp departure from the Protestant principle of the literal interpretation of the Bible, and thus prepared the way for further loose handling of the Scripture.

Reaction Against Domination of Reason

Against the skeptical use of reason in the secular realm, and the almost equally barren scholasticism in the great state churches, a reaction set in. In the religious world the reaction revealed itself in the Pietistic movement.

In the philosophical world there arose a school of thought that had as its objective to overthrow the supremacy of reason, which claimed that nothing can be certainly known but what can be observed and objectively checked by the five senses. Of this philosophical challenge to reason one writer has observed:

“There now confronts us the great new outburst of philosophical Idealism, in one of its most striking forms, which marked the passage from one century to another [the eighteenth to the nineteenth], and in the light of which alone the theological history of our period becomes intelligible. The famous names are four: Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel.” [2]

This challenge to the evil dominance of skeptical reason was, at least in part, an attempt to defend religion. Indeed, some of these philosophers were theologians. But the cure for rationalism that was offered proved to be almost as bad as the disease itself, for it popularized an idea that had hitherto been anathema in all religious circles, the pantheistic idea of God. The rationalists had driven

God out into the far reaches of eternity, when they did not abolish Him. The philosophers sought to bring Him near again. But in seeking to bring Him near they went to the other extreme and made Him a part of all nature, of mountain, tree, valley, and river.

True, the word pantheism is not used by these philosophers, or by the theologians who gradually came to accept this conception of God. Instead, they speak of an “immanent God.” One writer has well described the doctrine of an immanent God as simply “higher Pantheism,” which means that the personal God of the Bible has been vaporized into the moving spirit and essence of all creation.

The same writer who speaks of this “higher Pantheism,” thus concludes his examination of the philosophy of Emmanuel Kant and the other idealistic philosophers who followed him:

“We shall have to ask whether within this great, or at least imposing, framework of ideas room can be found for that personal being of God and man which holds a central place throughout the whole range of Biblical thought, and without which the Christian religion can neither be nor be conceived.” [3]

This philosophical school could not fail to affect theological thinking, because theology and philosophy had traditionally been closely related, and, as already stated, some of these philosophers were actually theologians. Furthermore, the leaders in this school of philosophy were Germans, and Germany was already a recognized center of theological thought. That land was increasingly to take the leadership in the field of Protestant theology as the nineteenth century opened.

The Theologian Schleiermacher

We cannot close the discussion of the forces operating to change the religious thinking of men in the eighteenth century without mentioning one more name, that of the German theologian Schleiermacher. Of him one writer well remarks:

“His work at the close of the eighteenth century opened a new era not only in theology as a whole but still more definitely in the scientific interpretation of religion.” [4]

He was concerned to protect religion from rationalism, but he fell into the same pit as the idealistic philosophers, if indeed he was not drawn into the pit by reading them.” The struggle between Pantheism and inherited Christian belief lasted all through his life.” [5] “We are left more than half in doubt whether by ‘God’ he

means a being of specific character.” [6] The writer from whom we have just quoted tells how Schleiermacher’s “pantheistic prepossessions” led him to blur the Bible doctrine of creation:

“The immanentist assumptions, which direct his mind. . . . made it hard for him to find even a modicum of value in such ideas as ‘creation out of nothing,’ or the absolute freedom of God in calling the universe into being. The reason of course is that the doctrine of Creation, understood as the Bible understands it, stresses that very difference and distance between God and man which it is the aim of mystical or speculative pantheism to abolish.” [7]

So influential was the thinking of Schleiermacher that we find him definitely affecting religious thought here in America, a century later, as we shall discover in due time. Let us summarize now the forces operating as we move from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century:

Forces Operating at Opening of Nineteenth Century

Scientific investigation and discovery were gradually creating an impression among intellectuals, and to some degree among the public at large, that science holds the key to the future and has the formula for determining what is truth.

The idea of man’s Inherent or potential worth and respectability, coupled with the philosophical Idea of world progress, was slowly taking hold on the minds of men.

A critical examination of all ancient historical records, known popularly as higher criticism when applied to the Bible record, had gotten under way, though such criticism had as yet scarcely been employed on the Scriptures.

In religious and philosophical circles an immanent, mystical view of God and thus of the whole supernatural world, was beginning to infect Christendom.

However, none of these views had, by the 1840’s, changed in any material way the view of God and of Christian theology that Protestantism in general had carried down from Reformation times. True, Christendom had accepted by then the post-Reformation idea of world conversion, with its millennium of earthly holiness preceding the Advent. Undoubtedly, also, the churches had

unconsciously become tintured with the mystical view of God and the supernatural that was held by philosophers and others. But, it should be repeated, there is general agreement among church historians that up to about the middle of the nineteenth century, Protestant theology was essentially unchanged. This was for two reasons:

First, it takes time for the leaven of new ideas to change the shape and character of something so large as Protestantism. Second, Darwin's theory of evolution, which seemed to validate, coordinate, and give added meaning to many of the new ideas in science and philosophy, had not yet been proclaimed.

The Millerite Movement

At this spiritually and intellectually significant moment in history, the Advent movement began under the preaching of William Miller. To a consideration of that we now turn. To avoid confusion, we shall call those first few years of the Advent movement Millerism, to distinguish it from the Seventh-day Adventist movement, which emerged as a distinct entity after 1844.

The Millerite movement, though it began with the preaching of Miller in 1831, did not become a well-defined movement until 1840. It was then that a number of other ministers joined with Miller to carry on a concerted work. From then until October 22, 1844, the movement grew steadily in strength. until its message was heard throughout all America and in lands afar.

The theological opponents of Millerism were willing to agree that certain great Bible prophecies had just been fulfilled or were about to be fulfilled, and that a momentous turn in world affairs was due. But they were not willing to grant that the event impending was the literal, personal coming of Christ in fiery judgment, for they believed in world conversion. The secular world had increasingly come to believe in the perfectibility of man and the general progress of the world, and, hence were also unwilling to give ear to Millerite preaching. Furthermore, the doctrine of the personal, literal coming of Christ ran counter to the mystical, pantheistic idea of God, which had already gained a definite foothold in intellectual circles, though it is not clear to what extent it affected the thinking of the clergy in the 1840's. Hence it is not difficult to see why Millerite preaching met such general opposition.

First and Second Angels' Messages Preached

The Millerites never ceased to stress the fact that they were not preaching a new, strange doctrine, that instead they were reviving the hope and teaching of the apostles and, in turn, of the sixteenth-century Reformers. They also declared that they were fulfilling Revelation 14:6, 7. Here are the words of one of their most prominent spokesmen:

"We look upon the proclamation which has been made, as being the cry of the angel who proclaimed, 'the hour of his judgment is come. (Revelation 14:6,7.) It is a sound which is to reach all nations t is the proclamation of 'the everlasting gospel,' or 'this gospel of the kingdom. ' In one shape or other, this cry has gone abroad through the earth wherever human beings are found, and we have had opportunity to hear of the fact." [8] (Italics supplied.)

When the churches quite uniformly made light of their preaching, even to ridiculing the idea of the literal, personal coming of Christ, the Millerites then cried out, "Babylon is fallen. -They generally set this forth in terms of the language of Revelation 18, and thus they were able not only to make an announcement but to issue a command, "Come out of her, my people." But though they made the proclamation, primarily in terms of Revelation 18, they called attention to the fact that the same message in essence is found in Revelation 14:8, and that it is a message that follows right upon the message of Revelation 14:6, 7. In other words, they believed they were proclaiming what we describe as the first and second angels' messages.

In their denunciation of the churches as Babylon, they made central in the indictment the fact that the churches took a spiritualizing view of the Scripture, and thus vaporized the great truth of the literal coming of Christ.

In the Millerites' controversy with the churches regarding spiritualizing we find in embryo the whole Adventist controversy with the churches over their spiritualizing away of the most literal passages of Scripture. After October 22, 1844, the Millerite movement proper dissolved before any serious question was raised as to the third message of Revelation 14.

The Rise of Seventh-day Adventism

Amid the divergent and perplexed Millerite groups in early 1845 were found a few who were fully persuaded that there was no mistake in the basic interpretation of prophecy, that 1844 was the great year, and that if they would but hold fast their faith and pray the Lord for light, they would soon see where the particular mistake lay and could go on from there, building on the foundations already laid. That little group, small and ill-defined, was the nucleus of the Seventh day Adventist movement.

How this little group were corrected in their understanding of the meaning of the sanctuary is too well known to Adventists to need discussion here. Well known also is the story of how the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath was brought to a company of Advent

believers in Washington, New Hampshire, by a Seventh Day Baptist, Rachel Preston. But what seems not to be so well known is how that Sabbath truth became anchored to the message of the third angel, and in turn, became central to the prophetic preaching of Seventh day Adventists.

Briefly the history is this: In 1846 Joseph Bates, one of the original little group who constitute our spiritual fathers, wrote a tract in behalf of the seventh-day Sabbath. In that tract he uses the simple, elementary argument in behalf of the Sabbath; namely, that it was made at creation, and reaffirmed at Sinai by being included in the Ten Commandments, which are the moral code for all men in all ages. In that same tract he makes a brief reference to the little horn of Daniel 7 that would think to change times and laws, especially the law of the Sabbath. He asks the Second Advent believers, the group for whom the pamphlet was prepared, why they should doubt this part of Daniel's prophecy, inasmuch as they had such great confidence in all of Daniel's visions.

In the second edition of his tract, published in January, 1847, Bates expands the prophetic argument for the Sabbath by tying the statement of Daniel to the statement of John in Revelation 14:9-11. In doing this he accomplished two things: provided a new argument for the Sabbath and a new argument against Sunday.

He really did much more than this, as he and his Sabbath keeping associates quickly realized. He gave an interpretation to the words of John in Revelation 14:9-11 which enabled the Sabbath keeping remnant of Millerism to go forth to other Advent believers with a plea that ran something like this:

All of us during the Millerite movement believed that God raised us up to preach the message of the angel of Revelation 14:6, 7. All of us believe that God called us on further to preach the message of Revelation 14:8. But why should we stop short with these two messages when the Bible reveals clearly that a third one is to follow? Is not this third one patently present truth for these days immediately following 1844, and ought we not to believe it and in turn proclaim it?

Thus Joseph Bates and his associates pleaded with Sunday keeping Adventists. In general their reply was that they were no longer sure of the first or second angels' messages, and therefore how could they hope to be certain of the third?

It was this growing attitude of disbelief on the part of other Adventists that led James White to affirm, "We claim to stand on the original Advent faith. [9] Accordingly, our pioneers declared that other Adventist people, because of their wavering on the first and second messages, if not their renouncing of them, had left the original faith." [10] (In the Advent Review those four quoted words are in large capital letters.)

It is evident, then, that from the very outset this Seventh day Adventist movement has considered as basic and central to its beliefs and to its preaching the threefold message of the angels of Revelation 14:6-11.

Restricted View at Outset Regarding Threefold Message

To keep the historical record clear, it should be remarked in passing that at the first our spiritual forebears viewed the first and second messages as having been given, in the sense that they had been completely fulfilled, and thus were no longer to be part of Adventist preaching. This viewpoint is understandable when we remember what they believed on three important facts.

1. They believed that the investigative phase of the judgment, which precedes Christ's coming in executive judgment, would be exceedingly brief. Thus the "hour of his judgment might be considered as primarily describing Christ's coming in glory. This message men had had ample opportunity to hear and act upon. Had it not been preached over the length and breadth of America and in lands beyond?
2. The second angel's message was viewed as describing a fully accomplished fact, that Babylon had fallen, and at a certain point in history, 1844.
3. The world at large had sinned away its day of grace -the door was shut.

Hence our spiritual forebears believed that they should focus on the third message, and consistently they believed at the very beginning that they should proclaim this message to fellow Adventists, who were not under the indictment of the second angel, and who were already fully acquainted with the import of the first angel's message.

The True Measure of Threefold Message

But the value and importance of the threefold message is not to be measured by the early dimness of understanding on the part of our fathers, but by a study of the messages themselves, and then, in turn, by a comparing of the prophetic declarations of these messages with unfolding events. Let us not forget that we believe that the three angels' messages are prophetic declarations regarding last-day

events. Hence, the passing years should provide increasing proof or disproof of the claim, a claim that Adventists have consistently made, that these messages are the ones most needed by the world in the last days. In other words, the claim of the Advent movement that it was raised up by God to preach a unique and most timely message for the last hours of earth's history must find its validation in the events of history that were to take place from the day of our first preaching in the 1840's until the last hour of earth's history.

Now, God is never taken by surprise. He does not wait to set in motion a movement or a message long after the time it is needed; rather He sets it in motion to anticipate a need. Thus the unfolding events of history, as they fit into the prophetic message of God, provide for it a convincing validation, for they reveal the divine forethought of Him who gave the message. Have the changing events from 1844 to our day provided support for our prophetic forecasts built on Revelation 14, and our declaration that our message, therefore, is more timely and true today than it ever could have been before? That is squarely the question before us, and that is why I have entitled my studies "The Increasing Timeliness of the Threefold Message."

Doctrines and Prophecies Set Forth in Threefold Message

However, before I present a survey of the years from 1844 to the present, let me list briefly the doctrines and prophetic forecasts that are either explicit or implicit in the threefold message:

1. A message is to be proclaimed in the last days of earth's history, which message is not a new gospel, not a new formula for salvation, but "the everlasting gospel." Evidently it will be necessary to stress most specifically this everlasting gospel, in order to meet some issue that is to develop in the last days of earth's history.

2. There is a call to men to worship, not a pantheistic God, nor an evolutionary God, nor a mystical God, but the Creator God. Men are to "fear God. . . and worship him that made heaven and earth." Evidently there is need in the last days to stress a great, elemental truth concerning the nature, the character, and the authority of God.

3. A message is to go forth announcing a climax to earth's history, and that without delay. But the climax is to be in judgment, swift and decisive, not in imperceptible transition to holiness by world conversion. We may rightly here fuse together the investigative and executive judgments in considering the ultimate import of this judgment message. In other words, there is to be great need of preaching a particular truth concerning the character of events that lie at the end of the way, that men may know definitely what is ahead. There is need to present what theologians would describe as a sharply etched eschatology, a doctrine of last things, a doctrine of the judgment and the Advent.

4. This message that the hour of God's judgment has come, has implicit in it the message that Christ is coming the second time, personally, literally, and soon. It was only when men began to accept the doctrine of world conversion and an earthly millennium that they allowed the doctrine of the literal coming of Christ to fade from their minds. The Scriptures have ever tied together the fact of the final judgment of God with the personal coming of Christ. It is no unwarranted extension of the text to say that the judgment-hour message is also a message of the literal coming of Christ the second time.

5. But this judgment message that focuses our minds on the climax of earth's history also turns our eyes directly to the sanctuary in heaven above, to behold the manner in which Christ's atoning work for sin is carried on. Evidently there is to be great and increasing need in the last days of earth's history to bring men to a clear realization of the reality of sin and how we can be cleansed from it. The message has a time element; it begins in 1844.

6. There is implied in this threefold message a call to keep God's holy law, for the call to "fear God," in view of the judgment, may properly be restated in terms of Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14." Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Here is a message of explicit obedience to a clearly defined moral standard.

This reasonable conclusion that a call to keep God's holy law is implicit in the threefold message, is strengthened by the description of the saints of God that is presented immediately following the announcement of the threefold message: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.

The Message of the Second Angel

7. A message is to be sounded that the great religious bodies have fallen spiritually, fallen away from the high spiritual level on which they should walk, fallen away from great cardinal truths that should distinguish the followers of Christ. It is beyond the purview of this lecture to present the evidence that Babylon describes the fallen churches. That point I may rightly take for granted in addressing an Adventist audience.

That this fall of Babylon is progressive may be implied from the fact that the message is repeated in Revelation 18, but with heightened emphasis and new details. Though the first and the third angel of Revelation 14 are said to cry out with a “loud voice,” the second angel is not thus described. I would not stress this point, though it is an interesting fact that our pioneers did. And, by contrast, they also stressed the fact that the angel of Revelation 18 has “great power,” the earth is “lightened with his glory,” and “he cried mightily with a strong voice.” Though Babylon is fallen it contains many of God’s people. The task of those who proclaim the second message is the task of calling men out. Evidently conditions in the religious world are to develop so that there will need to resound in the days ahead a new and a stronger cry than ever has been made before: “Babylon is fallen come out of her, my people.”

The Message of the Third Angel

8. There is explicit a warning against Sunday worship. Again I may add, parenthetically, that it is beyond the range of these lectures to show that the mark of the beast is Sunday worship. That I may rightly take for granted in addressing a conference of Adventist ministers.

9. There is implicit in the threefold message a call to keep God’s holy Sabbath, and this is evident for two reasons: (1) We have already discovered that there is implicit the call to keep God’s holy law, which includes the Sabbath; and, (2) If we are to warn men against keeping the wrong Sabbath day, it is evident that our message is not complete until we have presented the message of the true Sabbath day.

10. The threefold message presents five prophecies:

a. That Rome and the United States will be dominant. Let us not forget that in any discussion of the threefold message we must think of it in relation to the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, for the beast, and the image of the beast, mentioned in Revelation 14:9, find their explanation in the thirteenth chapter. Indeed it is in the sixteenth verse of that chapter that we first find the reference to the mark of the beast. Therefore, viewing the third angel’s message in the setting of the thirteenth chapter, we are correct in declaring that that third message contains a prophecy that in the last days Rome and the United States will be dominant in world affairs.

b. That Protestantism will be dominant in the affairs of the United States.

c. That Protestantism will be, in some degree at least, unified. Obviously, if Protestantism is to acquire a dominant position in the affairs of the nation, it must present a much more unified front than was true in 1844. At that time the distinguishing mark of Protestantism in the United States, as elsewhere, was its divisive, warring quality.

d. That there is to be a close working together of Rome and the United States. How could the second beast of Revelation 13 call on men to make an image to the first beast, which received and recovered from a deadly wound, unless there was some unique understanding between them? And it is of the beast and its image that the third angel speaks.

e. That in the last days the seventh-day Sabbath will have a key significance as a sign of allegiance to God. The context clearly implies this.

I do not believe that I have passed the bounds of reasonable deduction from the words of Scripture in what I have here set forth as the doctrines and prophetic declarations, either explicit or implicit in the threefold message. In fact, I believe I am but restating the long-established Adventist position and interpretation of these messages.

Our pioneers very shortly came to see that the threefold message contains the propositions here enumerated, which means that they quickly came to realize that their first dim conception of the first and second angels’ messages as being in the past, was in error, and that instead, the first angel is followed by the second and then by the third, not in the sense of separate, completed messages, but rather in the sense of an enlarging message increasing in volume and becoming threefold in character. Thus they quickly saw that all three messages have meaning and timeliness to the end of earth’s history. Very particularly, they came here long to believe that the fall of Babylon is progressive, which meant placing in the future the day of its complete fall or total apostasy.

Threefold Message Often Preached in Too Narrow Setting

That this has been our belief from very early times is evident from our literature. However, an examination of that literature through the long years up until now will reveal, I believe, essentially this concerning our preaching of the three messages:

1. We have generally presented the first angel’s message in a rather tightly restricted form, that is, simply in support of the doctrine of the investigative judgment, which was to begin at the end of the 2300-day period.

2. We have presented the second angel's message largely in terms of the fall of the churches in 1844, and in terms of certain proofs of spiritual apathy immediately subsequent to that. And I might add that these proofs of spiritual apathy in the years subsequent to 1844 have too often been of a vague and general character; in other words, a kind of general indictment of the churches as lacking spiritual vitality and vigor. In fact our literature, particularly in recent decades, seems to contain relatively little on the second angel's message compared with the first and the third. An examination of the subject titles of many evangelists for a number of years has impressed on me the same conclusion.

3. Through the years we have unquestionably presented the third angel's message militantly and directly. However, most of us have presented it almost exclusively in terms simply of keeping the "seventh day" as God's law commands rather than keeping the first day as the Papacy commands.

Now all this is good as far as it has gone, but if these three messages are prophetic forecasts for the last days, and if Adventist preaching—with Revelation 14:6-11 as central—is to become increasingly timely, then the passing years should have caused us to give increasing force and breadth and definiteness to our preaching of these three angels' messages. I cannot escape the conviction that we have not been setting forth the threefold message with the increasing fullness that the changing events of the years warrant.

What those changing events have been, and how they are related to the threefold message, I shall now seek to set forth.

Progressive Steps in Apostasy

It is not hard to understand why historians are in agreement that mid-nineteenth century marks a great dividing point in the history of religious thought. In 1859 Charles Darwin published his book, *Origin of Species*.

This proved to be the most important book of the nineteenth century, for it affected every field of thought—biological, social, political, economic, and last but not least, religious.

Until Darwin's day, the idea of evolution had been held largely as a philosophical speculation, a deduction from highly debatable data. And speculative arguments in the field of philosophy are never too convincing. The uniqueness of Darwin's contribution in 1859 was that he seemed to lift the discussion out of the foggy area of philosophy into the clear sunlight of the science laboratory. Apparently here was the demonstration, scientific and undebatable, that there really is a law of progress, that man and all things on the earth are truly evolving. Almost the closing line of Darwin's *Origin of Species* reads as follows:

"Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one. And that, while this planet has gone circling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." [11]

Twelve years later he published *The Descent of Man* (1874), whose concluding paragraph reads in part thus:

"Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale. And the fact of his having thus risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hope for a still higher destiny in the distant future." [12]

The rest of the paragraph extols the greatness of man and the various exalted powers he possesses. Then, by contrast, he declares in the closing line that, despite all these exalted powers, "man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin." [13]

Here was the climax to which men were brought as they read these two breath-taking volumes by Charles Darwin. Man stood forth as the masterpiece, the end product, of the long, long line of evolution. Man is of lowly origin, but nevertheless he has made vast strides forward and may "hope for a still higher destiny in the distant future." Why should the natural heart of man rebel against a theory like that? It was easy to accept.

Men took great comfort and delight in both the opening and the closing view of man presented in Darwin's picture of an evolving world. They could excuse any of their present shortcomings because of their lowly ancestry, and they could hope for endless progress in the future.

At first the clergy were vigorous in declaring that the theory would lead to atheism. However, science had already come to be viewed, even by ministers, as the source of vast knowledge and as holding the key to the discovery of still greater truths. It was already popular to ask whether or not a certain view was in harmony with science. It was not long before that question began to be asked concerning matters in the religious world.

Thus it came about that one after another of the clergy, desirous to be in harmony with the most advanced thought in the scientific world, and fearful lest religion might not look intellectually respectable, began to seek for some way to harmonize Moses with Darwin. Because of all their past training, they could not think of giving up the Scriptures, but they wished to square their thinking with scientific findings. But this harmonizing attempt did not last long.

Darwin and Christian Doctrines

Darwin's theory touches not simply the doctrine of creation; it affects every major teaching of Scripture. The man who accepts Darwin can find no place for the classic Christian belief in a transcendent God. If all the universe is constantly evolving from the simple to the more complex, then God, if there be a God, is Himself a part of the evolving process. Though Darwin did not sense this at first, those who followed him quickly did.

Logically, the man who accepts Darwin believes in an immanent God, if he believes in God at all. But we have already noted that the idea of an immanent God, one who is everywhere present in nature, is really nothing more than pantheism, "higher pantheism," if you wish to borrow the kindly phrase of one writer, but pantheism nonetheless.

Joseph Le Conte, one of the most prominent early religious apologists for evolution, wrote a book to prove that evolution does not undermine Christian beliefs. But after describing the 'scientific premises on which evolutionary thinking rests, he confesses, "I freely admit that, following up this scientific line of thought alone, we are carried strongly in the direction of pantheism." [14]

In this same connection he admits that "following up this scientific line of thought alone leads to humanity worship or rather to self-worship)." [15] True, he does not accept the charge and seeks ardently to prove that we may still worship God in truth and sincerity, even as our fathers did. But what kind of God is it that we may be permitted to worship and still hold to the evolution theory? His answer is clear and direct, "A God immanent. A God resident in Nature." [16] (Italics supplied.)

He attempts to equate this immanent God with the God of the Scriptures. Later apologists for evolution, more clearheaded or more frank, or perhaps both, have been free to confess that an immanent God, a God resident in nature, is not the God of the Bible.

We need tarry only a moment to discuss the effect of Darwin on the doctrine of prayer. Prayer owes its meaning and force to the idea that we can commune with God as friend with friend, but how can one commune with a God resident in nature, a God who is everywhere in general but nowhere in particular?

Historical Framework of Bible Destroyed

And what happens to the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible? We have noted that when Darwin's theory first appeared, attempts were made to harmonize the Genesis record with evolution. But when such harmonizing attempts failed, those who accepted evolution had to conclude that the Genesis story was myth, and if it was myth, what of the other Bible stories? Thus at one stroke the historical framework of the Bible was destroyed.

Miracles have always been considered a unique feature of the Bible, one of the evidences of God's direct interposition in the affairs of men, one of the proofs Christ offered in behalf of His Messiah ship. Indeed the very idea of a transcendent God implies also the idea of miracles, acts not a part of the ordinary course of nature. Without miracles there can be no creation, according to the Bible definition of creation, no providential guidance of men such as the eleventh chapter of Hebrews portrays, no virgin birth, no resurrection, no ascension, no glorious Second Advent. But the very idea of the reign of natural law without which the evolution theory has no meaning, precludes the miraculous. At one stroke all the miracles of the Bible must be spiritualized away or else declared to be simply myths.

But discarding miracles makes necessary also discarding the great Bible doctrine of the deity of Christ. The Bible presents Christ's whole life as a series of miraculous incidents, and sometimes with these incidents presented as proofs of His divinity. Indeed, if God was manifest in the flesh, we should naturally expect to be confronted with miracles as we examine the record of our Savior's life on earth. Furthermore, if God be viewed as immanent, resident in all nature, then the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ, which is an indispensable part of the doctrine of the deity of Christ, becomes meaningless.

And what of Darwin and the doctrine of sin? Sin is central to the tragedy set forth in Scripture and is the explanation for the plan of salvation, which is the drama of Scripture. But for the evolutionist the word sin describes simply those gross qualities in man that are a holdover from his animal ancestors.

Plan of Salvation Becomes Meaningless

Because Darwin's theory could find no place for the Bible conception of sin, it could find no place for the Bible plan of salvation. If there was no fall in Eden, there is no need of a divine plan to lift men up again. If sin is not really a moral defect, but only a holdover from animal ancestors, there is no need of atonement for sin on Calvary. Why require an atonement for that which is of our essential nature, through an evolutionary process that is God's method of creation? Indeed, why require the death of the Son of God to make possible our escape from the clutches of sin, if a few more evolutionary ages, plus an elevating environment and better education, will eliminate the defects in man that had formerly been known as sin?

The Bible makes plain that not only is the death of Christ necessary to our salvation but also His resurrection. But the theory of atonement that is necessitated by evolution makes the resurrection superfluous. If Christ's death has significance and efficacy simply as a good example, which is the modernist teaching, then the resurrection adds nothing to the power of the example. Thus the man who has accepted the evolutionary conception of the atonement is prepared in advance to discount the importance or even the need of the resurrection. This, in turn, prepares him to accept the claim that there could not literally have been a resurrection, for that would be contrary to the operation of natural law.

What of the Darwinian theory and the doctrine of the literal, personal Second Advent of Christ, which is central to Adventist preaching? The answer is that the doctrine of the Second Advent is ruled out, and for two reasons. First, because it would be an event out of the natural order, a miracle, and miracles are contrary to the uniform operation of the laws of nature. Second, because it runs counter to the evolutionary belief that man is progressing steadily toward perfection, and that all the universe is controlled by the law of progress.

Hence the Darwinian theory could not do other than make meaningless in Christian creeds any reference to eschatology, which is the doctrine of last things, the doctrine which seeks to present the Biblical picture of the final events of earth's history. Evolution thinks always and only in terms of endless ages of never-ceasing change and progress. There cannot, therefore, be a climax to history; there can only be a future to it, a future which presumably will mean constant betterment for man and the world in which he lives.

Churchmen in general were already conditioned to view not unkindly this conception of gradual improvement over a long future period, for they had largely accepted Whitby's doctrine of world conversion, and of constant moral and spiritual improvement in the world for a thousand years preceding Christ's coming.

Moral Standards No Longer Absolute

What happens to the Bible doctrine of an absolute, objective moral code when the evolution theory is accepted? Christianity has ever been distinguished by its declarations that there is a real and an eternal difference between right and wrong, and that God gave to men eternally binding moral standards. Christ told the Jews that Moses permitted them a bill of divorcement because of the hardness of their hearts, but added immediately that this was a departure from the ideal that existed at the creation of the world. Thus the original Edenic world was to be viewed as an exhibit of right moral standards in action, because that Edenic world was the perfect expression of the mind and will of a holy God. But the evolution theory makes meaningless Christ's reference to a perfect creation of God in Eden.

At the outset there were many theologians who were ready to accept the evolution theory in a general way, in order to be intellectually up to date, but who failed to see the ultimate destination to which the logic of evolution led. Indeed they were shocked and scandalized by the conclusions drawn from the theory by such men as the atheist German scholar Haeckel, and the agnostic English scientist Huxley, who called himself "Darwin's bulldog." Such men, either more clear-headed or less inhibited than the early ministerial disciples of Darwin, were quick to point out the ultimate logic of the Darwinian theory. That they were correct in their conclusion that Darwin's theory, with all its associated skeptical premises, undermined the whole structure of orthodox doctrine, the future was soon to reveal.

Higher Criticism Undermines Bible

Let us look now at another factor operating strongly in the last half of the nineteenth century that was vitally affecting religious thought. For some time there had been developing a new historical method of examining ancient records. Many of these records were open to suspicion. Either they had been doctored through the centuries, or else the original writers had written their account of a great war, or of the rise or fall of an empire, from a prejudiced viewpoint. Greek historians, for example, might be presumed to have written ancient history from a Greek viewpoint, to the glory of Greece and the minimizing of the glory of all other peoples. Thus with the historians of other lands of the long ago.

It was not long before this historical method, with its coolly skeptical examination of ancient chronicles, began to be employed on the Bible. Here was a Book that professed to give the history of many nations over a long period of time. Why might not its record of the past also be subject to suspicion? The question seemed to permit of only one answer, in view of the fact that the inquiring scholars

discounted heavily, if not altogether, the teaching that the Scriptures are inspired. By mid-nineteenth century this historical method had begun to be employed on the historical parts of the Bible.

Then came Darwin with his evolution theory, which seemed to provide scientific proof that the opening chapters of the Bible were only a myth. Here was the very confirmation needed for the premise that the Bible record of ancient history should be viewed with the same suspicious eye as all other ancient records were viewed. This approach to the Scriptures, which we today entitle higher criticism, gained rapid acceptance in theological circles. This, I repeat, was due not simply to the plausibility of the premises of the historical method itself but also to the fact that the rising tide of evolution washed away the historical foundations of Scripture.

The higher critics proceeded on the theory that Bible history, like all other history, represents not only the prejudiced viewpoint of the national historian but also the slow growth of the ideas of a people. Various books of the Bible, like the writings of Moses, which professed to have been written at a time when the higher critics declared that the Jewish nation and the world at large had not yet evolved upward to the level of ideas and principles set forth in the writings, were given new dates and attributed to later authors. Consequently the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, became a patchwork of documents, most, if not all of them, dated very much later than the Scriptural record would indicate.

It is immediately evident that certain effects, destructive to Christian theology, flowed from the conclusions of the higher critics. The classic conception of the inspiration of Scripture simply disintegrated.

One of the most distinguishing features of Christianity is that it is a historical religion. In the Scriptures the revelation of God's will to man is not in the form of abstract moralizings or idealistic proverbs. Instead, it is set in the framework of historical incidents. The recital of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is a good illustration of this. This chapter becomes meaningless if the higher critical view is accepted. We cannot be sure that righteous Abel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or any of the others of the ancient worthies ever lived. Rather, we can be sure that they did not live, but were, instead, glorious myths of the Jewish race.

Now the historical part of the Bible is entwined with the prophetic part. Christ came in the fullness of time, and in harmony with certain predictions, predictions that had been made by certain men of God, as the earlier books of the Bible recorded. But if we cannot be sure when those earlier records were written, how can history testify to the truth of prophecy? For example, what becomes of the testimony of Daniel's seventy weeks if Daniel was written long after 457 BC?

The Science of Comparative Religions

Closely related, in some respects at least, to higher criticism, is the science of comparative religions, which rapidly developed in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and ultimately was included in the curriculum of almost all theological seminaries. This science of comparative religions grew out of the theory that Christianity, to a greater or less degree, held many beliefs and viewpoints in common with other religions. This theory, although its first proponents might not have realized it, was really an adaptation to religion of the evolution theory that our world and all things upon it are the result of a slow evolution, an evolution that reflects the interlocking action of all the forces operating in the world.

Furthermore, on the higher critical theory that the Bible is a slow accretion of myths and moralizings recorded in a medley of documents, there was no reason to confine the study of Christianity to the pattern set in Scripture. That Scriptural pattern, of course, requires us to believe that Christianity is unique and stands wholly apart from all other religions, for the Savior it presents is divine, and thus its plan of salvation for man and the world is both divine and unique.

As theologians looked at the Scriptures through the spectacles of their evolution and higher critical theories, they began to see Christianity as simply one of a host of religions that sought to formulate an answer to the problem of man and the universe. Any similarities between its teachings and those of other religions were explained as borrowings from these religions. In strict logic, then, the Christian has perhaps as much to learn from the pagan as the pagan has to learn from the Christian. How that logic has been applied and what effect it has had on missions, we shall later discuss.

Ritschl and Protestant Theology

In a summary of nineteenth-century factors operating to break down classic Protestant thought, the name of a prominent German theologian, Albert Ritschl, must be included." He died in 1889, yet even today his thought is a living factor in the dogmatic constructions of the Church." [17]

He held that the validation of Christian theology is to be found in the realm of the Christian's inner life. He realized that this inner life involves the emotions. He realized, further, that emotions are variable and differ with every man. He therefore sought to anchor religion and the inner religious life to the historical Christ, or rather, to the experience that results from a study of Christ in the historical record of the Scripture.

But, I repeat, the weakness of this beautiful formula is that it is wholly subjective, despite every protestation to the contrary. How can we be sure of our picture of the historical Jesus unless we accept the Scriptures as a valid record? A little later we shall see the outworking of his views in American theology.

Religious Picture at Opening of Twentieth Century

As we enter the twentieth century we find men in every branch of learning employing freely the principles of scientific inquiry, quite unconcerned whether their conclusions might run counter to long-held religious beliefs. We find also a very influential segment of the clergy in seminaries, in pastorates, and in administrative positions, committed, at least in spirit, to evolution and other secular views, and exceedingly desirous to make religion appear intellectually respectable. We find too that such members of the clergy are abandoning the attempt to harmonize the statements of the Bible and the theory of evolution. If science and the Bible differ, the verdict of science must be accepted.

The effect of all this on the Bible and Christian theology as the twentieth century opened was well summed up by a writer in the influential New York Independent in the year 1909:

“When we found that Adam was not made directly from dust and Eve from his rib and that the Tower of Babel was not the occasion of the diversification of languages, we had gone too far to stop. The process of criticism had to go on from Genesis to Revelation, with no fear of the curse at the end of the last chapter. It could not stop with Moses and Isaiah; it had to include Matthew and John and Paul. Every one of them had to be sifted; they had already ceased to be taken as unquestioned, final authorities, for plenary inspiration had followed verbal inspiration just as soon as the first chapter of Genesis had ceased to be taken as true history. The miracles of Jesus had to be tested as well as those of Elijah. The date and purpose of the Gospel of John had to be investigated historically as well as that of the Prophecy of Isaiah; and the conclusion of historical criticism had to be accepted with no regard to the old theologies. We have just reached this condition, and there is repeated evidence that it makes an epoch, a revolution, in theological thought. . . . To this present teaching, which has invaded all our denominations, Jesus is the world’s prime teacher, but it can assert nothing more. There is, it declares, no reasonable proof of His birth from a Virgin, no certainty of a physical resurrection; the Gospels must be analyzed, for they contain mythical elements, non-historical miracles, unverified assertions.” [18]

The Social Gospel

It was in this first decade of the twentieth century that a new phrase gained vogue in the religious world. The clergy began to speak of the social gospel. The briefest explanation of the social gospel is that it is an attempt to remake the kingdoms of this world into the kingdom of God by earthly, political means rather than by the distinctly spiritual method of dealing with individual souls that had formerly been in vogue. There were three major forces, I believe, that contributed to the rise of the social gospel.

1. The industrial revolution, with its mechanization of life and its massing of labor in great industrial centers, with resulting social conditions and environments that were hostile to the development of Christian ideals.
2. The view that man himself is, after all, not so bad, that he needs only better opportunities and better environment, with particular emphasis on environment, in order to evolve into a decent creature.
3. The view that this earth is the world of prime significance to man, for skeptical teachings, as we have discovered, had cast grave doubt on the reality of a world beyond.

One modernist church writer, in commenting on the rapid growth of the social gospel idea among the clergy in the early decades of the twentieth century, remarked:

“The ‘social gospel’ has so far been a life preserver for twentieth century preaching. Ministers, sensitive to the bearing of changed conceptions of the Bible and the conclusions of science and psychology upon their inherited beliefs, were getting hard pressed to find anything to preach which bore creatively upon life. . . .

“The world is mine again, the perplexed preacher might have said when he discovered the social gospel.” [19]

In other words, the social gospel provided a substitute for the everlasting gospel that had been undermined by the evolution theory.

The Appeal to Religious Experience

The opening years of the twentieth century witnessed a search for a new source and center of religious authority. In discussing this I shall quote several statements from a book written in 1928 by Gerald Birney Smith entitled *Current Christian Thinking*, which traces the changes in Christian thought in the last years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth.

When he wrote his book he was professor of Christian theology in the divinity school of the University of Chicago and editor of *The Journal of Religion*. The book was prepared for colleges and seminaries, and was endorsed by the editorial committee of the Religious Book Club, by being placed in a published list of “highly recommended publications. - The then president of the Federal Council of Churches was a member of this editorial committee.

Early in this survey I referred to the German theologian Schleiermacher, and stated that his views on theology, which were tinged with mystical, pantheistic ideas, were to affect Christian thinking seriously a century

later. Smith refers to Schleiermacher’s view that “religion is essentially a profound experience, involving a mystical relationship between the inner life of man and the great mysterious Infinite upon which man is dependent.” [20] Then Smith observes that in America “it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that there was any widespread appreciation of the ideal which Schleiermacher had so long before set forth.” [21]

And why did theologians, very particularly in America, think that they had found in Schleiermacher’s “mysterious Infinite” such wonderful help? Here is the answer that Smith gives:

“Protestantism in recent times has become increasingly dissatisfied with theological contentions. The older denominational distinctions are becoming less sharp. Some bodies which once separated because of what seemed to be irreconcilable theological differences are now finding a way of reuniting. There is a widespread feeling that Protestantism ought to be able to present a more united front against the evils of our day. This desire to put doctrinal disputes into the background has found expression in a new type of theology. The attempt is made to give prominence to those articles of faith which are the expression of fundamental and supposedly universal Christian experience, and thus to appeal to life itself rather than to official authority.” [22]

Note that we are here beginning to see the outworking of ideas set in motion a century before, ideas which have as their distinguishing mark a turning away from the Bible as the infallible guide for the Christian. Now follow closely as Smith shows the subtle transition that took place as theologians began to appeal to a new source of authority in the spiritual realm, called religious experience. He declares:

“The first advocates of the appeal to experience were men who had been brought up under the influence of biblical orthodoxy. Their religious experience, therefore, had been shaped in accordance with what they believed to be biblical doctrines. . . . It was felt by the early advocates of the new method that an appeal to experience would not really change the content of theology. The Bible would still remain the source of doctrine, but the Christian’s experience would furnish a vital means of verifying the doctrines of the Bible and thus would release religious thinking from the externalism of a scholastic method of using the Scripture [that is, using the Scriptures as the literal and infallible guide, as orthodoxy had ever done].” [23]

However, the new generation of theologians, that is, the generation in the early decades of the twentieth century, were not anchored to the Bible, and for reasons already set forth. Hence, as Smith goes on to observe, “the appeal to experience changes theology more than was anticipated by its early advocates.” [24]

Then comes the logical question, which Smith confesses was not anticipated by the first advocates of the method. Just what is religious experience? How shall we distinguish between an experience which wholesomely reflects the reality in relation to which we live and an experience built up from wishes, hallucinations, vague speculations? [25]

The Psychological Study of Religion

At the very time this kind of thinking was shaping up in the religious world, a “significant development” had occurred in the scientific world, the “psychological study of religion.” As Smith observes:

“The influence of this psychological study of religion is strongly in the direction of discrediting the unique features of Christianity, since these may easily be explained as the result of special indoctrination.” [26]

This psychological study of religion dovetailed with the science of comparative religions, which declares that Christianity is simply one expression of the universal longings in the heart and soul of men for religious certainty and satisfaction.

Thus it came to pass that in the early twentieth century theologians increasingly retreated into the inner citadel of Christian experience and holy emotions, hoping thus to be safe from the assaults of rationalists and the conclusions of scientists. But they speedily found the citadel attacked by certain skeptical psychologists who shouted the terrifying battle cry that religious experience and holy emotions are not intrinsically valid proofs of the truth of Christianity but only the end products of special indoctrination. In other words, that theologians had simply been educated to believe certain ideas consistent with the Christian life, and thus their religious experience and emotions corresponded thereto.

One writer, after declaring that the psychological study of religion makes possible an explanation of “many phenomena that formerly seemed inexplicable,” remarks, “Psychologists have thus come very generally to realize that they have no more need of ‘the hypothesis of God’ in their specific task than had La Place in his.” [27]

Theologians reacted to the attack based on the psychological study of religion in one or the other of two ways:

1. They began to agree with their attackers and, in Smith’s words, to “consider all religion as a human quest for the best possible life,” with Christianity simply “one of the many ways in which this religious quest is being prosecuted.” [28]
2. Or else they sought to discover an objective reality to which to anchor their Christian experience—thus to prove that it was not merely the result of indoctrination—without, of course, returning to an infallible Bible.

The “Appeal to Christ”

That brings us to a further development in the early twentieth century known as the “appeal to Christ.” This attempt to give objective reality to religion was built on the theology of Albert Ritschl, the influential German theologian of the nineteenth century, to whom I have already made brief reference. It was an appeal to the historical Christ on the part of those who felt that science and higher criticism had deprived the Scriptures of their divine and authoritative character.

Of course the question that here clamors for answer is this: If we do not take the Scriptures as an inspired record, how can we be sure what Jesus taught and what ideals He stood for? Smith calls attention to the fact that it soon became evident that the question could never be answered to the satisfaction of all, not even to the satisfaction of the various elements in the liberal group in religion.

The end result, therefore, of the endeavor to find a new source and center of religious authority in religious experience, even when that experience is supposed to be anchored to an objective conception of Christ, is most frankly set forth by Smith. He declares that even as modernists came to view the Bible not as an infallible authority but simply as containing certain beautiful ideals, so now “Christians will learn about Jesus, not to make him a formal authority, but rather to gain inspiration for the creative task of constructing theological doctrines.” [29]

Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy

As modernist teachings began to be increasingly prominent in theological seminaries, pastorates, and church administrative offices in the early twentieth century, there developed what is known as the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. Early in the twentieth century a vigorous though ill-defined group of conservatives, who later took the name fundamentalists, began to demand that modernists and all their teachings be cast out of the churches. This controversy became increasingly vigorous for a time, but rapidly died down after 1925.

The far-reaching character of the issues at stake in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy was tersely set forth in a Christian Century editorial in 1924:

“There is a clash here as profound and as grim as that between Christianity and Confucianism. Amiable words cannot hide the differences. ‘Blest be the tie’ may be sung until doomsday but it cannot bind these two worlds together. The God of the fundamentalist is one God; the God of the modernist is another. The Christ of the fundamentalist is one Christ; the Christ of modernism is another. . . . The church, the kingdom, the salvation, the consummation of all things these are one thing to fundamentalists and another thing to modernists. . . . That the issue is clear and that the inherent incompatibility of the two worlds has passed the stage of mutual tolerance is a fact concerning which there hardly seems room for any one to doubt.” [30]

As the controversy came to a climax some fundamentalist leaders declared that if modernists could not be ousted from the control of the churches, then fundamentalists should withdraw. One such leader, answering an interviewer’s question, “What should the Church do?” replied:

“Without delay we should put the evil leaven out, and if, because of ecclesiastical machine control, we can not, follow the Scriptural injunction, ‘Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.’” [31]

However, that cry was never generally sounded, and one by one the founders and the great theological fighters of the Fundamentalist Association died. I think it is not incorrect to say that within a few years after 1925 the only real fighting between fundamentalists and modernists was in the form of guerrilla skirmishes. Modernism had taken over.

Apostasy in Full Flower

In the preceding lecture I sought to show how one after another strange, skeptical ideas were planted in the soil of Protestantism. The theological gardeners assured all men that the harvest from such planting would be more beautiful flowers than ever before seen. At least they were certain that they were setting out the only kind of plants that could hope to thrive in the increasingly chilly climate of this modern scientific age. Were not these plants sturdy

hybrids that the theological gardeners had produced under scientific guidance?

Until about 1930 nothing grieved a modernist more deeply than to suggest that the plants he had so carefully set in the garden of men's minds would produce poisonous flowers.

In this lecture I shall attempt to show that time has proved true the gravest forecasts of conservative Christians as to the evil harvest that would result when these modernist plants came to full flower. For practical purposes we can set the date of that flowering near the end of the third decade of the twentieth century, for by then fundamentalist opposition had quite died down. Let us therefore look at the garden of religion about the year 1930 to see what kind of flowers modernism produced from plants that had grown up out of the soil of nineteenth-century scientific speculation, evolutionary views, higher critical conceptions of the Bible, and the like. And remember that under this nineteenth-century soil was the subsoil of the eighteenth and immediately preceding centuries, down into which had gone the roots of all those lush modernist plants whose flowers we now wish to examine.

A professor in the department of philosophy at Columbia University, writing in 1929, on "The Forces That Are Destroying Traditional Beliefs," said this, in part:

"The faith in science has grown so strong, so self-sufficient, so deeply rooted in the processes of our society, that many of those who feel it have lost all desire to combine it with any other. . . . The philosophies that express their basic interests today are no longer concerned, as they were in the nineteenth century, with vindicating a belief in God and immortality. Those ideas have simply dropped out of any serious attempt to reach an understanding of the world. . . .

"The present conflict of religious faith with science is no longer with a scientific explanation of the world, but with a scientific explanation of religion." [32]

The Complete Denial of God

Let us turn again for a few moments to listen to the testimony of Gerald Birney Smith in his 1928 volume, *Current Christian Thinking*, which, as I have already noted, came from the press with wide acclaim and endorsement by Protestant religious leaders. Keep in mind what has been said concerning the logical effect of the evolution theory on the doctrine of God and how certain theological apologists for evolution insisted that, far from abolishing God, the evolution theory really gave us a new and more stimulating view of Him, albeit an immanent God resident in nature. Says Smith:

"The religious man will, under modern conditions, have many a doubt concerning the objective reality of what the theologians call God. He may, for a time, seek to find satisfaction in purely humanistic aspiration. . . .

"An apologetic for theism is likely to betray more or less clearly the fact that the doctrine stands related to too finished and static a conception of reality [a finished creation as Genesis declares] to seem really convincing to men who think in terms of evolutionary science." [33]

And so Smith, as a spokesman for modernism, informs us that the doctrine of a personal, transcendent God, and the doctrine of a finished creation, as Genesis declares, go hand in hand. Therefore, because the Genesis story of creation seems wholly unconvincing "to men who think in terms of evolutionary science," the personal God of Genesis, and of all the Bible, for that matter, seems unconvincing, unreal, and therefore unnecessary and unbelievable.

In 1930 a writer in *Scribner's*, at that time an influential monthly journal of opinion, discussed the subject of the disappearance of God. Declared this writer:

“A good display of the modern destruction of God by religious leaders may be seen in a little book called ‘My Idea of God.’ The very title shows how unsubstantial God is nowadays. He is the opinion that any devout person holds. . . .

“After I have read it I can think of nothing but the massacre of God that is being made by the best religious thought of the day. . . . The God that used to hear my prayers is disappearing, is being nebulized out of existence.” [34]

A Notable Survey of Scientists

In 1933 a professor of psychology in Bryn Mawr College, James H. Leuba, sent a questionnaire to a wide group of scientists to discover, if possible, whether they believed in God or not. His findings revealed that only 30 per cent of the scientists were “believers in a God moved to action by the traditional Christian worship: supplication, thanksgiving, songs of praise, etc.” In other words, only 30 per cent believed in the kind of God to whom conservative Christians pray.

Dr. Letiba also presented in his report on this 1933 survey a comparative table showing his findings on a similar survey made in the year 1914. In that earlier year the scientists who declared that they believed in God totaled 42 per cent, against the 30 per cent in 1933, “a marked increase in unbelief during the last two decades is thus recorded.”

He couples with this survey of the scientists a survey that he made of students in two colleges, which he identifies only as College A and College B. His conclusion was this:

“It would appear that: (1) The students, in considerable numbers, lose their beliefs as they pass from the freshman to the senior year. (2) During the last twenty years a marked decline in belief has taken place, a decline similar to the one revealed by the statistics of scientists.”

With the belief in a personal God thus largely dissolved, what becomes of the unique status that orthodox Christianity has ever given to Christ? In answer let me quote from an article published in a leading interdenominational religious weekly, in 1931. The article is entitled “How Far May Christians Diverge From Jesus?” The author of the article, A. Bruce Curry, was, at the time of writing, a professor in Union Theological Seminary, one of the most influential seminaries in the United States. Here are his words:

“He [the modern Christian] may develop his religious thought, philosophy, and experience in the light of the best knowledge and insight of himself and his spiritual kindred, past and present. Where he finds himself indebted to Jesus or to later Christianity, he will be glad to make acknowledgment of the fact. But he will be under no initial obligations to align his faith with that of Jesus, or with any one else in the Christian tradition. Nor will he feel that he must impress Jesus into the service and support of his own developing religion. He will recognize that the basis of authority has shifted to the informed insight of the best-qualified individuals and groups.” [35]

Modernism Undercuts Morals

And what proved to be the full flowering of modernism as relates to sin and moral standards?

In the year 1930 a prominent minister wrote an article entitled “The Vanishing Sinner.” The reasons he gives for the vanishing of that theological culprit, the sinner, are illuminating. He reminds us that “the traditional terminology of the church in this matter of sin has been a courtroom vocabulary. We speak of ‘the judgment seat of God,’ ‘the bar of conscience,’ ‘the guilt of sin.’” [36]

But, he explains-

“The courtroom scene no longer has a part in the world view of the man of the street. . . .

“The divine is no longer thought of as the close-up Being before whom man’s misdeeds cast the old sharply defined shadows of guilt. The Creator Spirit. . . is more pervasive but less personal. It is difficult to vision Him on a judge’s scat, holding court.” [37]

The writer of the article gives as a further reason for the vanishing sinner, “the seeming uncertainty of the divine laws which the sinner is accused of violating.” He goes on to explain that the current conception today of law and morals is that they change with the generation, that what is right in one generation is wrong in another, or vice versa, that all moral codes are simply the expression of the best judgment of the men of that day.

The final reason for the vanishing sinner, says this prominent metropolitan preacher, is to be found in the pulpit, for “the denunciation of sin has lessened in passion and volume. . . . The churches have adopted a hush policy regarding the doctrine of depravity, and are becoming ‘a fellowship of natural amiability.’ A rotarian gospel takes the place of repentance.” [38]

Under the title “The Lost Note” a Presbyterian editor in the year 1933 discusses the absence in present-day preaching of any strong indictment of sin. Says he: “Speech after speech is made by able men under Christian auspices, and there is no mention whatever of sin, and often the mention of God or Christ is omitted.” [39]

He rightly adds that “if ‘redemption through Christ’s blood and the forgiveness of our trespasses’ is no longer to us a momentous and supreme fact, we have made for ourselves another gospel.”

In 1934 S. Parkes Cadman, outstanding Protestant spokesman, delivered an address at Oberlin College, in which he discussed the malign forces at work today, such as corruption in public office, crime waves, and immorality. He declared that it would be impossible to determine all the causes for these evils, “but we can confidently list one of them as undeniable. It is the loss of that God-consciousness which has always been a stabilizing force in the individual, the community, and the nation.” [40]

In 1925 Edwin G. Conklin, at that time in the forefront of scientific authorities, made this frank admission:

“The decline of faith in the supernatural origin of man and of ethics, the decreasing fear of hell or hope of heaven, and the increased freedom of thought and action brought about by science and education, have led, in some instances, to a general weakening of the ethical code.” [41]

The attitude of scientific men, in view of such a damaging admission, is simply this: We realize that the traditional morality was built on a belief in a God who rules in the heavens and to whom men are directly accountable, and that while men believed such an idea they were provided with a basis for morals. But evolutionary science has proved all this unbelievable. The results to morals has sometimes been bad, we confess, but that cannot be helped. We must simply seek till we find a new basis for morals.

Modernism and Foreign Missions

And what has modernism done to foreign mission work? In the late 1920’s, which were years of great prosperity in America, various publications, religious and otherwise, began to call attention to a very startling fact in church statistics. It seems that many of the large religious bodies in America were suffering a steady decline in gifts for foreign missions despite the fact that these religious bodies had gained in membership at home, and despite the fact that year by year, during the 1920’s, prosperity was increasing. Prof. K. S. Latourette, for many years a teacher at Yale University and an eminent authority in church history, declared in 1928:

“Something is happening to foreign missions. So at least church papers are telling us, and so even a cursory reading of the scanty items in our newspapers would lead us to suspect. Those who are best informed declare that little short of a revolution is in progress.” “In 1926 the amount given to six of the major American mission boards was between six and seven million dollars less than in the peak years. . . . It is significant that the number of students annually deciding to devote their lives as missionaries has fallen more than half in the past six or seven years. . . . just at this time, then, when Protestant missions are facing elsewhere a more serious set of problems than has confronted them for a generation, they are undercut at home by a declining support, wavering convictions, and new divisions. It is quite the most alarming situation with which they have had to deal in the century and a quarter since they became important.” [42]

Under the breath-taking title “Will Foreign Missions Die With This Generation?” a former editor of the Christian Herald wrote an article in 1929 in which he reminds us that “foreign missions began as an evangelistic enterprise. It grew because it remained evangelistic.” Then he adds:

“It is probable that the world-wide business of establishing the supremacy of Jesus Christ and His ideals is slowing down simply because many church people lack the conviction that Jesus and His ideals are supreme.” [43]

Mission Recruits Becoming Scarce

Not the least of the mission problems has been the decreasing number of mission recruits. Many of these recruits have been drawn from the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. An editorial in the Christian Advocate in January, 1928, described, in part, the Student Volunteer Movement convention that had just been held in the city of Detroit and to which youthful delegates had come from schools all over the country:

“It is noted by some who watched the Detroit meeting that the ready and confident response to the call to the mission field came chiefly from students whose theological views were most nearly in line with those of the past. The old-fashioned theology, with its clear-cut teachings regarding sin and salvation through faith in a divine Christ, still, it seems, supplies an adequate motive to lead generous youth to dedicate his life to the fulfillment of our Lord’s commission. On the other hand, those who have modified and nebulous views of the personality of God, the divinity of Christ, and the efficacy of the remedy for sin which was revealed in His life and death, are prepared to criticize others, but not to surrender themselves.” [44]

In 1930 a group of thirty-five influential laymen, drawn equally from seven denominations, set out to study the problems of foreign missions. In September, 1932, they prepared and published an extended and much-discussed report entitled *Re-thinking Missions*.

This report declared that there was a continuing place for foreign missions. But the kind of foreign mission work that it endorsed is a rather pale replica of the fervent mission program that was launched long years ago and has been carried on by evangelical missionaries. An endeavor is made to show, among other things, that Buddhism, Confucianism, et cetera, contain great truths, and that the endeavor of the missionary should be to take advantage of the combined good things of all religions in bringing help to people in all lands. In the section discussing the “Changes Affecting Missions, the report observes:

“Western Christianity has in the main shifted its stress from the negative to the affirmative side of its message; it is less a religion of fear and more a religion of beneficence. It has passed through and beyond the stage of bitter conflict with the scientific consciousness of the race over details of the mode of creation, the age of the earth, the descent of man, miracle and law, to the stage of maturity in which a free religion and a free science become inseparable and complementary elements in a complete world-view. Whatever its present conception of the

future life, there is little disposition to believe that sincere and aspiring seekers after God in other religions are to be damned: it has become less concerned in any land to save men from eternal punishment than from the danger of losing the supreme good.” [45]

On November 20, 1935, the *Christian Century*, influential modernist weekly, published an article from a professor in the divinity school of the University of Chicago under the title “I Don’t Want to Christianize the World!” I quote briefly:

“I simply do not hold the view expressed by Dr. John R. Mott, in his ‘Decisive Hour of Christian Missions’-and still, I suppose, the view held by the great majority of sponsors of the missionary enterprise-that ‘Christianity. . . is the only religion for all mankind.’ I believe that there are other religions which will meet the needs of other men, just as there are other cultures and other forms of government than ours that will meet their needs. I have no more desire to ‘Christianize’ the world than I have to ‘Americanize’ it.” [46]

The professor adds immediately, “This is, indeed, a very different view from that which I once held.” The reasons he offers for his change of view are the very ones that we have been considering.

This article is followed immediately, in the journal, by one written by the editor, entitled “Do I Want to Christianize the World? Yes!” But his idea of Christianizing is strangely different from that held by orthodox missionaries of the days gone by. His is the modernist view of missions, that there is good in all religions. We simply share with them what we have to offer, and to that extent Christianize the world.

And all of this minimizing of missions, this shrinking of mission recruits, was taking place while certain great international mission congresses were proclaiming the primacy of Christianity and the importance of an expanded mission program.

A Summary of Changed Theological Thinking

A professor in a theological seminary, writing in 1936, summarizes the changed theological viewpoint over a fifty-year period. He declares that a half century ago “there was a body of religious truth generally recognized as orthodoxy.” [47] Then he states what has happened to these major doctrines. The doctrine of the divinity of Jesus no longer rests, as it once did, “upon his virgin birth, his miracles, and his physical resurrection. These days it would rest on his moral character, his spiritual insight, his nearness and likeness to God, and his influence upon the spiritual life of the world since his day.” [48]

He asks next, “How is it with the doctrine of atonement?” And answers: “Most people probably have no real doctrine of it at all. . . . What is sure is that the atonement is not central in theology these days as it was fifty years ago. Books are still written about it, but not so many. Those that are written do not come passionately to its defense, as if salvation depended upon it.” [49]

He goes on to say that “in most recent statements of faith. . . . two items are absent which were usually included fifty years ago; they are the fallen estate of man and the idea of heaven and hell. . . .

“As to miracles, there is little discussion at the present time. . . . We now try to explain them or even to explain them away.”

He gives special attention to the effect on Christian doctrine of the theory of evolution and the theories of Bible criticism. Note his words:

“First, as to evolution. Its most obvious application was to the biblical stories of creation. The older of us will remember the earlier attempts to harmonize these stories with the new idea. . . . It was soon apparent that this would not do. The question was finally solved, or rather dissolved, by the progress of biblical criticism.

“The next and larger application of evolution was to the idea of God. If the world and man had grown, if there didn’t seem to be any place where or time when God stepped in from the outside, then God must be inside the process [a pantheistic God] or disappear entirely. . . .

“The change that has come over our thought of the Bible is familiar to most of us and requires no extended comment. It began, naturally, with the Old Testament. At the beginning of our period the higher criticism was just appearing over the horizon. . . .

“Biblical scholarship naturally passed from the Old Testament to the New Testament. . . .

“Summing up this matter of the Bible, the views now held render obsolete all discussion of the inspiration of the Bible, verbal or otherwise, and all such discussion seems to have ceased.” [50]

This leads him on to the following conclusion: “We have little, almost nothing, left of the orthodoxy with which we started out fifty years ago.”

Though this writer happened to be setting down his thoughts in the year 1936, I am sure he would agree, for the evidence is clear, that the picture he presents was one that had already come clearly into focus several years before that date. In that picture we see modernism in full flower.

And what has been the effect upon the spiritual life of Christian men and women who have sat under the ministry of those committed to these modernist views? A partial but startling answer is found in the waning interest in foreign missions, which I have already discussed. In 1928 the pastor of a large Congregational church wrote two articles under the general title “A Modernist’s Criticism of Modernism.” His criticism is extended and withering, even though he seeks to soften it with occasional declarations as to the intellectual gains of modernism. I quote briefly from the second article:

“If the peril of conservatism is intolerance, the peril of Liberalism is indifference. Freedom of thought tends to become absence of thought. It is easy to pass from the affirmation that there is truth in all forms of belief to the affirmation that all beliefs are equally true, and then go on to say that it does not make much difference what one thinks. Religion is very confusing; why think of it at all?” [51]

Into this mood of spiritual apathy have men been brought as they sat under modernist preaching. And apathy is but one step removed from apostasy, as the author of the article frankly confesses.

Modernism Challenged by Humanism

Modernism, bold and assured, had no more than come to its place of dominance in the late 1920’s than it was confronted with three grave challenges. The first of these was a left-wing school of religious thought called humanism.

Humanists argued that inasmuch as modernism called for following scientific methods in discovering truth, and inasmuch as science is quite unable to discover any God, or any evidence of heaven, why not frankly admit that the idea of God and heaven are dead? Why not, in turn, frankly declare that this earth is our home, and that humanity, viewed collectively, must find in itself its only hope of salvation and betterment, that indeed in humanity must be found the only true object of worship. Hence the use of the word humanist.

Humanists jeered at their fellow modernists who failed to go all the way with them, declaring that they lacked the courage of their beliefs.

The rather sudden burgeoning of this humanist movement both frightened and embarrassed the great host of modernist churchmen. There was embarrassment because the humanists contended that the ultimate logic of modernism demanded the complete renunciation of God and the worship of humanity instead. Fundamentalists had been saying just that for years. Now, behold, there rises up a radical wing of modernism to admit the very contention of fundamentalists!

There was fright in modernist ranks because, though they admitted much of the force of the humanist argument—they could hardly do otherwise—they were terrified at the thought of going the whole distance. They illustrated in their lives that baffling, but sometimes encouraging fact that the consent a man’s mind may give over a period of years to the logic of a certain kind of reasoning, may be quite different from the deep, though ill-defined, convictions that control his heart.

The premises on which modernists built when they desired to make religion intellectually respectable, through acceptance of evolution and related skeptical thoughts, required them to vaporize God, to diffuse Him throughout all nature in a pantheistic way. But it is hard, even for a mind rigidly disciplined and shackled by false reasoning, to overwhelm completely the inner witness of the heart that testifies to the existence of a God who is the explanation of all things. Only thus, I believe, can we explain why modernists in general halted at the edge of the atheistic abyss and refused to affirm that there is no God, that there is no world beyond, and that earth, and earth alone, is our home.

Of the gravity of the crisis produced in religious circles by the humanist wing of modernism, John Herman Randall, Jr., in the *Christian Century* of November 11, 1931, observed: "A generation ago the focus of controversy was the defense of Genesis against an encroaching 'Darwinism.' Today it is the defense of some kind of God against 'materialism, atheism, and humanism.'" [52]

The writer of those lines gave no evidence that he believed there was a causal connection between Darwinism a generation ago and "atheism and humanism" today. Undoubtedly he saw no such connection. But the actual facts demanded that he put the two in the sequence they are given. We may be permitted, in the light of the evidence already presented, to see in the atheism and humanism of 1931 the end result of the "encroaching 'Darwinism'" of a generation before.

The Depression Challenges Modernism

I said a moment ago that humanism failed to capture the great body of modernists because of the deep, intuitive feeling in the hearts of virtually all men that there is a God, and that there is a world beyond. But that was not the only reason humanism failed to carry modernism to the final end of the skeptical road, and that further reason brings us to the second great challenge to modernism that developed almost at the same time. I refer to the great world depression that began in the early 1930's. At first men reasoned that it was something transient, and that prosperity was just around the corner. But it soon became evident that the great depression was an inevitable aftermath of the world war of 1914-1918.

When that great war broke, it shocked intellectuals in general and modernist churchmen in particular. A world war, vast in scope, murderous beyond the imagination of man, and devastating to all the treasures of the civilized world, simply did not fit into the theory that man is an embryo angel and that the world, by some great cosmic law of progress, is moving inevitably onward and upward. When the war ended, modernist churchmen wished to shake off the memory of it as one would wish to forget a nightmare, for the memory of such a war could result only in constant conflict with the idea of world progress. And after all, was this not a war to end all wars, and had not a League of Nations been set up to solve all future problems? Perhaps the war was the last convulsion of an old world that was almost ready to give birth to a new?

Thus did men beguile themselves into misinterpreting the true implications of the war, as regards both its revelation of the evil heart of man and its warning of greater troubles ahead. But the depression changed all this. As hunger and wretchedness began to gnaw at men's souls, and the evidence multiplied that the depression stemmed from the world war, the beautiful vision of world progress began to fade.

The import of this was clearly set forth by a well-known scientific authority in 1933:

"The collapse of the faith in 'Progress' has affected the Western world more profoundly, I should say, even than the nineteenth-century collapse of faith in the literal truth of the Bible. . . . The faith in 'Progress' implied a whole philosophy of life, a whole theory of conduct. . . . The collapse of the faith meant the collapse of the philosophy and the ethic: which meant, in its turn, that men and women were left, not only without an incentive to action, but also without any map or guide, however imperfect, in the midst of a world of obscure chaos." [53]

Into this "obscure chaos" the peoples of the world moved increasingly in the 1930's. And amid such chaos the self-sufficient and pompous arguments of the humanists seemed ludicrously and pathetically unimpressive. Indeed, there began to arise in the hearts of all modernists most clamorous questions as to the validity of some of their assumptions, and as to the worth of some of the scientific premises on which they had so confidently built. It began to dawn on some of them that they had been promoting a fair-weather religion that could not help men who were plunged into an "obscure chaos."

Modernist Heart Searching

For these and other reasons liberals began to do a very great deal of heart searching in the 1930's. Their distress became only the greater when the depression merged into the second world war, and the second world war climaxed in the explosion of an atomic bomb. Modernism had idolized science, had considered that the scientists' approach to all knowledge was much more worth while than any approach employed by the prophets or apostles. Science, indeed, was to be the main agent in producing that ever-better world, that kind of heaven on earth, to which modernists looked forward. Now, here was science providing, in the second world war, a

vastly larger and more terrifying proof that its discoveries were producing a hell on earth. Scientists had reached to the inner secrets of the atom and had brought forth, not a God resident within, but a blinding power of destruction.

It is no exaggeration to say that the most destructive impact of the atomic bomb was not in the world of things but in the world of ideas. It was not only the city of Hiroshima that was destroyed but the idea of progress, or whatever remained of the idea. Never before in the intellectual history of man has an idea so important to the whole structure of men's intellectual life, so important to the whole fabric of philosophy, an idea held so long and with such increasing fervency and affection, been so suddenly and so completely swept from the minds of men.

A secular writer in 1946 makes this far-reaching admission:

“There was, until recently, widely current in liberal spirits a faith in the infinite perfectibility of human institutions. All that was needed was first to clear away inherited stupidities and traditional follies, as Voltaire suggested, and to bring the clear light of intelligence to play upon the problems of mankind, from illness and crime to government and business and law. . . .

“It seems quite clear by now that human intelligence may span oceans in hours and speak to distant continents in an instant. But the happiness dreamed of, the good society, the heaven on earth seems no whit nearer than it was in Greece, which had no science at all in the modern sense. Everyone who has watched the changing climate of feeling has seen scientific Utopianism fade.” [54]

How strangely different this sounds from what was once heard so confidently on every side concerning the inevitable progress of man!

The bleak depression, which so effectively challenged modernist utopianism, struck a deadly blow at humanism. The second World War was a further blow. It is not too much to say that humanism virtually died of malnutrition during the depression.

Neo-orthodoxy Challenges Modernism

Largely as a result of two world wars and the depression, there developed a third challenge to modernism in the form of a school of religious thought known generally as neo-orthodoxy. It is difficult to do justice to this third factor that challenges modernism, because it is not quite possible to define it sharply. In the first place it is not a tightly knit movement or school of religious thought. But it is nevertheless significant. It began to take shape in European theological circles after the first world war. Karl Barth, who had trained for the ministry under ultra-modernist German professors, found his theories of man and the world suffering severely under the devastation produced during the years 1914-18. His feelings were quickly shared by others, outstanding among these being Emil Brunner. Thus on the Continent there had already developed in the 1920's a school of religious thought that took an increasingly gloomy view of the two most primary tenets of modernism: the idea of progress and the perfectibility of man.

Not till the depression descended on America did theologians in this country really begin to give any serious attention to such doleful views. But during the last twenty years an increasing number of them have allied themselves in varying degrees with neo-orthodoxy. Unquestionably such theologians have experienced some very great readjustments in their views of God, of the world, of man, and of the Bible. That is evident. After talking with certain of them my first feeling is that they are not far from the kingdom. I believe them when they say they pray to a transcendent, personal God, that they believe man is evil, and that God's grace is necessary to his redemption. Yet as I think further on their declarations and inquire for their premises, I am persuaded that they are not returning to orthodoxy. The most that can be said is that they are a theological hybrid. Some keen observers, both in the modernist and in the conservative camps, are not willing to grant even that much.

Charles Clayton Morrison, one of the most incisive of modernist writers, and formerly editor of *Christian Century*, wrote in that journal in 1950 a series of articles in which he convincingly developed the thesis that “neo-orthodoxy is an extension and development of the spirit and method of liberalism.” He showed that in common with liberalism, neo-orthodoxy accepts “the higher criticism of the Bible and, in general, the findings of modern science.” [55] This is another way of saying that it accepts the theory of evolution.

Not long ago Cornelius Van Til, a professor in the conservative Westminster Theological Seminary, wrote a scholarly book entitled *The New Modernism*, and subtitled *An Appraisal of the Theology of Barth and Brunner*. As just stated, these men are the leading figures in Continental neo-orthodoxy. Van Til declares that these two theologians use certain key words in such a way as to create the impression that they are the exponents of old-time orthodoxy. For example, they use the word “transcendence” in connection with their description of God. That would seem to suggest the historic Christian conception of God. But, declares Van Til, they use the word “transcendence” in harmony with the conception given to it by the German philosopher Kant and his school of thought, and that “such a meaning has nothing but the name in common with the historic doctrine of transcendence of Reformation theology.” [56]

You will recall that early in this series of studies I called attention to the fact that the philosopher Kant and his school, though they started out to defend religion, ended up by setting forth pantheistic ideas of God.

Van Til declares that “according to Barth and Brunner there has been no historical Adam whose deeds at the beginning of time have had a far-reaching influence on the whole course of history.” The theology of these two outstanding theologians, whose particular brand of neo-orthodoxy is known as crisis theology, is quite in accord with, if it does not actually require, the modern evolutionary notion of the origin of man.”

Van Til continues, “What we have witnessed in recent years is merely the appearance of a new form of modern theology.” As regards the question of creation, he adds this observation:

“It is Barth’s critical theory of being that makes him reject the orthodox doctrine of temporal creation, creation Ex Nihilo. Adopting this doctrine in words, as he adopts all the doctrines of historic Christianity in words, he denies it in fact.” [57]

To keep the record straight, I should add that some American neo-orthodox theologians with whom I have talked challenge Van Til’s sweeping conclusions.

A modernist divinity school professor, after discussing neo-orthodox liberals, makes this remark, which probably comes as near stating the matter as we can hope for:

“There is no evidence that they wish to return to the dogmatism of any of the orthodoxies, be they Calvinist or Lutheran or Roman Catholic or whatever. Some of the reformed liberals are called neo-orthodox by the unrepentant and unregenerate modernists. But this propagandistic name should give no comfort to the orthodox party men. As a matter of fact, it does not.” [58]

In the Protestant religious world we find at mid-century a chastened modernism, unsure, but in large degree unrepentant; neo-orthodoxy, small in numbers, but vigorous in conviction; and conservatives, also relatively small in numbers. In the secular world we find that intellectuals of all kinds are quite completely committed to the scientific viewpoint, particularly so in the great educational centers, which means that God scarcely comes into their thinking. That is the picture as of the present hour.

I cannot close this third lecture without drawing a few lessons from the apostasy here described.

If this apostasy teaches us anything, it teaches us that the parts of Christianity are all interlocked. You cannot undermine or abandon one part without endangering the whole structure. That should be true, of course, of any logically knit system of belief. Canright declared, on leaving his, that he could not give up part of his Adventist faith and hold on to the rest. He had to hold all or none. He never made a truer statement. It is imperative that we guard every part of our belief.

If this apostasy teaches its anything, it teaches us that doctrines, well defined and explicitly stated, have a most important place in the life of the church. Modernists frankly confess that it was the weakening of doctrinal belief that paved the way for new and erroneous ideas to come in. Thus they fulfilled the last-day prophecy that men would “not endure sound doctrine.” 2 Timothy 4:3. When a worker says to me that his hope and salvation are in Christ and not in doctrines, I can agree with what he really means, but I always wish he would say it a little differently. It is unquestionably true that in Christ alone is found salvation. But to set Christ against Christian doctrine in the plan of salvation is to create a false antithesis.

Modernists assert their belief in Christ. But what do they mean when they say they believe in Him? I cannot know until they tell me precisely what they believe and teach concerning Christ. And when they have done this I find that their conception of Christ and His salvation is worlds apart from mine. But what disclosed that difference? Their statement as to what they teach regarding Christ, in other words, their doctrine of Christ. My doctrine of Christ is different from theirs, and so long as I hold that doctrine I hold to a concept of Christ that enables me to secure from Him the salvation that the Bible sets forth. I pray God that I shall never abandon that concept of Christ that is embodied in my doctrine of Christ. Here apply the words of Holy Writ: “Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.” Titus 2:1.

If we are to have a stable and satisfying religion, we must think straightly in our minds as well as feel deeply in our souls. I grant that a doctrine, in and of itself, can provide me no comfort, no protection from the storms of life. Neither can a set of blueprints of a house provide me comfort, or protection from the literal storms that beat. So long as I simply hold onto the blueprints, and gain nothing more than a mental picture from them, I secure no protection. But if I exercise my will and put my heart into the task of possessing for my own self a home, those blueprints will enable me to make that home what it ought to be. Thus with doctrines. So long as I simply hold to the doctrines as so many mental concepts, I have no salvation. But if by faith and the exercise of my God-given free will I appropriate to my heart the divine Savior who is so clearly revealed in those doctrines, I shall be saved.

Let us never forget that our Adventist doctrines were forged in the furnace of bitter opposition from enemies and apostates in the early days of this movement, when it was imperative that we know of a certainty and most precisely what we believed. We as verily need to know today, in this age of apostasy, what we believe and why we believe it. And by Advent doctrines I mean the basic elementary teachings that have distinguished us from the beginning. We need not minimize doctrine in order to magnify Christ.

If this apostasy teaches us anything, it teaches us that we need to be set for the defense of the faith once delivered unto the saints. We live in a world of apostasy, often in most subtle form. We need to be prepared more definitely than ever before to give an answer to every one that asks us a reason for the hope that is in us. I cannot escape the conviction that many of us, burdened from morning till night with the business of the Lord, have but small realization of the intellectual and religious climate in the world around us. I never make a visit to an outside center of learning, either secular or theological, without being impressed anew with the greatness of the gap between our views and those of others around us. And also how subtle is the reasoning employed by them in support of their views, either religious or scientific.

I advocate no militant campaign, no invectives, no reckless denunciations. But after studying the endless works of those who have produced the apostasy today, and after talking with numbers of the theological spokesmen of Modernism, I would be false to my sense of duty if I did not declare with all the earnestness of my soul that I feel we should train our ministry more fully, more adequately than ever before. I am not on the payroll of our Theological Seminary. But I thank God every time I think of what it can do to prepare our ministry more adequately to meet the issues of today. Let us not have less study, but more, on the part of our ministry. Let us have more research, more investigation, that will strengthen our faith and establish our heavenly teachings. The times demand it.

Preaching the Threefold Message More Fully

In order to present an adequate historical background for an appraisal of the threefold message, it is necessary to add to our survey of religious apostasy a survey of certain developments of modern times. I think of three that impinge on the prophetic aspect of the threefold message: (1) the trend toward church union, (2) the growing power of Rome, (3) the decline of liberty in the world. Let us consider them in order.

1. The Trend Toward Church Union

First, the trend toward church union. Differences in doctrinal views were largely responsible for the separate religious bodies in Protestantism. But when the Bible began to lose its unique status as a wholly inspired book, the churches began to lose interest in doctrines. And as such interest lessened, a certain kind of toleration between churches resulted, a toleration that grew out of the feeling that there was nothing really worth fighting for in the field of doctrine. With doctrinal walls breaking down between denominations, the greatest obstacle to the union of churches broke down.

Then came the great depression, with darker days following, to hasten the trend toward church union. Churchmen began to appeal for union in order to secure for Christianity an added strength to meet the threatening evils of what they began to describe as a new Dark Age.

In America a number of religious bodies have been organically merged with other religious bodies. The same has been true in other countries. There was also created the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, now merged into the National Council of Churches. Today some of the major bodies in this federation are seriously exploring the possibility of an actual union of all Protestantism in America.

More recently there was crystallized a long-planned World Council of Churches, which seeks to embrace all of non Roman Catholic Christendom. In 1938, when plans for this world council were definitely taking shape, the official organ of the Federal Council of Churches declared editorially:

“A new mood is abroad in the churches—a uniting instead of a divisive mood. There is a deepened awareness of the fact that the very nature of the Church, as the one Body of Christ, requires unity. There is also a heightened realization that the world situation which confronts all the churches today is a clarion summons to unity.” [59]

Indeed so strong was this “new mood,” even in 1938, when that editorial was written, that in January of the next year, at a meeting of the provisional committee of the World Council, the following action was taken:

“The chairman was authorized to write to the Vatican giving information about the formation of the World Council and expressing the hope that in view of their common interest in opposing widespread secularism and paganism there might be at least some measure of Roman Catholic cooperation in certain aspects of the council’s work.” [60]

The council was finally created in 1948, at an impressive meeting held in Amsterdam, Holland, to which came church dignitaries from most of non-Roman Catholic Christendom. The next is to be held in 1954 in the United States.

The World Council and the Second Advent

A special committee that has been studying the theme for this 1954 meeting has made available to church leaders a preliminary report. Unless this report is discarded or materially revised, the coming World Council session will discuss the relation of Jesus Christ to the life of the church, past, present, and future. This report includes a discussion of the doctrine of the coming of Christ as the hope of man.

But though the report uses the phrase “the coming of Christ,” and even borrows Christ’s words as found in Matthew 24, it leaves the whole matter of the Second Advent distressingly out of focus. The framers of the report confess that they do not know how Christ will come or just what He will accomplish by His coming, to say nothing of being in complete ignorance as to when He will come.

Indeed, there were some theologians, particularly in the United States, where the optimistic idea of an earthly heaven still lingers, who were quite certain that the placing of an emphasis on the Second Advent marked a backward step. They feared that it would divert the minds of churchmen from the present problems of the world. Some American theologians frankly declared that they really did not know what the report meant when it spoke of the Second Coming.

This report of the special committee of the World Council of Churches reveals that as regards the Second Advent, the climax of God’s plan for man’s salvation, many theologians sense the need of the revival of that doctrine, but seem strangely ignorant concerning it. [61]

2. The Growing Power of Rome

Let us look now at the growing power of Rome. The Papacy received a mighty increase of power as the result of the first world war. Someone has observed that the only victor in that war was the Catholic Church. Before the war began there were fourteen nations to which papal envoys were accredited. At the close of the first world war the number had increased to thirty-two.

In 1929 Mussolini and the papal secretary of state signed a Political Treaty, Concordat, and Financial Agreement, which redressed the wrongs that the Papacy declared Victor Emmanuel had committed against it in 1870, and changed the Pope’s status from that of prisoner in the Vatican to that of a free and sovereign ruler, the king of Vatican City.

A few months after the signing of the treaty, the Pope, in addressing Catholic journalists of Italy, described the year 1929 as “this moment, so historic, so important, that it stands between the past and the future; which closes the past and opens the future.” [62]

Probably one of the greatest proofs of the increasing power of the Papacy is the growth of the Catholic Church in America. The United States emerged from the first world war unquestionably the most powerful nation in the world and also the richest. It is understandable that Rome should look to America as the land of promise. It is not necessary to list the various ways in which the Catholic Church in the United States has sought to gain influence and power, for more than sufficient evidence presents itself on every side and is common knowledge to all Seventh-day Adventists.

I should mention one startling piece of evidence, President Roosevelt’s appointment of Myron C. Taylor, in 1939, as American envoy to the Vatican. Well might the Christian Century say in editorial comment on the appointment: “The dispatch of Mr. Taylor to the Vatican is of ill omen to the neutrality and religious freedom of the United States.” [63]

It is a significant fact that despite all the protests from Protestant circles, President Roosevelt, and then later President Truman, continued to maintain an envoy at the Vatican. At the moment the matter is clouded, and no one knows exactly what is in the President’s mind concerning future relations with Rome. That must be left in the field of speculation.

But it is no speculation to say that in these years following the second world war, Rome has greatly enhanced its standing and is easily one of the most strategic centers of international affairs.

Conversions to Rome

A unique proof of the power of Rome is found in the conversion of certain intellectuals to the Roman Catholic Church. Intellectuals today are notoriously indifferent to all religion, yet there is a sufficient number of such men joining the Catholic Church year by year to warrant giving the matter some consideration. There can be little doubt that one great reason stands out above all others in explanation of the conversion of such men to Roman Catholicism. Thomas Huxley was right in his understanding of human nature when he declared that men long for some sure authority that they can accept and that brings to an end their arduous and often baffling search for truth and certainty in living.

A writer who is a professor in a denominational college declared in the early depression years:

“For many students, the attempt to live without standards of conduct or religious beliefs involves a mental strain so unbearable that they are ready to believe and follow any religious guide who assumes an air of certitude. It is precisely the most skeptical students who are the most apt to yield to a sudden attack of credulity, for the simple reason that it is they who feel the lack of religious certitude most painfully.” [64]

The same writer immediately added this illuminating footnote:

“More than once I have been surprised, at the end of a conversation with a radically skeptical student, to have him ask me an obviously wistful question about the claims of the Roman Catholic Church.”

Protestantism has so largely surrendered authoritative teachings for and speculations that it has little appeal for those who seek spiritual certainty. Under the title “Protestant Preaching: Pagan or Christian?” a Protestant minister wrote an article in which he belabored his fellow ministers for turning from the eternal verities of revealed religion to the discussion of questions that can provide no help for men’s souls. The concluding paragraph of his article shows the relation of this situation to the question of conversions to Catholicism:

“I hold no brief for the Roman Catholic Church. It would be impossible for me intellectually to accept its teaching. But, if Roman Catholicism wins ultimately, it will be because men and women, tired in soul, stand ready to forget its many archaic remnants of the past, and kneel before the Altar, where for them an avenue may lead to the presence of their God. . . . The Roman Catholic is constantly told that his soul demands worship of its God, while the Protestant runs around among his churches to hear ‘Revelation A., who is a brilliant and popular preacher.’ He goes, like his pagan brother, to attach himself ‘for a while’ to his favorite philosopher.” [65]

Mrs. White’s Prophetic Words

Place alongside this a statement made by Mrs. White many years ago, which has proved to be prophetic:

“A day of great intellectual darkness has been shown to be favorable to the success of the papacy. It will yet be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is equally favorable for its success. In past ages, when men were without God’s word, and without the knowledge of the truth, their eyes were blindfolded, and thousands were ensnared, not seeing the net spread for their feet. In this generation there are many whose eyes become dazzled by the glare of human speculations, ‘science falsely so called;’ they discern not the net, and walk into it as readily as if blindfolded. God designed that man’s intellectual powers should be held as a gift from his Maker, and should be employed in the service of truth and righteousness; but when pride and ambition are cherished, and men exalt their own theories above the word of God, then intelligence can accomplish greater harm than ignorance. Thus the false science of the present day, which undermines faith in the Bible, will prove as successful in preparing the way for the acceptance of the papacy, with its pleasing forms, as did the withholding of knowledge in opening the way for its aggrandizement in the Dark Ages!” [66]

Through the centuries Christians have looked to one or the other of two sources of authority, the Bible or the church, by which is meant the Catholic Church. The controversy over whether the Bible or the church is the supreme authority has been the very crux of the conflict between Rome and Protestantism. Only to the extent that Protestantism has set forth the Bible as the very voice of God speaking to us, has she been able to offer to men that which satisfies the deepest longing of their souls, a sure authority.

It is in the light of this that we can see the sinister import of the modern apostasy, which has caused increasing multitudes of Protestant church members, to say nothing of hosts of non church members, to view the Bible as a mixture of folklore and beautiful platitudes. We speak often of completing the Reformation. It would perhaps be more exact to speak of starting the Reformation all over again. Rome’s Counter Reformation in the latter part of the sixteenth century, to recover Europe for the Papacy, never struck so deadly a blow at Protestantism as did the evolutionist-modernist movement that got under way in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In other words, the modern apostasy in Protestantism has paved the way for a revival of Rome’s power.

Today the United States is the outstanding power in the political world, and Rome, in the religious world. Both have a common enemy, they believe, in Communism, which fact will most surely tend to bind them ever more closely together. The implications of this tempt one to make detailed predictions, but I forbear prophesying. The evident facts are sufficient in themselves, and so are the prophecies of God’s Book. To these I shall refer a little later.

3. The Decline of Liberty

Let us look now at the third prophetically important development of our day, the decline of liberty. This decline is a reversal of the long trend that began in the eighteenth century. Then it was that new and revolutionary conceptions of the nature of the state and the

rights of the individual man began to be widely promoted. It was at the latter end of that century that a new kind of government was established here in America and a revolution took place in France that marked the beginning of the end of kings and emperors in Europe.

The trend toward democracy and freedom, the rights of the individual, and the rights of small peoples may be said to have come to a climax in the first world war, which President Woodrow Wilson declared was a war to make the world safe for democracy.

But that war, which brought such destruction to long established governments, paved the way for new and more powerful rulers. The shattering of the economy of nations in the depression years, coupled with the second world war, has created an unparalleled situation of economic instability and international suspicions and fears. This in turn seems to call for stronger and ever-stronger central governments, in certain lands at least, and for a bewildering multiplication of governmental regulations in virtually all lands. Very understandably these regulations are most evident in the area of buying and selling, an activity central to the functioning of any free society and vital to the life of every citizen.

At the same time Rome has been militantly aggressive wherever she had opportunity in different lands to suppress any opposition to the Catholic Church. This has been most marked in Spain and in certain South American countries.

The increasing regimentation of the citizenry in most countries, a regimentation due sometimes to economic necessity, sometimes to the evil ambitions of dictators, and sometimes to both, has ominously darkened the sky of freedom. We hear men speaking now of the twilight of democracy, the ending of the great day of human rights that dawned so auspiciously about two centuries ago. And these lengthening shadows have only added to the tensions and perplexities in the world of religion. Paradoxically, these shadows throw light upon the prophecy of Revelation 13, which is interlocked with the third angel's message.

Let me now sum up this survey. In the world of thought, religious and otherwise, the history of the last three centuries is a history of the secularization of man. The increasing dominance of science, with its apparent ability to explain all the mysteries of life and its evident ability to provide comforts and satisfactions for man, has played the key role in this secularizing process.

The Survey Summed Up

Man tends naturally, in his sinful state, to confine his thoughts to this world. If science has proved to his satisfaction that there is no evidence of a world beyond, and that God is not really needed in explanation of this world or as an aid to improving it, the inevitable result could not be other than the secularization of man. Then with religious leadership capitulating to the scientific premises, there was no check upon the secularization. Furthermore, with all the great centers of learning indoctrinating the youth with ideas which, if not hostile to the supernatural, at least discounted or ignored it, a secular fate for man was virtually inevitable.

If I had to describe in one word the mood of man in mid twentieth century in regard to the supernatural, I would use the cold, hard word secular.

In 1948 there was published an outstanding volume entitled *Christian Faith and Secularism*. In this book a group of writers present the current picture of the blight of secularism in every department of life. Here is the opening paragraph:

“Secularism is no longer, as it was a hundred years ago, an intellectual revolt against theological domination. It has become the supporting atmosphere of our culture. To describe it is like describing the air about us. No logical knife can dissect it; it is too pervasive and fluid to be captured in the net of any system of ideas. We are so completely adjusted to it that we do not mark it, but only those salient traits of our culture for which it is the permanent foundation.” [67]

The writer adds immediately, and correctly, “Secularism is practical atheism.”

Only a few months ago Arnold J. Toynbee, one of the most eminent of present-day historians, wrote a most remarkable article for a religious quarterly in which he set forth what he believed to be the real crisis in the world today. He declared:

“The fundamental conflict is not political but religious; and the dividing line between the two religious camps is not the present world encompassing political boundary between a Russian and an American sphere of political influence. The line cuts across the inward spiritual world within every living soul on earth today-whatever label of political citizenship may have been stamped upon its body by the accident of birth.

“The underlying reason why our souls are in spiritual travail today is because our generation is having to cope with one of the crises in mankind's religious history. . . .

“The temptation to worship himself instead of worshipping a now revealed True God has never ceased to beset man; and his temptation to commit this intellectual error and spiritual sin has never been so strong as it has come to be during this last century and a half. . . .

This fateful choice between God-worship and Man-worship, and not an ephemeral struggle for political supremacy between Russia and America, is the ultimate issue that is challenging all of us in our generation.” [68]

That, generally, describes man at mid-twentieth century. And how could the situation be otherwise in the light of the forces that have operated in the scientific, the philosophical, the religious, and the educational world, to take the reality out of God, to make Him unnecessary in the explanation of nature, and then to vaporize Him into a pantheistic God, or to eliminate Him completely.

For those who wish to see a current exhibit of how this worship of man, this naturalistic view of life, dominates thought today, at least in the great centers of learning, I submit the volume, published in 1944 by the Columbia University Press, entitled *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*. In this book a group of fifteen university and college professors, representing a cross section of the centers of learning in America, set forth baldly the anti supernatural viewpoint on all life.

Before the modern era began, that is, before the great Copernican discoveries in astronomy, man thought that this little earth was the center of God’s created universe, and that he was the chief object of God’s attention. But this gave him no sense of pride, for he also viewed himself as guilty before the great God, whose watchful eye was fixed upon him. The Copernican discoveries, which suddenly revealed the vastness of the universe, had, for a time, a shattering effect upon man, for now he stood revealed as a little object on a very little world, whirling in a vast universe. Most men failed to enlarge their idea of God to match the enlarged universe. Thus they inevitably felt that they could no longer be sure that they were receiving the direct providential care of God. This feeling that man is alone, adrift, and insignificant marked the beginning of what is known as the modern mood of man, a mood that became increasingly general as the churches began to be tinctured with skeptical thought.

But the passing years produced a strange evolution in man’s viewpoint. As he began to master nature through the advances of science, his sense of inadequacy and spiritual loneliness tended to give way to a sense of self-sufficiency. And as skeptical thought tended ever to make God and heaven seem unreal, the earth began to loom ever larger as the one sure abiding place and the proper center of all man’s interest. Thus man gradually began to feel once more that he dwelt at the center of the universe—at least everything else seemed incidental to this earth. But now it is a center on which God’s eye is no longer focused to guide man as he walks about in his world, or to bring him to account for all his acts, for he no longer believes that God guides it. He does not even believe God made it; it evolved.

But as he walks about this world, the center and circumference of all the interests of his now secularized mind and spirit, he hears distant rumblings and sees blinding flashes of light, the exhibits of man’s greatest achievement, the atomic bomb. And above the tumult he hears the forecast that this world and all upon it are probably doomed to annihilation, through the mutually suicidal endeavors of those who are bent on using the latest inventions of this marvelously scientific age.

Past history knows no parallel to this, no point where men collectively have been brought to such a high point of secular independence of God, only to find themselves standing at the edge of an abyss.

The neo-orthodox movement to which I earlier referred is neither large enough nor strong enough to alter this picture materially. And certainly the liberals, no matter how chastened they may now be, are wholly unprepared, by the very premises they hold, to offer escape from the dilemmas of our day, or from the catastrophe that impends.

The Dilemmas of Religious Leaders

In such a world as this the dilemmas of modern religious leadership are very great. First they lost faith in the Bible and in the God of their fathers. Now they must lose faith in man. They declared that man was an embryo angel, but now two world wars, concentration camps, and the atomic bomb reveal that evil spirits control him.

Religious leaders abandoned the idea of a heaven beyond as the great goal of life. They jeered at Adventists and others like us for offering “pie in the sky by and by.” They viewed this earth as a potential heaven and chided all who failed to cooperate with them in social and legislative ways, to hasten this heavenly transformation of our earth. Now they must sadly admit that there is small chance, if any, of this world’s being thus transformed. Rather, they confess that it may be transformed into flames, kindled by atomic fires.

They had generally minimized and often abandoned the everlasting gospel, the power of God unto salvation for the individual heart, in favor of a social gospel that would somehow save men collectively by improving their environment. But they find that the social gospel seems not to work, at least not in the way that they had anticipated, and many of them now confess that there is small reason to believe that the kingdoms of this world can be transformed into the kingdom of God.

Religious leaders turned from belief in the salvation of man, particularly the salvation of youth, through the means of an evangelistic appeal, and adopted the theory of salvation through education. What happened they had not anticipated. The church colleges became hopelessly secularized, to say nothing of state schools. Furthermore, a better education often displayed itself, not in increasing righteousness, but in more subtle forms of evil in the lives of men. College education proved no barrier to entrance to a penitentiary.

Religious leaders removed the churches' emphasis on evangelizing the world in a great foreign mission program, first because they cast doubt on the unique efficacy of the Bible plan of salvation, and second because they accepted the science of comparative religions, which seemed to prove that other religions may be quite as good as Christianity. Now they sadly find that the whole world of non-Christians is seething with explosive, revolutionary ideas, which create a threat to everything for which the Christian religion stands, a threat to the very life of mankind.

Religious leaders sought to harmonize all religious ideas with scientific thought and methods. If the ideas could not be harmonized, then the ideas must be surrendered in favor of science. Now they sadly discover that science has betrayed them. It was not concerned to discover God, as cloudy-minded theologians had sentimentally declared. Science had no concern about discovering God, but only the workings of nature.

Religious leaders extolled science as virtually the new messiah, which was to save us from sickness, lengthen our lives, give us increasing control over the elements, and virtually lead us into the promised land of an earthly millennium. Now they are disillusioned by the discovery that science has given to war its new deadliness and created the threat of world explosion and oblivion.

In view of these dilemmas, Protestant leaders seek to discover in church union a new strength to meet the threat of what they confess is a new paganism, fighting for the control of the minds of men. They realize that union of the Protestant forces alone is something short of the ideal goal. Hence they explore the possibilities of establishing closer relations with Rome, even though they have the gravest misgivings.

In the setting of this sad and disillusioning recital, I ask the question, the most important question that could be asked in religious circles today: What is the message that God would have His spokesmen proclaim in an hour like this? And I answer confidently, The threefold message of Revelation 14. Before I offer the specific proof of the truth of this answer, let me repeat what I said when we were examining the beginnings of the Advent movement. We must never forget that Adventists have ever maintained that the three angels' messages are prophetic declarations regarding the last days. Hence, if our interpretation of them is correct, these three messages should be uniquely and increasingly the truth for all men today, the savor of life unto life or death unto death. Indeed, on this very point the Advent movement really depends for the validation of its claim that it has been raised up to bring to men a particular message for a particular time in earth's history. Let us examine these messages.

The First Angel's Message

In the last days "the everlasting gospel" is to be proclaimed. What meaning and force that phrase has acquired as we have studied the history of religious thought during the century. In a world that has largely abandoned the everlasting gospel, by abandoning belief in the fall of man and the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, there is to be heard again in the last hours of earth's history "the everlasting gospel." Those who are to proclaim it are to build again the foundations of many generations. They are not the preachers of new, strange doctrines but of the everlasting gospel.

This gospel is to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. At a time when the religious world has lost its vision of foreign missions, because it has discounted the divine character of the gospel, a movement is to rise up to reaffirm the uniqueness and supremacy of the Christian message to all men in all lands, and to herald it to the corners of the earth.

A message is to go forth to "worship him that made heaven, and earth." In a day when the world has largely abandoned the idea of a personal God as Creator, a God great enough to control all things, and has accepted the idea of a pantheistic God, or at least a finite god enmeshed in the processes of nature, when indeed the world has largely turned from the worship of God to the worship of man, we take as our battle cry, "Worship him that made heaven, and earth' and the sea, and the fountains of water," for "the Lord God omnipotent reigns."

We call on men to worship God, "for the hour of his judgment is come." In a day when men have largely lost any clearly defined eschatological belief, any belief in the last things of earth's history, and have also lost faith in the possibility of improving this world; in a day when men feel that the world is rushing toward a blind, explosive, and meaningless end, how vital that there should sound forth the solemn and meaningful truth that earth's destiny is in God's hands and that the hour of His judgment is come, the hour of investigative judgment that is soon to climax in the executive judgment of the Second Advent. The world is not rushing toward a blind and meaningless end; it is moving relentlessly toward that end which holy prophets forecast, that end when men shall stand before the judgment bar of God to receive a reward for the deeds done in the body. It is the doctrine of the judgment hour of God that gives meaning to life at a time when all meaning seems to have been driven from life.

In a day when men have largely abandoned the idea of sin, and thus of Christ's atoning work for sinners, how important that we should sound aloud the message of the sanctuary service, which is now in its final phase. It is when men see Christ ministering His

blood to wash away the guilt of the penitent that they can sense anew the awful reality of sin and the price that was paid for our redemption.

In a day when the world generally considers all moral standards as but man's changing thinking on morality, with ensuing moral decline, how important to cry aloud that God is coming to judge all men by His holy law, and that those who will stand in that day will be those who keep the commandments of God.

The Second Angel's Message

The message is to sound forth, "Babylon is fallen." How timely that message when all about us is the clear proof that apostasy has increasingly engulfed the religious world. Note that I use the word "increasingly." The fall of Babylon has been progressive. That is the conclusion we must reach from our survey of religious history, and that is the view of the fall of Babylon that Mrs. White so long ago made clear to the Advent movement, when we were inclined to view the fall of Babylon as having fully taken place at the beginning of Advent history. In the first edition of *The Great Controversy* (1888) Mrs. White wrote:

"The message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the Advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time, they have fallen lower and lower. . . . But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination." [69]

The new edition in 1911 also affirms that "the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination." We know that that culmination is to be found in the linking of Protestant and Catholic interests and the enforcing of the mark of the beast. But the important point that Mrs. White makes so clear is that the fall described by the second angel is progressive, that the apostasy of 1844 would increase as the years went by. How true that has proved to be.

But let me call your attention to one striking difference between the wording of the old edition and the new edition of *The Great Controversy*. In the old edition we read in this same connection: "In the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, in a message which is yet future, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon." In the new edition, published in 1911, this time clause, "in a message which is yet future," has been deleted. In other words, Mrs. White in 1911 declared that the message of the opening verses of Revelation 18 is no longer "future." Adventists have always regarded the message in those first verses of Revelation 18 as the reaffirmation of the second angel's message, only in more thunderous tones, as though a last appeal were to be made to men. Surely as we look back over our survey of religious history and note how apostasy came to full flower in the early part of the twentieth century, we are led spontaneously to cry out with a loud voice, "Babylon is fallen; come out of her, my people."

If, early in the twentieth century, the progressive fall of Babylon had reached that point where Mrs. White could declare that the message of the angel of Revelation 18 is no longer future, we ought to make the second angel's message more central to our preaching than ever before. We are not preachers of smooth things. We have a message of judgment as well as of salvation to proclaim to men.

The Third Angel's Message

As preachers of the threefold message, we are to declare that "if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark," the last judgments of God will come upon him. As earlier stated, this message is an implied prophecy of the great power of Rome and the United States, and the united power of American Protestantism in the last days. It is also a prophecy regarding the close working together of Rome and the United States. We have further noted that when taken in conjunction with Revelation 13 it is an implied prophecy of startling curtailment of liberty in earth's last hour. Now, in a day when we see these very prophecies fulfilling before our eyes, we can cry out with new power against that which is the sign, the mark, of this climaxing apostasy, the Sunday institution.

And as we preach we should set forth Sunday in its larger setting as a mark of the apostasy of man in all ages, for it is a symbol of that turning away from the true God who created heaven and earth, that has distinguished fallen man from earliest times. Paul declared that men turned from the true God because they glorified Him not as God but "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." Romans 1:25. Central in ancient times was the worship of the sun, and then in counterfeit Christianity came the "man of sin" exalting "himself above all that is called God" and showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. Through him the pagan Sunday was brought into the church, both as a mark of his power and as a substitute for the Sabbath, which ever reminds us that God, the Creator, is above all. Sunday also stands as the one uniting symbol of Protestantism, and Protestantism is now distinguished by its denial of creation, its minimizing of God, and its exaltation of man. Sunday thus stands forth as the identifying mark of pagan, papal, and Protestant religions, all of which, in turn, have exalted the creature above the Creator.

It is high time for us to stress more fully to Bible-loving segments of Protestantism that when they keep Sunday in honor, of the resurrection, declaring that they are more Christian than those who keep the Sabbath in honor of creation, they forget that it is creation with its perfection, followed by the fall, that gives meaning to Christ's death and resurrection. When creation is gone the meaning of the resurrection departs. How, then, can it be more important to honor the event of the resurrection than the event of creation? How

vastly more important that the foundation of creation be preserved, lest the whole structure of Christianity collapse, the resurrection included.

I am reminded of a conversation that I had with a Baptist minister at the height of the fundamentalist-modernism controversy. He deplored the split in the churches and feared total apostasy. Then he turned to me and said, "I suppose that in your church you have the same split?" I assured him that so far from our having a split we had not even the beginnings of it. He looked amazed and asked whether I could possibly explain it. I replied, "How is it possible for Adventists to give any credence to the evolution theory, when every week they set aside a whole day as a memorial to Him who created the heavens and the earth, as the book of Genesis describes?" He gazed at me a moment and then exclaimed, "I'd never thought of the Sabbath in that way before."

Proclaim the Sabbath More Fully

Men and brethren, preachers of the threefold message, it is time for us to help men to see the Sabbath in that way. It is time for us to proclaim the Sabbath more fully, as the sign, the mark, of those who have no part in the worldwide apostasy, the mark of those who truly believe that the Lord God omnipotent reigns, that He is the Creator of heaven and earth, and will create a new heart within those who put their trust in Him. Yes, the mark of those who believe that this world is not in the grip of cold, senseless forces, carrying us we know not where, but rather that the world is under the guiding hand of a Divine Being who created it not in vain, and who will soon come to re-create this earth in righteousness.

How fitting that in a day when apostasy most sharply reveals itself in an attack on creation and a personal God, Heaven should command that men be called to honor the memorial of creation and creation's God.

It is high time also that we remembered in a larger way than we have thus far that the great apostasy growing out of the denial of creation has given to Rome certain of her unique strength today. For, as we have noted, her appeal to men is the appeal of certainty and assurance in the midst of a skeptical age. In other words, the apostasy of Protestantism strengthened the hands of Rome. Thus the renunciation of the creation record has produced a doubly evil effect. Apostate Protestantism, on the authority of human reason, cast out the creation record. Apostate Catholicism, on the authority of tradition, lifted up Sunday as a mark of its power. Thus the Sabbath stands revealed as the symbol of Bible opposition to the two great forms of apostasy in the Christian world in these last days, The Sabbath we keep is the sign we display to the world that we have no part in either apostasy; it is a witness we bear to all men that our allegiance is to the God of the holy prophets and apostles, and that our hope is in Him who made heaven and earth.

I see ever-increasing significance in Mrs. White's words that "at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully." [70] We can preach the Sabbath with a fullness that was impossible for the pioneers to give to it. It is of the nature of fulfilling prophecy that when the time is at hand, the message of God can be seen in its fullness and should be preached in its fullness.

We can only conclude that if no threefold message had been specifically penned on the pages of Bible prophecy, something like unto it would need to be sounded today to meet the last great apostasy. From the outset we as a people declared that the justification for the existence of this movement resided in our claim that we had a special message to proclaim, the threefold message. We made that claim in a day when our Sabbath preaching seemed to men a mere quibble over days, and when our declaration as to apostasy in Christendom seemed no more than the propaganda of proselyting enthusiasts. We made that claim in a day when our declarations of coming judgment seemed like the ravings of irrational alarmists. But we made our claim, declaring that the future would prove all our forecasts true. Time has fully validated that claim. Let us arise and finish the work of God.

11. Antichrist In History And Prophecy

Frank H. Yost

Introductory Remarks

It is becoming increasingly evident to all of us that the central theme of this Bible Conference is the Lord Jesus Christ. We are seeing Him as our Savior from sin, and we are seeing His death on the cross as the high pinnacle of Christian doctrine, the pinnacle to which the Old Testament points with its types and its rituals, and upon which hangs the New Testament with its glorious gospel of grace and the service in the heavenly sanctuary which it reveals.

It is of these things that I would long to speak to you tonight. But I have another assignment—a discussion of the perversion of these very truths—to point out how Satan, the false Christ, and the apostasy that he has been leading through the ages endeavored to warp and twist every truth that Christ's nature and office reveal. As a good soldier, I have obeyed and accept this assignment.

And this topic must be treated. It is history that teaches us what it means to disobey God and to reject the atonement for sin available through Jesus Christ. This is the true work of history. History is an art, but it is more. History is a cultural expression, but it is more. Rightly studied, history tells us what life is. It tells us this in positive terms. It tells us this in negative terms.

A people without a sense of history is like a man without a memory. To a man suffering from amnesia each day is a blind experiment, usually ending in frustration, often in disaster. But a man with a memory and a people with a sense of history understand what is happening day by day, because each day is seen as though thrown upon a screen, with the past, that is, history, as the backdrop.

Unfortunately, history is much more the record of failure than of success. This must be so in a world fallen in sin. To examine the Antichrist, prophesied in Scripture and manifested in history, means to see a dark picture. But the lessons of this dark picture must not escape us. We must see the picture and learn its lessons.

“Antichrist” Defined and Applied

“Antichrist” (Antichristos) occurs as a term but four times in the Bible:

1 John 2:18, 22-Antichrist will come, but there are many antichrists. Antichrist denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3; 2 John 7-Antichrist is he who fails to confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

John’s use of the term “antichrist” seems generalized, to apply to any opponents of Christ, but the expressions he uses with it would certainly include the Docetists, who were in his day teaching that Christ was only an “appearance” or a 11 seeming” on earth, and the Gnostics, who taught that Christ was but one in a series of emanations from the great universal Divine Spirit.

Commentators ever since apostolic times have, however, applied the term to the false christs foretold by the Lord Himself. (Matthew 24:24.) Paul’s “man of sin” (2 Thessalonians 2:3), [1] “the Lawless one” (verse 8, Weymouth), spoken of in the singular number, has always been held to be a prophecy of Antichrist. The beasts of prophecy, particularly the beast of Revelation 13 and Revelation 17, have been identified with Antichrist, as has the blasphemous and persecuting “little horn” power of Daniel 7.

However, the early Fathers of the church made a more personal application of the term. Some called Nero Antichrist. Others held that the expression defined a man, yet to be manifested, armed with satanic power in his conflict against Christ and His followers. This was the view maintained during the early Middle Ages. [2]

But in the tenth century a much more local and immediate application was made. In a written attack upon Pope John XV at the Council of Rheims in 991, the author, perhaps Arnulf, bishop of Orleans, or Gerbert, later Pope Sylvester II, maintained that a future pope, one “without charity and puffed up with knowledge,” was to be the Antichrist. This was probably more than mere name calling, and was a foretaste of what was to come. It was Joachim of Floris in the twelfth century who first suggested that Antichrist would come as the Universalis Pontifex, the universal pontiff, and occupy the Apostolic See. [3] It was a contemporary of his, Ainalric of Bena, who first attached the name to the pope, that is, to the papal system. [4] The Germans of the later Middle Ages, looking back with bitterness upon the papal struggle against the German emperors of the Western Empire, called Gregory VII, foe of Emperor Henry IV, the Antichrist. The Waldenses developed further the designation of the Papacy as Antichrist, in which they were imitated by the Hussites of Bohemia and Wycliffe and the Lollards of England.

The men of the Reformation followed this interpretation. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Melancthon, Bucer, Beza, and practically all their disciples called the Papacy Antichrist. [5] So far as Catholic writers have touched upon the question, they take the view that Antichrist is a person. He was one of the persecuting pagan Roman emperors, perhaps Nero. Innocent III, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, declared Mohammed to be Antichrist. Others take the view of the later Fathers, that Antichrist is a person with satanic powers, yet to be revealed. [6]

This Catholic teaching is followed in general by that branch of Protestant Christians known in the United States as fundamentalists. In fact, they have worked out quite a systematic theology on Antichrist. He is to be a malevolent personality, by some thought of as the offspring of an unholy union of the devil with a beautiful woman of Jewish descent, who will, “in the midst of the week,” the seventieth week, take over the ruler ship of the earth for 1260 days, three and a half years, after Christ has in the rapture removed the saints from the earth. Christ will at the end of the half week of years conquer the Antichrist, and the millennium of peace on earth will follow. [7]

To Seventh-day Adventists the Antichrist is primarily and fundamentally Satan, who first rebelled against Christ, who will just before the Second Advent endeavor to impersonate Christ on earth, and who will eventually be destroyed after the one thousand years in the lake of fire. (Revelation 20: 10) [10] This Antichrist is the dragon beast of prophecy, and his followers, organized to act in world affairs politically or ecclesiastically, are symbolized in prophecy by beasts of various descriptions.

However, Antichrist is known to Adventists more widely and generally as the Papacy, represented as the little horn of Daniel 7 and the “beast” of Revelation 13. The Antichrist Satan appears in the history of the Christian church in the guise of the so-called, and falsely called, vicar of Christ, the pope, until he himself comes to take over as the false christ. In the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the Antichrist, four great and awful manifestations of the beast are specifically marked in theological history:

1. Satan, the beast par excellence, who used the serpent, that beautiful creature so different from the snake of common knowledge [11], to deceive the primordial pair in Eden, and hence is called the serpent and also the dragon. (Revelation 12:3, 9, 14-17)” Satan’s career is pictured in Scripture as a series of apostasies, expulsions, and degradations terrible to contemplate and awful in their consequences to men.” The satanic dragon is a composite of the prophetic beasts. (Revelation 12:3)

2. The total of all apostasy among men, described for instance by Paul in an appalling picture of evil. (Romans 1: 18-32; 3:5-20.)” In revealing this apostasy the prophets have singled out certain nations as peculiarly inimical to the people of God. Four of these are specially described under the picture of beasts by the prophet Daniel. (Daniel 7:3-8, 17-28; 8:3-8, 20-22)” They are as follows:

a. Babylonia, the Neo-Babylonian Empire, as a lion in Daniel 7, previously described as the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar’s image vision of Daniel 2.

b. Medo-Persia, as the bear of Daniel 7, and the ram of Daniel 8; the breast and arms of silver of the image.

c. Macedo-Greece as the leopard of Daniel 7 and the goat of Daniel 8; also the thighs of brass of Daniel 2.

d. Rome as the nondescript beast of Daniel 7. As the progress of the empires is westward, and since the West has been in actuality the center of the great world expansion of Christianity, as well as of the great organized apostasy, prophecy has concerned itself largely with the Roman Empire’s westward development. It is, then, the western part of the Roman Empire that prophecy reveals being fractionated into ten kingdoms, represented by the ten horns. These symbolize the Teutonic nations, nominally under the empire, upon whom devolved the ruler ship in the West as the Roman central administration in the West collapsed. Among these, the strange, different, repulsive, and blasphemous little horn, the Papacy, takes its place by the elimination of three. Respectively these symbols correspond to the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay, and the ten toes of iron and clay, of Daniel 2. The little horn of Daniel 8 is the counterpart in one symbol of the fourth beast and the little horn of Daniel 7, thus representing both pagan and papal Rome.

Of these four powers, two stand out in Scripture as deserving of special condemnation:

3. Babylonia, from which in its ancient city-state form Abraham had to migrate in order to find and serve the one true Creator God. In the united form of Neo-Babylonia this power was to Isaiah (Isaiah 13, 14, 39) an object of special concern and condemnation, and was the peculiar foe and eventually the conqueror of the Judean remnant left in Palestine after the removal of the ten tribes (2 Chronicles 36).

Jeremiah warned of the Babylonian danger, and lived to see his dire prophecies fulfilled. (Jeremiah 20, 21, 24, 25, 27-34, 37-39, 50, 51) Ezekiel and Daniel became Babylonian captives. (Ezekiel 1; Daniel 1)

Since Babylonia was the particular enemy of God’s people in the days of the Old Testament prophets, the name was taken to apply to pagan Rome, the particular enemy of the incarnated Son of God and His followers in New Testament times. In apostolic times Rome was called Babylon (1 Peter 5:13), [16] and the term was used as a symbol for the archenemy of the church on earth by John in the Revelation (Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21).

4. Both “beast” and “Babylon” were the terms used significantly by John for the New Testament prophetic counterpart of the little horn of Daniel 7-the Papacy. The Jezebel of the Thyatiran period of the church’s history in Revelation 2:18-29 becomes in ampler presentation the composite beast of Revelation 13. It shows in its bestial qualities characteristics exhibited by the four imperial beasts of Daniel 7. But “beast” is not a sufficiently illustrative term for the Spirit of prophecy to complete the picture. In describing the Papacy in Revelation 17, the Spirit presents a fuller counterpart of the woman Jezebel of Revelation 2:20, and sets it forth as the harlot, a woman completely fallen in the uncleanness of spiritual adultery, into which she has led the whole world. (Revelation 17:3-7.) [17]

But the woman of Revelation 17 is seated upon a beast. (Verses 3, 7) The harlot is ecclesiastical Rome, and undergirding her power is the beast representing all the composite apostasy of the past, the present, and the future. Here are pictured seven heads as the Seven Hills of Rome, to aid in making identification of the beast. (Revelation 17:3; 9; 13: 1; 12:3.) [18] By prophetic extension these seven heads, clearly successive (Revelation 17: 9, 10), portray the successive empires that have been, and the forces that will be, enemies of God’s people. These powers, in their perpetuated manifestations, accompany and en vigor on the human side the machinations and

pretensions of the papal harlot (verses 3, 9, 12, 13), [19] until the final collapse at the end (verses 16-18; 18:8-24), “the judgment of the great whore.”

For an understanding and analysis of the various phases of the great apostasy, we are dependent almost entirely on the Biblical books of Daniel and the Revelation.

By vision after vision and symbol upon symbol the satanic characteristics and evil activities of these powers, and especially the Papacy, are presented.

The Papacy

It is the intent of this paper to see the prophetic beast as Rome, and to concentrate intensively upon Rome in its papal phase as the Antichrist of long centuries of history: a specifically blasphemous apostasy arising out of general apostasy.

The Papacy Defined

The Papacy is the sacrosanct and infallible episcopal administrative head of the great Roman Catholic religious system. As Christ is the mystical, invisible head of the mystical body, the true universal church, the pope is in fact the visible head of the visible Catholic or universal false church that Satan has set tip as a deceptive counterpart of the true church of Christ. The pope, or papa, as the Latin and Italian words are, is the bishop of Rome, metropolitan of the Roman arch diocese, Primate of Italy, and Pontifex Maximus of the professed universal church.

The Papacy claims that Christ left Peter to be the chief or prince of the apostles, the petros or rock, upon which the church was founded by Christ. (Matthew 16:18, 19.) [20] According to this claim, Peter was founder of the church at Rome, where he preached twenty-five years, [21] from the time of his release from prison by Herod Agrippa I in Jerusalem in AD 44. (Acts 12:3-23) [22] until his martyrdom in Rome in 68. Before his death Peter, it is claimed, appointed to succeed him Linus, [23] the first of a succession of men who in turn have become apostolic princes in the realm of Peter. Apostolic succession, says Rome, exists only through the Papacy, in the extension of episcopal authority through the bishops by certification of the Church of Rome. [24] There are churches other than Rome which can prove that they have been founded by apostles, but Rome claims the primacy among all churches, [25] and, as a matter of theological fact, urges that all churches that do not admit Rome’s claim are schismatical, and have fallen from the true way.

The Petrine theory of the Papacy, based on Matthew 16: 18, will be considered later, but be it asserted that Christ is the Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4) who has founded, and is the foundation of, the church of Christ (1 Corinthians 3: 11). [26] No apostles have built the church except in and through Christ, and not merely one apostle, but all the apostles and New Testament prophets have been builders of the church through their Lord. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

The succession from these true apostles. and prophets has been, not psychological, political, or ecclesiastical, but spiritual, and not personal, through popes, of which Scripture knows nothing, or through bishops, but corporately through the body of the church as the body of Christ. [27]

The Evolution of the Episcopate

Who are these bishops, of whom the pope claims to be the supreme pontiff?

There were but two classes of functionaries known in the New Testament church:

1. The order of the men of the Holy Spirit, the pneumatikoi (Galatians 6: 1; Romans 8,:6, 1 Corinthians 2:15; 3: 1; 14:37), who were the bearers of special gifts of the Holy Spirit, by virtue of which they were acknowledged:

- a. Apostles (Greek, apostolits, “one sent”) or missionaries (Latin, missionarius, “one sent”).
- b. Prophets.
- c. Evangelists.
- d. Shepherds or pastors.
- e. Teachers.

f. Exhorters.

g. Healers.

h. Workers of miracles.

i. Speakers of tongues.

j. Interpreters of tongues. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Ephesians 4: 11.) [28] These were not elected functionaries, but arose spontaneously through evidence acceptable to the church that they had the gifts they professed. Ellen G. White is in that blessed sequence of those who enjoyed gifts of the Spirit.

2. The other group was an elected one, of which there were two orders: the elders or presbyters (from Greek, *presbyteros*) (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2-6, 22, 23; 20:17; 1 Timothy 5:17; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1), and the deacons (from Greek, *diakonos*, “servant”) (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). [29] The deacons cared chiefly for the material and physical phases of the church’s needs. (Acts 6:1-6.) The elders looked chiefly to the spiritual and administrative needs of the church. The qualifications and duties of the deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and the elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) are rather clearly defined.

But quite early, beginning perhaps as early as the second century, the order of elders bifurcated into (a) bishops “overseers” (from Greek, *episkopos*) and (b) elders as local pastors. The Scriptures know no such division: both terms, overseer and presbyter, are used in the New Testament for the same office. Paul calls the representatives of the church of Ephesus, who at his request came to Miletus to confer with him, at the same time presbyters and overseers-presbyter as the name of their office (Acts 20:17; see margin) and overseer as the name of their function (verse 28, margin; cf. verse 17). Paul uses the terms as synonyms in his letter to Titus. (Titus 1:5-9.) He addresses only the bishops and deacons at Philippi (Philippians IA), but there is no hint that these bishops are other than elders.

There were elders in every church in apostolic times (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5), and they are spoken of in the plural, as “ordained” (Authorized Version) or “appointed” (American Revised Version), that is, elected (Acts 14:23). [30] According to the post apostolic writers, there was a first or presiding elder in each group of elders. [31] It is evident that the title bishop came to be reserved eventually to the president of the elders.

In some localities the president, or presiding elder, rose to a unique position as overseer or bishop more rapidly than in others. Shortly after AD 100 the president at Antioch is being called bishop, and an early bishop of Antioch, Ignatius, makes great claims for the authority of the bishops. [32] But Clement, leader of the church at Rome, writing to the church at Corinth in AD 96, knows only presbyters; [33] and as previously mentioned, Justin and Tertullian speak of “presiding ones,” apparently still the chiefs of the elders. Indeed, Tertullian resents the growing authority of the bishops. [34] He dreaded what he saw—the authority in the church being taken from the church, and the leadership tending to become monarchical. This it did. Eusebius, writing about AD 324, in his Church History, knows all the early church leaders as bishops, and not as presbyters. [35] He is, of course, in this reflecting his own times.

However, the environmental condition of the early church, psychologically, secularly, and socially, made almost inevitable the hardening of the office of presiding elder into that of the monarchical bishop. In fact, viewing the conditions, one feels that it would have required specific resistance on the part of the church as a commonwealth to have avoided the emergence of the bishops. Some such endeavors were made from time to time, but they were sporadic and unsuccessful. The following are causes and factors in the emergence of the bishops as monarchs in the church:

1. The normal and proper tendency of humanity is to look to leadership. It was a time of centralization and autocracy in public government. The president of the elders would of necessity have personal faculties of leadership, and would show efficiency in his office. Perhaps, at a time when there was little education, such a man would manifest some psychological and intellectual gifts.

2. Christianity was an urban organization. There was normally only one church as an organization in each city. But the groups of believers doubtless met simultaneously in different parts of the city. Large gatherings by a persecuted sect would not usually be safe. Perhaps each one of the local groups was presided over by an elder, but the presiding elder would have general oversight of church matters in the city, and probably in the country immediately surrounding the city. This would be normal, in view of the Greek and Roman concept of the city-state. Thus the presiding elder, the overseer (*episkopos*, “bishop”), would take on the importance of the city over which he had supervision in even so insignificant an affair as an illegal, infant Christian church.

3. The offerings that came into the infant church were used for the most part for the support of the poor, the unfortunate, the sick, and those in prison for their faith. Upon the president devolved the responsibility of handling these moneys. Undoubtedly in that early day this gave him a position of great influence. (Titus 1:7.) [36]

4. When the frequent persecutions of that day tended to scatter the flock, it was to the elders that the church

members looked for leadership. Of course, the position of the presiding elder as the more general overseer was enhanced by the needs of those perplexing days. In fact, so obvious was the dependence of the church members upon their overseers that the pagan Roman authorities sensed it and early directed the persecutions against those very officials. This was so until the very close of the last persecution under Diocletian. [37]

5. The circulation of the Scriptures could not have been extensive among the Christians. There were no printing presses in that day, and copying was an expensive process. There must, therefore, have been copies of the Scriptures in the households of very few of the Christians. Perhaps the few in the church who were wealthy might have had portions. The elders in the smaller towns might have had some portions. But for complete copies of the Scriptures one doubtless would have had to seek out the presiding elder, the overseer, in the church in a large city. To him would come questions concerning doctrine, and calls for the checking of heresy. [38] Therefore the overseer of the church early became an umpire in matters of heresy. This not only greatly enhanced the authority of the overseer, but enabled the later bishops to supplant almost completely the prophetic and teaching gifts among the men of the Spirit. Beginning about AD 150, these men of the gifts tended to disappear, and the overseers, or bishops, were taking their functions.

A powerful order of bishops is pictured for us in the writings of Cyprian at AD 250. [39] The episcopal power was greatly enhanced by the legalization of Christianity by Constantine in AD 313.

It cannot be too often emphasized that whatever powers bishops were acquiring were also acquired by the bishop of Rome. As the administrative function in the church became a matter of greater and greater authority, the authority of the bishop of Rome increased with that of his fellows. In fact, the power of the bishop of Rome grew more rapidly than did the power of the overseers in other cities for two general but important reasons:

a. Rome was the capital of a vast empire. It was the seat of government for the greatest power the world had yet seen. Not only politics, but commerce, art, culture, literature, philosophy, and religious cults all centered more or less in the city of Rome. Men flocked there as to the fountain of all things interesting and useful to humanity. Inevitably, Christians would tend to look to Rome just as other men did. Therefore the power and influence of the bishop of Rome were enhanced by his presence in the imperial capital.

b. There were other great cities in the empire. The Christian church in a number of these cities had been founded by apostles, just as the Roman Church claimed to have been founded by an apostle. Not so in the West. In Western Europe, Rome had no rival as a city, and the Church of Rome had no rival there as a claimant to apostolic origin. Jerusalem, Ephesus, Antioch, and Alexandria could all claim that their churches were founded by apostles, but these churches were in the East. In the West only Rome could with any hope of success claim to be apostolic. It made this claim, basing it on Peter, and pressed its claim at every opportunity, until the popes appear to be claiming to be a mystical reincarnation of the fisherman apostle.

And this so-called apostolic church, claiming to be the paragon of orthodoxy, actually was the systematizer and fosterer of the apostasy that all too quickly spread in the church in general.

Early Apostasies

It is to be noted that the first apostasies, like the apostasy into episcopacy and into papacy, were mainly apostasies in form. But this fact must not blind us to the seriousness of the early apostasies. They came early, fifty years after the apostle John's death, and they struck at fundamentals. One cannot experience apostasy in form, without apostasy of idea. For form in religion, if it retains any meaning at all, is an expression of religious idea. The forms are dignified with importance by the force of the theological concept undergirding the forms.

Apostolic Succession

Thus the development of the episcopacy, which was gradual, yet rapid, meant a fundamental change in the concept of the church itself from that of a commonwealth under Christ to that of a monarchy, with the bishops intervening, as ecclesiastical rulers, between Christ and the members of His body. This was extra-Scriptural. When the episcopacy became sacerdotal-priestly-it became apostate.

So with other concepts and practices. Bishop Irenaeus of Gaul, himself a great defender of the church against heresies, insists that the truth is to be found among the bishops of churches founded by the apostles, who have transmitted the truth to their successors. [40] This thesis laid down not only the foundation for the doctrine of apostolic succession but also the flimsy basis for authoritative

tradition. Tertullian of North Africa developed this further: that the Scriptures are not sufficient to combat heresy; tradition must be depended upon. [41] He lists some half-dozen practices, including methods of observing the Lord's day (Sunday) and making the sign of the cross, which, since there is for these no Scriptural foundation, prove, he says, that tradition is valid, since the church is practicing them. [42]

Borrowing Pagan Practices

Actually, the churchmen's argument as it developed in the next hundred years or so, ran somewhat thus: We worship the true God and His Son Jesus Christ. Hence we have the truth, and the truth is honored by any practice we follow, as long as we worship the true God. It is well expressed by Cardinal Newman in the following:

"Confiding then in the power of Christianity to resist the infection of evil, and to transmute the very instruments and appendages of demon worship to an evangelical use, and feeling also that these usages, had originally come from primitive revelations and from the instinct of nature, though they had been corrupted. And that they must invent what they needed, if they did not use what they found. And that they were moreover possessed of the very archetypes, of which paganism attempted the shadows. The rulers of the Church from early times were prepared, should the occasion arise, to adopt, or imitate, or sanction the existing rites and customs of the populace, as well as the philosophy of the educated class." [43]

The changes came therefore both by developments within and borrowings from without. Cardinal Newman frankly lists a dozen or more practices that gradually came into the church, all of them borrowings from paganism:

"It is not necessary to go into a subject which the diligence of Protestant writers has made familiar to most of us. The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; votive offerings on recovery from illness; holy water; asylums. Holy days and seasons, use of calendars, processions, blessings on the fields; sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure, the ring in marriage, turning to the East, images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant, and the Kyrie Eleison, are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church!" [44]

Changes in Baptism

The mode of baptism underwent a change very early, and with it the understanding of its significance. By AD 150, trine immersion had been introduced, and pouring was practiced along with immersion. [45] By AD 225 an elaborate baptism ritual had been developed. By this time too, in the minds of some, baptism had become a saving sacrament, its value residing not in its proof of faith on the part of the one baptized, but in the act of baptism itself. At about AD 225 Origen argued for infant baptism, in order to save infants who might otherwise suffer damnation because of the original sin they had inherited. [46] To him baptism had become efficacious without faith on the part of the baptized. But while the sacerdotal nature of baptism was being urged, the form of baptism was becoming of less importance. This is normal in religious transitions. But when a priesthood evolved to administer saving ordinances, apostasy was present.

The Ritualistic Eucharist

The Lord's Supper, instead of being celebrated wherever Christians gathered to eat together, as was the case in the apostolic church (cf. Acts 2:42 with Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 11:25, 26), [47] became a more formal rite. By about AD 150 it was a thanksgiving service, [48] and was celebrated in Rome on Sunday. [49] Very early it was called a sacrament, or oath, as a pledge to Christ. [50] It was soon called a sacrifice. [51] In succeeding centuries the Real Presence was being talked about for the bread and wine, but how significant it was theologically is not clear. The doctrine of transubstantiation emerged late. [52] But when the bread of the Lord's table became a sacrifice necessary to salvation, apostasy was present.

Veneration of Saints

One searches in vain in the Fathers for one writer who held clearly to the Biblical doctrine of the unconscious state of the dead, and there was therefore no safeguard against veneration of the martyrs.

In Tertullian's day, AD 225, services were held at the graves of the martyrs and by the time of Gregory Thaumaturgus (the miracle-worker), who died about AD 270, the bodies of the martyrs were distributed to various places, and Christians congregated for merrymaking at designated times to do honor to these martyrs. [53] Prayers to the saints and image worship easily followed.

Image Worship

Image worship came in gradually. Painting on the walls of churches was forbidden by the Spanish Council of Elvira in 305, [54] and it was not till the fifth century that Augustine reluctantly, [55] and Paulinus of Nola approvingly, [56] mentioned the widespread use in

the West of painting of Bible characters and martyrs and symbols of the Trinity on church walls. By the eighth century, when a furious controversy broke out in the East against images, the Roman Church was ready to take, and did take, a strong position against the iconoclasts and in

favor of images. One reason the pope had for crowning Charlemagne, in AD 800, was to set him up against the empress Irene of Constantinople, [57] who was perhaps considered too weak to meet the iconoclasts in the East. The strong defense of image worship by the Roman Church accounts for the elimination of the second commandment of the Ten Commandments from its catechisms.

The Changed Attitude Toward the Law

To understand how freely the early church adopted or rejected days of religious celebration, one must know the early Christian attitude toward the law of God. The law of God was holy and of obligation to Christians, but the law as given on Mount Sinai contained Hebrew ceremonial elements that the church could and should disregard. [58] Thus the Sabbath was viewed as Hebraic, and was gradually set aside. Other days of worship could be maintained or even newly introduced as might seem best in current Christian practice.

Sunday Observance

This was the basis in thought for a most remarkable sign of apostasy and a practice which developed within the Church of Rome itself: the use of the first day of the week, popularly known as the day of the sun, as a day of Christian worship. Sunday was being used in Rome for weekly Christian worship by AD 155.

The earliest Christians had taken over, from the Jews, not only the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, which Christ had observed (Luke 4:16; Matthew 12:12; Mark 1:21-34), but also, in spite of Paul's warning to the Galatians about the danger of their observing "days, and months, and times, and years" (Galatians 4: 10), the observance of certain Jewish annual festivals. Passover, or Pasch, modernly Easter, the fourteenth of Nisan, and Pentecost, modernly Whitsuntide, the sixth of Sivan, were the ones the church most particularly retained. (Acts 20:6, 16; 1 Corinthians 16:8.) [59] The significance of the latter festival to Christians was deepened by their memory of the visitation of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles of Jerusalem on that day. Passover was revered by the Christians because it was on Friday afternoon, the fourteenth of Nisan, that Christ died on the cross, at the same time as the killing of the Passover lamb by the Jews. On the Friday night that Christ spent in the tomb, the Jews were eating the Passover lamb. (Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5; John 19:14, 31.) [60]

It became a tradition among early Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, to celebrate the crucifixion of Christ at the time the Jews were entering their Passover season. The Christians took their reckoning of the date from the Jews, and gathered in homes or in hired halls (they had no church buildings in that early day) at the same time the Jews were gathering for the celebration of the Passover. For this practice there is not a single word of authorization in the Bible.

We are told by a writer at AD 200 that this practice began as early as the time of the apostle Philip and the apostle John. [61] Some Christians apparently kept only the day, the fourteenth of Nisan. Others celebrated the period from the crucifixion to the resurrection. Still others observed the whole time of the Jewish festival, [62] which was the Feast of Unleavened Bread prescribed in the law of Moses (Exodus 12:1-20; 23:14, 15; 34:18; Leviticus 23:5-14; Numbers 28:16-25; Deuteronomy 16:1-8), lasting from the fifteenth till the twenty-first day of Nisan.

But in any case the celebration centered on the day of the crucifixion, the fourteenth of Nisan, when "Christ our Passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7) died for sinners. It was observed without concern for which day of the week it might be, as Christmas is celebrated among Christians today by date and not by day of the week.

It was this custom that the Church of Rome undertook to change, by leading all Christians to celebrate annually, not the crucifixion, but the resurrection. [63] And not on the fourteenth of Nisan, regardless of the day of the week, but always on Sunday, the first day of the week, regardless of the exact date. The Church of Rome won in this endeavor.

The reason the Church of Rome assigned for Sunday observance was that Christ rose upon that day. [64] The observance began under Sixtus, [65] who was the papa (pope), [66] or leader, of the Church of Rome about AD 125.

But this was not at first a weekly observance, coming once each week after the Sabbath, as it was later, and as it is today. It was annual.

Why did the Church of Rome make this change? One reason was anti-judaism, the ancestor of the anti-Semitism of today. The Jews had always been opposed to Christianity. They rejected Jesus when He was on earth. They brought about His crucifixion at the hands of the Romans. (Matthew 27:22-26.) They discredited the fact of His resurrection. (Matthew 28:11-15.) They persecuted the New

Testament church (Acts 4:1-3; 5:17-41), even to the death, as in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60; 8:1; 9:1-3). They led the pagan Roman authorities to persecute the Christians, and indeed told such ugly tales about them that mobs in the cities were incited to bloody violence against the followers of Christ. [67] Tertullian named the synagogues “fountains of persecution.” [68]

But the Christians had cause to dread the Jews for political reasons. The Jews had always been a problem to their Roman conquerors. As the “chosen” people of God they resented deeply being ruled by despised Gentiles, and rebelled again and again. They fought against Herod when he sought to assume the kingship of the Jews granted him by the Roman senate. [69] They caused the removal of Archelaus, Herod’s son (not without cause), as ruler in Jerusalem, [70] and brought about the seating of a Roman procurator instead. [71] Their bitter antagonism toward the Romans becomes clear in the Gospels.

In Acts 18:2 we learn that all Jews were expelled from Rome. In the year 66 the Jews’ rebellious spirit led them into a furious revolt, which resulted, AD 70, [72] in the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the death of thousands of Jews. From then on the Jews were especially marked as a political problem in the empire. There was another outbreak about forty years later, [73] not so serious or so widespread, but still damaging to any good relations between the empire and Judaism.

About the time Pope Sixtus was beginning to bring about the change in the Christian spring festival, the worst revolt of all broke out. For a period of years during the reign of Hadrian, and over a wide extent of the Roman Empire, the Jews rebelled. Thousands upon thousands of them were killed; thousands were driven from the empire. The city of Jerusalem was again completely destroyed. A plow was symbolically dragged over its desolate site, and Roman decrees forbade any Jew again to set his foot upon the spot. The Romans then proceeded to rebuild the city as a strictly Gentile town. [74]

Christians in the city of Rome especially dreaded being confused with the Jews. It was known that Christianity had sprung from the Jews and that some of the practices and observances of Christians were like those of the Jews. There was good political reason for Pope Sixtus to lead his church away from a celebration timed to the Jewish Passover, when he sought to have the spring festival fall always upon a Sunday, instead of upon the fourteenth of Nisan. The church sought to avoid being thought Jewish.

“To prepare the way for the work which he designed to accomplish, Satan had led the Jews, before the advent of Christ, to load down the Sabbath with the most rigorous exactions, making its observance a burden. Now, taking advantage of the false light in which he had thus caused it to be regarded, he cast contempt upon it as a Jewish institution. While Christians generally continued to observe the Sunday as a joyous festival, he led them, in order to show their hatred of Judaism, to make the Sabbath a fast, a day of sadness and gloom.” [75]

But for the pope to stress the resurrection day meant that he was stressing the day of the sun. The spring had for ages been a special time for the annual worship of the sun. [76]

Astrologers had named as the sun’s day the day coincidental with the Jewish first day of the week, and sun worshipers, as Tertullian tells us, were using this day to move their lips in adoration to the sun as they faced the east at daybreak. [77]

The first hour of the day of the sun was used to reverence the sun, as the first hour of the moon’s day was used to reverence the moon. [78] And so on through the cycle of the seven days, for Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn each had a day, [79] with Saturn’s day coinciding with the seventh-day Sabbath. [80]

A converted sun worshiper would not feel out of place at the spring festival, beginning to be urged by Pope Sixtus of Rome, for it fell both at a season and on a day familiar to him as a sun worshiper. The pope’s insistence that the resurrection, and not the crucifixion, must be celebrated in the spring, and not on the Jewish fourteenth of Nisan, but always on Sunday, the day of the resurrection, put Christians, by an ecclesiastical trick as it were, in the position of honoring the sun’s day.

About twenty years after the time of Pope Sixtus, when Polycarp, the head of the church of Smyrna and famous martyr, visited the church at Rome, he knew no celebration of the resurrection and no honoring of Sunday. He and Pope Anicetus of Rome discussed the question, but they avoided controversy, and each agreed to follow the custom he had been observing. Pope Anicetus declared that his practice went back to the time of Sixtus, and Polycarp said that his went back to the apostles. ` They “agreed to disagree.”

A rather apocryphal source, the *Liber Pontificalis*, states that at about this same time a brother of Pope Pius 1, named Hermas, had a dream in which an angel dressed as a shepherd appeared to him and instructed him that “the holy feast of Easter be observed upon the Lord’s day.” [82]

We may doubt the dream without doubting the use that Pius made of the story!

But Sunday observance was not left by Rome as an annual matter. Another step in Sunday observance was made between the years AD 125 and 150. Writing at about AD 155, Justin Martyr tells us:

“And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows, and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead.” [49]

Justin wrote his Apology to the emperor Antoninus Pius, and in it made a point of telling him of this Christian act of worship taking place on the day of the sun. He was in Rome when he was writing, and he was describing the weekly Sunday keeping of the church at Rome and the surrounding churches under its influence. The portion of the Apology dealing with Christian worship on Sunday is in the context of a comparison of Christianity with Mithraism.

Just how the step was made from the annual observance of Sunday to weekly worship on Sunday is not clear, but the step was made, and was made in Rome.

Under the guise of honoring the blessed resurrection of our Lord, Rome brought about the honoring of the day of the sun. Writes Ellen G. White:

“I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes. But the pope had changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws.” [83]

“The pope has changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day. He has thought to change the very commandment that was given to cause man to remember his Creator. He has thought to change the greatest commandment in the Ten Commandments, and thus make himself equal with God, or even exalt himself above God. The Lord is unchangeable, therefore His law is immutable; but the pope has exalted himself above God, in seeking to change His immutable precepts of holiness, justice, and goodness. He has trampled under foot God’s sanctified day, and, on his own authority, put in its place one of the six laboring days.” [84]

“Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants, by observing the Sunday, are recognizing her power. . . . The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept the Sabbath of her creating, while they reject the Bible Sabbath, they virtually admit this assumption.” [85]

How the pope did this is illustrated by an act of Pope Victor, about AD 200, in seeking to enforce annual Sunday observance. He saw that quiet pressure from Rome in favor of Sunday was not too successful. In his pride of office he ordered all bishops excommunicated who would not follow Rome’s plan for the spring festival. At that early day no church recognized the authority of the pope outside of Italy; in fact, the Papal See was not always honored in Italy. But Victor, assuming a general authority which later popes were increasingly to exercise, sought to legislate for all Christendom. And it was in the interests of Sunday. He failed in his plan of excommunication, but not in the respect given to the day of the sun.” [86]

The attempt of Pope Victor to excommunicate those who would not honor the resurrection Sunday at the annual spring festival illustrates better than anything else could the type of pretensions the bishop of Rome was then making and would from then on make, as well as the amazingly early date at which these pretensions began. And Sunday observance, it must be noted, was the vehicle the pope used in this early attempt at aggrandizement.

It is valid to put this change to the account of the Church of Rome, as witnessed by Socrates, skilled historian of the church, writing about AD 450. He says:

“For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.” [87] (Italics supplied.)

Doubtless the “ancient tradition- was the stress which Popes Sixtus, Pius, Anicetus, and Victor had in succession put upon the honoring of Sunday.

Here is an example, a signal one in view of Daniel 7:25, where the Papacy performed its own unique act of apostasy. In nearly all the other apostasies, general in the secularized church, the Church of Rome participated, particularly in respect to forms and practices, much of which it borrowed from paganism. As head of an increasingly pagan based church, the Papacy rose to power.

The Sacerdotal Church

But the combined result upon the church of such evolvments as the moniscopacy, a baptism believed necessary to salvation, and the Lord's Supper become a sacrifice, was to effect a complete transformation. The product was a sacerdotal church with the bishops, and the clergy they controlled, acting as priests in the mediatorial sense, and baptism and the Eucharist becoming the means of salvation in the ritualistic sense.

Thus by AD 400 the church in general, and the Church of Rome in particular, had become a mystery cult. Certainly by AD 500 it had become as much a religion of priest craft and sacrament as any of the heathen religions roundabout. [88]

Indeed, by that time paganism had become the object of persecution by state and church, hiding out in rural districts; and apostate Christianity had become the favorite of a corrupt government, and of masses of people, touched but little by the truths of Christianity and acquainted less with its divine Founder-masses of people who flocked into the churches, carrying with them much of their pagan superstitions and practices.

The Evolution of the Papacy

Steps can be noted for the rise to power of the Roman Church, mysterious as this rise seems to be, and Satan engineered as we know it has been. Some of these steps were situations created and enlarged upon by a Papacy very conscious of its growing powers. Others were opportunities shrewdly entered upon.

1. The Church at the Political Capital

The very fact that the church at Rome was seated in the capital of the one great empire, and hence the center of political life, economics, law, culture, and religion of the world, goes far to account for the early beginning of the Roman Church. Anything coming out of Rome was important. Religious opinions coming from the respectable church at Rome would be listened to by all the sister churches.

2. Clement's Letter to Corinth

Clement, leader of the church in Rome in AD 96, wrote a letter to the church in Corinth. [33] Corinth was having trouble over the election of its officers, and Clement wrote from Rome a letter of kindly admonition, urging the Corinthians to find peace in their internal difficulties. The fact that Clement of Rome could write this letter to a church outside his normal geographical jurisdiction is used by papal protagonists to show the early authority of Rome, although Clement shows that he feels no such authority. But the churches did listen to Rome's voice.

3. Apostolic Succession Applied to Rome

This is made plain by Irenaeus, a courageous leader in the church in a time of persecution, bishop of the churches in Gaul (France), and prolific writer in opposition to heresies. The title of his best-known work is *Against Heresies*, written before AD 200.

Irenaeus met the question of where could be found Christian truth to use in pressing the battle against the heresies of his day, by emphasizing that Jesus Christ had the truth, and passed this body of truth on to His disciples, the apostles, who founded churches throughout the world and passed on the deposit of truth they had received from Christ to the bishops who were elected to succeed them. These in turn passed the deposit of holy truth on to the bishops who succeeded them. Therefore, if one wished to know that he really possessed truth and not heresy, he should appeal to the bishops of the churches founded by the apostles. Of all the churches known in Christendom as reliably orthodox, and excellent for consulting, Irenaeus especially mentioned Ephesus, where the apostle John had held forth; Smyrna, where his own mentor, Polycarp, a disciple of John, had been bishop; and Rome, to which city, says Irenaeus, all come to confer. [40]

Notice what Irenaeus has done in thus establishing this position: (1) He has put the church in Rome in a position of chief consideration; (2) he has laid the basis for the theory of apostolic succession; (3) by avoiding reference to the authority of the Scriptures, and putting forward instead the authority of the apostolic bishops, he has laid the basis for the authority of tradition.

Indeed, as already noted, a late contemporary of Irenaeus' in the West, Tertullian, went so far as to say frankly that Scripture is not sufficient to combat heresy: tradition must be used. [41] Tertullian argued the validity of tradition by showing how the churches of his

day were maintaining practices for which there is no Scriptural authority-only tradition. He gave as examples special ceremonies at baptism. The dispensing of the emblems at the Lord's Supper by the presiding elder only; making birthday offerings for the dead at the anniversary of martyrdom; forbidding fasting or kneeling on the Lord's day, Easter, and Pentecost; care in avoiding spilling any of the emblems on the ground; and the making of the sign of the cross. This was at AD 225. Thus early was laid a foundation, albeit a flimsy one, in Christian teaching for the apostolic and traditional claims of the Papacy.

4. Victor's Excommunications

Rome put forth her claims of hegemony in the church early. We have already seen an illustration of this in the bold attempt of Pope Victor 1 at about AD 200, to excommunicate all the bishops who would not follow Rome in honoring Sunday as the resurrection day. We are told that Victor was opposed in this by some bishops, such as Irenaeus, who did not think this the proper way to handle the matter, and by others who refused to follow the pope's dictates concerning Sunday. [62] We are not told the motives that actuated Victor. It certainly gave impulsion to Rome's advocacy of Sunday observance, and it advanced the pretensions of the Papacy as having power over the churches.

5. The Petrine Theory

For all this papal aggrandizement there had to be theological support in Scripture. This was provided by Pope Calixtus, AD 220. He brought to light the Petrine theory; that is, the theory that when Christ said, "Thou art Peter [Petros], and upon this rock [Petra] I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18), [20] He meant that the church which Peter founded-Rome-should be the foundation and cornerstone of the church. The idea took. Although challenged by Tertullian [89] and questioned by even Cyprian, [90] it became the most useful single basic theological principle to undergird the Papacy.

The Scriptures do not know Peter as the founder of the church of Christ. In the Gospels, Peter was an impulsive, eccentric, and not always dependable disciple, who, although in the circle of Christ's friends closest to Him (cf. Matthew 4:18-22 with Mark 1: 16-20 and Luke 5: 1-11. Mark 5:35-43 with Luke 8:49-56; Matthew 17:1-13 with Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36. Matthew 26:36-46 with Mark 14:32-42. Luke 22:39-46), denied Him when Christ most needed a loyal word and look (Matthew 26:69-75. Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-27). Christ prayed for his conversion and bade him strengthen the brethren (Luke 22:32) and feed the Lord's sheep (John 21:15-17). Peter was an active member in the college of apostles as pictured in the book of Acts, giving the apostles counsel that they found it well to accept (Acts 1: 1526), leading out in evangelism (Acts 8:14-25), and facing the problems of the infant church (Acts 9:32 to 11:18). But never was Peter recognized as the cornerstone of the young church.

Peter was not the rock on which Christ's church has been raised. Christ is the Rock, of the Old Testament and of the New. (Daniel 2:34, 44, 45; Matthew 22:42-44; 1 Corinthians 10:4.) He only is the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:9-13), the cornerstone, upon which the New Testament apostles and prophets have erected the sacred edifice, which is the temple of Christ (Ephesians 2:19-22). Peter knew himself as but one of the living stones built into this temple, which is in turn founded upon Christ. (1 Peter 2:4-8)

But weak as the Petrine theory was historically and exegetically, tradition fed it with trumped-up stories of Peter on the Tiber. Synthetic Acts [91] and Recognitions [92] have Peter moving in and out of Rome in a bustle of evangelistic activity, reinforced by ecclesiastical authority. The most clear-cut tradition appears in a somewhat respectable historical document, the Chronicon of Eusebius, the church historian, which is lost in its original form, but is extant in a Continuation by Jerome, noted fourth-century monk and translator of the Scriptures. Here it is stated, under the year AD 44, that Peter spent twenty-five years preaching in Rome. [93]

It must be recognized that Peter was in Rome-at least once, when he was martyred about AD 68. [94] But the claim in the Chronicon is impossible of acceptance. Peter was in Jerusalem at the time of the ascension of Christ and the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit in AD 31. (Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-14, 37, 38) He continued there for some years and was doubtless in Jerusalem when Stephen was stoned in AD 34 (Acts 7:54-60; 8:1), for shortly thereafter he left, at the request of the apostles, to join Philip the deacon-evangelist in Samaria (Acts 8:14-25). He was in Joppa and Caesarea after the conversion of Paul in A. D. 35. (Acts 9:32 to 11:8) The next record we have of him, he is in prison during the reign of Herod Agrippa I, and was liberated by an angel just before Herod's death, which by other records is known to have taken place in AD 44. 2' To make the Chronicon true, Peter must needs have been in Rome immediately after this and for the next twenty-five years, until his martyrdom.

But he was present in Jerusalem at the council held there in AD 49-50 (Acts 15:7-11), and was in Antioch of Syria afterward, dissembling in the matter of eating with the Gentiles-for which misguided duplicity Paul "withstood him to the face" (Galatians 2:6-21). At some time, probably after this, Peter evangelized certain cities in the region of Asia Minor, for he addressed his first epistle to the converts there. (1 Peter 1:1)

There is, then, no twenty-five years' continuous service of Peter in Rome. At best there could have been only intermittent visits during a period of twenty-five years-if that. Paul hints that Peter was as itinerant as himself. (1 Corinthians 9:5)

There is no proof that Peter founded the church at Rome. There is Scriptural reason to think he did not. Paul declared that he did not evangelize areas already visited by other apostles. (Romans 15:20.) This would have ruled out Rome for Paul, had Peter evangelized it. But Paul wrote to the church at Rome an epistle, the deepest, most systematic, theologically, that he ever wrote, and spoke definitely of plans to visit the church there. This he would not have done had Rome been under Peter's oversight. It is most likely that the church at Rome was founded by Jews who had pilgrimed to Jerusalem for Pentecost in A. D. 31, and having been converted on that occasion to Christ (Acts 2: 10), had returned to Rome with the joy of the new-found Savior in their hearts and started the infant church. The Petrine theory is without foundation historically or exegetically.

6. The Emperor Aurelian and the Pope of Rome

The bishop of Rome was, however, recognized by the emperor as early as the third century, and by a pagan emperor at that. The circumstances were these:

Bishop Paul of Samosata in Syria had been convicted by a church council and expelled from his bishopric. This was about AD 270. But he would not vacate the episcopal property. Somehow the dispute reached the emperor's ears, and he ordered the bishops of Rome and Italy to decide who should occupy the episcopal property. [95]

Thus, even before Constantine had legalized Christianity in the empire, the Church of Rome had come to a certain place of hegemony in the thinking of Christians, and even in the imperial concepts themselves. This not-too-significant ruling of Aurelian was the first of a series of imperial rulings advantageous to the Papacy, each one more important than its predecessor.

7. Constantine and the Bishops

Constantine was the next emperor to single out the church for honors. It was the second year of his enthronement in Rome, in AD 313, that Constantine, with the probably forced cooperation of Licinius, the co emperor, issued the Edict of Milan. [96] Under this decree the church ceased to be a *religio illicita*; instead, it became completely free to carry on its work. Indeed, it became virtually a department of the state. Churchmen rejoiced beyond measure at their new freedom:

“And finally a bright and splendid day, overshadowed by no cloud, illuminated with beams of heavenly light the churches of Christ throughout the entire world. And not even those without our communion were prevented from sharing in the same blessings, or at least from coming under their influence and enjoying a part of the benefits bestowed upon us by God.” [97]

The legalization of the church by Constantine was probably as significant an event as any in church history. But the new liberty cost the church dear. It not only led to the succeeding Roman emperors professing Christianity; it greatly enhanced the position of the Christian church in the eyes of the people of the empire and resulted in a great influx into the church by those who thought that by affiliating with the Christian church they could somehow benefit by the favors of the emperor. These sycophants did not become in life like the Nazarene whose name they professed. More than this, Constantine and his successors issued a series of laws that greatly enhanced the powers of the bishops and made them for all practical purposes functionaries of the Roman government. [98]

Constantine exempted the clergy from taxation and from onerous municipal duties. Declaring the bishops to be better judges than his own officials, [99] he authorized them to hear civil cases, [100] a function they had through the reign of several emperors.

Indeed, the emperor found no untried novices when he called on bishops to take the judicial bench, but capable administrators with a tradition of two centuries of hearing of cases at suit. Jesus had authorized the church to be judge in matters of dispute between brethren. (Matthew 18:15-18) Paul instructed Christian disputants to use not the courts of the world but the court of the church for redress. (1 Corinthians 6:1-6) [101] A fourth-century source refers to these church trials. [102] The presbyters, and ultimately the overseer, as he rose to the status of monarchical bishop, must have presided at these hearings, and a wealth of judicial experience must have resided among the bishops as a class.

In the fifth century both Bishop Augustine of Hippo and Patriarch John Chrysostom of Constantinople complained bitterly at the weight of their judicial burdens in the church. [103]

It was bishops judicially experienced whom Constantine made public judges of heresy, and provided that the sentences they handed down should have the force of law. There were laws which named the heresies under condemnation, [104] and even named the orthodox bishops. [105] Thus was laid a foundation for the episcopal inquisition, the forerunner of the papal Inquisition.

As a consequence of these favors by the emperor, the bishops sat in the local councils of government; and when civil administration broke down in western Rome, as it did in the two centuries following Constantine, and the civil officers fled to escape exorbitant and confiscatory taxation, social and economic ruin, or capture at the hands of marauding German hordes, [106] the bishops were the only trained administrators prepared to take over. Take over they did sometimes eagerly, more often reluctantly. Be it remembered that all

the powers that any run-of-the-mill bishop enjoyed in the state and in society the bishop of Rome enjoyed the more, for he was the greater.

8. The Imperial Throne Moved to Constantinople

This became particularly true for the pope when Constantine removed his capital in AD 330 to Byzantium on the Bosphorus, where he had built the new city of Constantinople. [107] The ancient city of Rome was now bereft of its importance as a capital, and the remaining great official, the only one left to grace the once-proud center on the Tiber, was Pope Sylvester I, with his successors. The Papacy quickly filled in the vacuum created by the removal of the imperial court eastward. A nineteenth-century cardinal writes that although the will of Constantine, called the Donation of Constantine, is acknowledged fictitious, the “principle” is that Constantine left to Sylvester and his successors a legacy by his own removal:

“But from the hour when Constantine, in the language of the Roman law, [Dominicus Solo, *De Potestate Ecclesiastica*, -Bibliotheca Pontif. Rocaberti, tom. x. Page 136.] ‘Deo jubente,’ by the command of God, translated the seat of empire to Constantinople, from that moment there never reigned in Rome a temporal prince to whom the Bishops of Rome owed a permanent allegiance. From that hour God Himself liberated His Church. [Suarez, *Opuscula, De Immunitate Ecclesiastica*, lib. iv. 3: ‘Dicendum ergo est summum Pontificem ex divino jure habere exemptionem et immunitatem ab omni judicio ac jurisdictione seculari etiam imperatorum et regum.’] It was from the first involved in the principles of the supernatural sovereignty of the Church on earth, that it should be one day free from all temporal allegiance, though as yet its liberation was not accomplished. David possessed the promise of the kingdom of Israel; but he waited long. Jeroboam had the promise of the ten tribes; but he was a usurper, because he grasped it before the time. The Church followed not the example of Jeroboam, but that of David, whose Son is its own divine Head. It waited until such time as God should break its bonds asunder, and should liberate it from subjection to civil powers, and enthrone it in the possession of a temporal sovereignty of its own. [The temporal power belongs to all Christians.] Therefore, in that day when the first Christian emperor withdrew himself into the far East, he abandoned Rome and Italy; and the ‘donation’ of Constantine, as it is called, expresses not a fact, but a principle. Constantine signed no instrument of donation; but the manner of conceiving and of speaking, in those simple ages, so represented the providential fact of the donation of God. God gave to the Vicar of His Son the possession of the city in which thirty of his predecessors had sealed their testimony with their blood. The donation of Constantine consisted in the simple providential fact, that he departed from Rome to Constantinople, moved by an impulse from God Himself. It would delay me too long to dwell upon the motives which God implanted in the first Christian emperor, to impel him to abandon his sovereignty in Rome. They were motives of a supernatural origin, and he was but obeying a supernatural impulse. The donation was of God, and not of man. Simple ages have supposed that the great act was engrossed upon a parchment, illuminated, sealed, and signed, and laid upon the altar of St. Peter. This, as a fable, represents most truly the act of Divine Providence. Now, perhaps in some histories you will be told that the Creek emperors used still to claim possession over Italy; that they sent their exarchs and their armies to Ravenna and to Rome. You will be told also, that afterwards the kings of France claimed it; that the French emperors, Pepin and Charlemagne, claimed Italy and Rome as their own. So the world writes history. Such is not the fact.” [108]

9. The Title “Pontifex Maximus”

There were emperors seated variously at Rome, Ravenna, and Milan [109] between 330 and 476, but the popes were able to take advantage in troubled times of men on thrones who were pressed beyond measure with affairs too complicated for them, or men complacent or indifferent or simply weak.

It was Gratian, not noted for his force of character, who opened the way for a title to be seized by the pope, by himself resigning it. The emperor, a Christian, declined any longer at about 380 to bear the ancient pagan Roman title of Pontifex Maximus; [110] that is, chief pontiff, a title that belonged to Roman kings of the misty old days of the past as heads of the state cult, and had come down through consuls and emperors to the fourth century. [111] When Gratian resigned the title, Pope Damascus, less modest, as eager as his predecessors to seek the place of greatness in religion and society, assumed it. [112] It had been applied to the popes early, as complimentary, to the disgust of men like Tertullian. [113] Now the pope took it as his right.

10. The Appellate Power of the Papacy

The record of the extension of the papal influence first, then jurisdiction, then control, over churches beyond the Roman church’s appropriate ecclesiastical boundaries, is so long as to be tiresome in its recital. We have seen that Clement, overseer at Rome at the end of the apostolic age, wrote a letter of kindly rebuke to the quarreling church at Corinth. [33] This was to him but an exercise of fraternity; his successors have claimed for it an exercise of hegemony. One hundred years later Victor I, it will be recalled, tried to behead at one stroke the churches where Sunday was not being honored at the annual paschal service, by excommunicating the recalcitrant overseers of those churches. From this he was prevented by vigorous protests from those otherwise favorable to Sunday, [86] but his successors have made of it an illustration that popes have always had the power to dictate to the churches.

As early as the year 270, Pope Dionysius of Rome corrected the theology of a neighbor bishop. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria had described the Sonship of Christ to God in a way objectionable to some of his clergy. They called the pope's attention to the statement, and at the pope's protest Bishop Dionysius corrected his theology. [114]

The Council of Nicaea in 325, in its sixth canon, named Rome as entitled, along with the great churches of the East, to supremacy in its own territory, [115] which was virtually an ecclesiastical acknowledgment of papal supremacy in the West. Constantinople was declared second only to Rome at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

[116] The Council of Chalcedon in 451 followed this with an acknowledgment that the church of Constantinople was of high authority and dignity because the emperor was seated there, and second only to the church of Rome.

[117] And the theologically-minded emperor Justinian late in his reign ruled that Rome was first and Constantinople second in the hierarchy of episcopal sees. [118]

The Council of Sardica in 347, deserted by most of its Eastern bishops in the heat of a dispute over Arianism, voted that any bishop under accusation of heresy might appeal to the pope. The pope was named-Pope Julian; [119] but ever since, the Papacy has claimed that this established an appellate superiority for all popes.

The early fifth century saw the Papacy taking a hand in controversies in North Africa, in which by taking sides at the right moment and with the more compliant, but not always the more righteous, parties in dispute, it was able to tighten its hold on that area, so troubled by both theological and military wars. [120] The popes took part more and more in civil affairs, and became more and more ecclesiastical mentors.

11. The Decree of the Emperor Gratian

This was augmented by an imperial decree, accredited to Gratian, who had complacently yielded the title of Pontifex Maximus. Gratian, with the co emperors collaborating, issued a decree in 381, declaring the Trinitarian doctrine of Rome, the see of Peter, concurred in by Alexandria, to be the orthodox one," obviously in contrast to Arianism.

12. Contributions of Pope Leo I

Pope Leo I, the Great, 440-461, is markedly an illustration of the growing power of the Papacy. Leo was a natural-born leader of men, a skilled theologian, and a shrewd politician. The times gave him opportunity to exercise these gifts. During his administration the Papacy took definite strides forward as the strongest institution touching the lives of the people of Western Europe.

A serious controversy with Bishop Hilary, Primate of Gaul, in which the pope bested his adversary, gave him opportunity of securing from Valentinian III, emperor in the West, a decree that made the pope of Rome umpire in all ecclesiastical controversies, and required of Roman governors that they see to it that those summoned before the pope's court be there. [122] This imperial decree, dated 445, although not stressed too urgently by the Papacy, because they do not wish to allow the thought that the state has given it its power, did as a matter of fact make its contribution to the control of the Papacy over the churches of Christendom.

The Council of Chalcedon, which met in 451, gave Leo opportunity to manifest his ability as theologian. The council had before it the teachings of the Nestorians that Christ was of two natures, with the divine nature predominating by far. The bishops had from Pope Leo his statement on the nature of Christ, that famous Tome of Leo, holding that the human and the divine in Christ were united in one Person, and this was accepted by the Council of Chalcedon as the orthodox position on the nature of Christ. [123] He was, however, unable to make heard effectively his vigorous protests against Chalcedon's action, putting Rome and Constantinople on an equality.

Leo's reign was in the troubled days of the barbarian invasions. It was while he was pope that the Huns swept westward across Europe. Having been turned back in central Gaul, they turned eastward and, cutting across northern Italy, threatened Rome. There are historical sources which indicate that Leo with a party met Attila of the Huns and had conference with him. After this interview, discounted by some and believed by others, the Huns turned away and moved on eastward. [124] Attila died shortly after, and the Huns disappeared as a power in Europe. Four years later, in 455, Gaiseric, leader of the Vandals who had migrated a half century before across Gaul through Spain and then had proceeded to conquer North Africa, was raiding Italy from the Vandal ships that sailed across the Mediterranean from North Africa. Gaiseric led his forces into Rome. It was the intervention of Leo that caused Gaiseric to withdraw from the city and leave it with far less damage done than might otherwise have been the case. [125] Even so, vandalism continues to be a name for destruction, dating from this pillaging of Rome.

Leo honored the Sunday. He confirmed what preceding popes had ordered, that baptisms should take place only on Easter Sunday and on Pentecostal Sunday. [126] He warned against pagans who were using Sunday and Monday for the worship of the sun and the

moon. [127] But he emphasized the sacredness of Sunday by pointing out that it was the memorial of the day upon which God created light, the day upon which Christ rose from the dead, the day upon which He breathed the Holy Spirit upon His disciples, the day upon which the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Pentecost. [128]

13. Uprooting the Three Horns

The Emperor Justinian, 527-565, did much for the Papacy, although he was ruling the Roman Empire from the East, and was less than successful in endeavoring to bring back the entire West under his direct control. Indeed, it was his efforts to suppress the German tribes, whose kings were not too attentive to the wishes of the emperor at Constantinople, that gave him opportunity to aid the Papacy. Justinian's campaigns in the West accounted for two of the uprooted horns prophesied in the seventh chapter of Daniel. (Daniel 7:8, 24)

The uprooting of the first horn was accomplished before Justinian came to the throne. It will be remembered that the army of Odovacar was made up largely of Germans, the majority of them Herullans. His army found itself in 476 in Italy, stationed around Rome, and when Odovacar made upon the Roman emperor the usual demand for lands for his garrisoned troops, the emperor, Romulus Augustulus, or rather his father, Orestes, the general of all the western Roman armies, who was the actual ruler behind the throne,

refused to grant for Odovacar's troops what was customary: one third of the farmlands. When the determined German leader realized that the Romans were about to refuse completely his request, he took matters into his own hands. He put Orestes to death and incarcerated his young son, the emperor, the little Romulus, in a monastery. He then took the imperial insignia and sent them by messenger to the emperor at Constantinople, and told him that these trappings would no longer be needed in the West, for the emperor in the East was sufficient imperial authority for all. Odovacar then made himself virtually a king of Italy. [129]

He and his followers were Arians, and were probably an irritation to the Papacy seated at Rome. Odovacar interfered in the papal election of 483. [130] The emperor Zeno was being troubled in the East by the presence of the Ostrogoths in Greece and Thessaly, and authorized this German tribe to proceed west and take over Italy. When Theodoric, leader of the Ostrogoths, also Arian, arrived in Italy in 489, he was met by Odovacar, whom he defeated, but it was not till the year 493 that Theodoric secured the surrender of Odovacar, whom he shortly put to death. Theodoric made himself undisputed king of Italy. [131] Thus was uprooted the first horn, the Arian Odovacar, who was troubling the Papacy.

It was Justinian's armies that removed the other two horns. The Vandals had entered North Africa in the year 428, and in short order had overthrown the Roman forces in North Africa and made the region their own. [132] Gaiseric was an active Arian, and the Roman Catholic authorities in North Africa irritated him, and brought down upon themselves the full power of the persecuting inclinations of the Vandals. [133] Since the completion of the conquest of Carthage by the Romans in 142 BC, North Africa had been virtually a suburb, albeit a very important suburb, of the city of Rome. In the same way the churches of North Africa were considered daughters of the Roman Church, and over them the Roman Church had exerted a strong influence. The Catholics in North Africa appealed to Justinian for help, and in 533 the Vandals were defeated, and indeed wiped out as a factor in history. [134]

Having finished the conquest of the Vandals, Belisarius proceeded under orders from the emperor Justinian to Italy, where in 534 he began a campaign against the Ostrogoths.

The Ostrogoths under their king Theodoric had been very tolerant in Italy. But the Papacy could not endure the rule of an Arian king. It disapproved Theodoric's kindly treatment of the Jews. It urged upon Justinian the importance of taking away all political power from the Goths. [135] In sending Belisarius, Justinian was making a reality of his theoretical rule of Italy and of Western Europe, and of his sincere desire to suppress Arianism, which he hated. For Justinian was a theologian in his own right and an avowed extirpator of heresy.

The campaign against the Ostrogoths lasted for twenty years. It saw Belisarius succeeded by Narses. It saw the Roman armies again and again defeated. But little by little the Ostrogoths were driven back, decimated, and finally, cut to pieces, eliminated from history in the year 553. [136] But the important point in the campaign for those interpreting prophecy is that in 536 the Ostrogoths were driven from the city of Rome and their siege lifted in 538. [137] They re-entered the city in 540, [138] but it was for only a short time, in one of those gatherings of strength sometimes manifested by a dying man. The third horn was uprooted.

14. The Decree of Justinian

Coincidental with the suppression of the Vandals came a letter from Emperor Justinian, addressed to Pope John of Rome, with which the theologian-emperor dispatched a statement of orthodox belief that he was sending to all the bishops of the realm. The theological treatise has been largely forgotten, but not the important covering letter to Pope John.

This is the famous *Decretum Justinianum*, familiar to every Seventh-day Adventist evangelist and teacher, which set forth the place of the Papacy as responsible umpire in every religious controversy in Christendom. [139] This was in 533, five years before the expulsion of the Ostrogoths from Rome.

It is not necessary to find the beginning of the 1260-day period in an undefined area of time lying between 533 and 538. It was once thought that Justinian's recognition of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Papacy was written in 538. Its placement at the proper date does not vitiate 538 as the beginning of the 1260 years. The range of dates for the imperial recognition of the Church of Rome is from 275 through 445 to 533. The range of dates for the suppression of the Arian tribal foes of Rome is 493 to 538. The steps in the process of the elimination of the three horns and the elevation of the little horn- to a place of potential politico ecclesiastical importance are gradual ones. The actual point of the beginning for the prophecy can well be punctiliar, 538-particularly since history furnishes at the other end of the prophetic period a punctiliar date, 1798.

15. The Contribution of Pope Gregory I

Forty years after the disappearance of the Ostrogoths there came to the papal throne Gregory I, the Great. His reign was in the fourteen busy years from 590 to 604. The Lombards had already moved into Italy and were occupying the vacuum left by the Ostrogoths. They were Arian Christians when they entered the empire, with no regard for the objectives and desires of Papacy or empire. [140] But Gregory was able to establish Roman Catholicism among them and to hold them in check by political machinations.

Gregory's missionary interest led him to send Augustine to England to take Roman Catholicism there-a task he himself would gladly have accomplished. Augustine was barely successful in his mission, but Roman Catholicism gradually spread from the south of England, pushing back the already decadent Celtic Church. The Anglo-Saxon kinglets of England realized that their political interests lay with the Continent. They respected the power of the Roman Church. Gradually they accepted the dogmas of Rome and Rome's hegemony in ecclesiastical affairs. [141] When the king of North Umbria at the Council of Whitby in 664 decided that he should affiliate with the church whose chief saint, Peter, presided at the gates of heaven, he turned away from the Celtic Church, and the last political stronghold of that ancient form of Christianity was gone. [142]

Gregory's works are still read, and his influence was felt in Western Europe through the rather decadent years that followed for the Papacy.

16. The Decree of the Emperor Phocas

Somewhat has been made of the recognition of papal orthodoxy and ecclesiastical supremacy by the usurping emperor of the East, Phocas. The recognition was given, [143] and Rome was vastly pleased by it, as coming from the scat of Rome's great rival, the Eastern Orthodox Church. It was one more step in the public aggrandizement of the Papacy. Commentators of the past even sought to fix its date, 606, as the beginning date for the 1260-day prophecy. Actually, it was of no value in the East in bringing Constantinople to acknowledge Rome as mistress, and of little practical use to Rome in the West. It deserves, however, this mention.

17. The Carolingian Era

The time of Charlemagne saw a recovery of papal power, although always under the shadow of the power of the kings of France. Pope Zacharias invited Pepin to suppress the Lombards, who were still serious enemies of the Papacy in Italy. [144] In exchange for being named king of the Franks, Pepin attacked and conquered the Lombards and turned over to the pope as his own wide areas in central Italy. This gift, called the Donation of Pepin, marks the beginning in history of the Papal States. [145] The pope was becoming in fact a temporal ruler. Lombards, however, continued to trouble the Papacy, and it remained for Pepin's son, Charlemagne, to subjugate them completely. When he had accomplished this he added to his crown as king of the Franks the iron crown of the Lombards' [146] and the extensive Carolingian Empire was founded. Perhaps it was a recognition of Charlemagne's favors to the Papacy- it

undoubtedly was an effort on the part of the pope to make himself of political importance to Charlemagne-but from whatever motives, on Christmas Day of 800, Pope Stephen crowned Charlemagne Western Emperor of the Roman Empire. [147] No emperor had ruled from the West since 476.

This was the Papacy's opportunity. A woman was ruling from Constantinople an empire that since Justinian had exercised little power in the West. The ancient rival of the Papacy, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, was torn by the iconoclastic controversy, the destruction of the images in the churches. The Papacy felt it wise to have a hand in restoration of imperial power in the West, even though that power overshadowed its own strength.

Perhaps as a counterbalance to this vigorous though nascent imperial power, the Papacy used at this time another method of aggrandizement. There turned up in this Carolingian era a document purporting to be a grant by Constantine to the pope of ecclesiastical and political power over virtually all of Western Europe. This was called the Donation of Constantine. [148] It was

claimed that Constantine had made this Donation when he removed his capital from Rome to Constantinople in AD 331. The wording of the Donation was such that there could be no power able to dispute legitimately the power of the pope, no affair in which the pope might not intrude his finger, no lands concerning which the pope would not have official say. [149]

Slowly, with little fanfare, this strange document became the basis for increasingly aggressive claims of the Papacy. For almost a millennium these claims, pressed by shrewd politically-minded ecclesiastics, made the Papacy a dominant figure in Western Europe. It was not until the middle of the fifteenth century that the Donation was seriously challenged and its entirely fictitious nature pointed out through the successful application by the Spaniard Lorenzo Valla of higher critical methods, his use of which is still the admiration of scholars. [150]

It is in this document that the pope is called for the first time Vicarius Filii Dei, “Vicar of the Son of God.” It is in this Latin expression that those who identify the Papacy with the beast of Revelation 13 have found the number 666. The process of interpretation is familiar to all:

V
I
C
A
R
I
U
S

F
I
L
I
I

D
E
I

TOTAL 666

Among those who have used this method of identification are Seventh-day Adventists. [151] The question is not whether this title can be made to produce the number 666; it does, because the challenge as to the word for “son” being spelled fili and not filli is explained in the coalescing of the two i’s. The fact is that the full Latin is filii, with the stem of the word fili and the second i an inflexional ending for the genitive case in the singular. Interpreters are justified in using two final i’s in the word filii. As a matter of fact, extant copies of the Donation spell the word filii.

The question, then, is not whether the number can be found in the title; the question is the standing and use of the title. It is used in the false Donation of Constantine; it is not found in any earlier document. But the legitimacy of the title as a papal claim cannot be questioned, for the synonymous wording Vicarhis Christi, “Vicar of Christ” is used many times for the pope. It was made an official title of the pope by Innocent III. [152] When the pope claims to be the Vicar of Christ he is, of course, claiming to be the Vicar of the Son of God. The claim is a part of those papal pretensions set forth in prophecy, even though this particular phrase is not found earlier than the time of

Charlemagne, when the Donation emerged. What of its later use?

In the early years of the medieval Papacy efforts to codify papal claims and dogmas and the canons of the popes and of church councils are represented by such unfortunate documents as the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, of which the Donation of Constantine is a part. This collection is a “pious fraud,” perpetrated to advance the power of the pope, and many of its supposed decretals are fictitious, if not in historic basis, at least in wording. [153] But in the twelfth century the work of codification was undertaken anew by Gratian, an Italian priest skilled in law, and the result of his arduous labors was the famous Decretum of Gratian.

Gratian was uncritical in making his collection. He included such documents as the Donation of Constantine, which Roman Catholic scholars would today prefer were not in the Decretum. The Decretum has never been officially voted as the authorized statement of canon law of the Roman Catholic Church. But if use means anything, then no one can contend successfully that the Decretum of Gratian can be denied a place in establishing, and in still building, papal and Roman Catholic power. It has been quoted constantly

through the centuries. It has been and still is used in Roman Catholic seminaries for the instruction of priests. No one would dare to profess to know the history and canon law of the Roman Catholic Church without being thoroughly conversant with the Decretum. It has had in the church the full use accorded to an official document.

In the Decretum Gratiani the expression Vicarius Filii Dei is used but once, and there is quoted from the Donation of Constantine. But there is no edition of the Decretum of which we have any knowledge in which this expression is lacking.

The expression is picked up by Ferraris, a Jesuit encyclopedist of the eighteenth century, who in his *Prompta Bibliotheca*, or "Handy Library," in the second article, "Papa," [154] quotes the Donation of Constantine in its setting in the Decretum, thus recognizing the title as belonging properly to the pope.

But the most striking use of the title occurs not in Latin but in English. Cardinal Manning, a convert to Roman Catholicism from the Anglican Church during the Oxford Movement of the early nineteenth century, wrote a book called *The Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes*. In this book his arguments for the development of this papal sovereignty are well constructed. He shows how logical the development of this sovereignty was and how, he claims, in keeping with the will of God. In his argument eleven different times he calls the pope the Vicar of the Son of God. [155] It cannot be said that this book expresses the opinion of a man. When cardinals write they need no imprimatur. As princes of the church, they speak for the church.

This, it is believed, is the extent of the use of the title Vicarius Filii Dei by the Roman Catholic Church in any official sense. No proof has been forthcoming that this title has appeared on a papal crown. It is not used in the papal coronation oath, but it stands in Roman Catholic literature of high standing and expresses exactly the same idea as the title Vicarius Christi used of the pope numerous times and officially.

18. Pope Gregory VII

The first pope to make very frank use of the principles of the Donation of Constantine was a man who was great in his own right and who, although he died in exile, was a great ruler of the Roman Catholic Church—Pope Gregory VII. Through the reforming activities of the Cluniac monastic system [156] and his own sincere ecclesiastical standards, he accomplished needed reforms in the Roman Catholic Church. He was a rebuker of kings and brought to his knees at Canossa the youthful emperor Henry IV, as the king pleaded to be forgiven and lifted out of the disgrace of excommunication. [157] Gregory must undoubtedly have been the sponsor if not the author of the famous Dictatus, the most advanced and extreme claims ever made by the Papacy at a given time. [158] Emperor Henry IV's predecessor, his father, Henry III, had sought to reform the Papacy as an imperial act. Gregory VII took the reform, kept it in papal hands, and devoted his life to a struggle against certain evils, chiefly political in context, which he felt were interfering with the progress of the Roman Catholic Church and the development of papal power.

19. Pope Innocent III

The Papacy rose to the culminating height of its glory under the proud and ambitious Pope Innocent III, 1198-1216. To list his accomplishments in pressing and enforcing the authority of the Papacy would be virtually to write a history of the central period of the Middle Ages. Half a dozen of the kings of Europe submitted to him in homage, John Lackland of England being the best-known case. The seating of emperors in the Holy Roman Empire was under his control. With his tacit approval the Crusaders took over the city of Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Orthodox Church so hated by Rome. [159] His theological contributions culminated in the pronouncement at the Lateran Council of 1215 of the dogma of transubstantiation: that the wafer and the wine of the mass in their incidence or inward nature are really the very body and very blood of Christ. [160]

It was Pope Innocent who authorized the destruction of the cultured Albigenses. [161]

After Innocent III the Papacy fell on evil days. There came the Babylonian Captivity, when the popes were seated under the finger of the French crown at Avignon. [162] This was succeeded by a worse sickness, the Great Schism, when there were two and even three popes claiming the title at the same time. [163] It looked as though the governing authority of the Roman Catholic Church in the pope as a single head were coming to a close, and that the bishops in council would be recognized as holding the headship of the church. But the Papacy recovered, and before the Reformation began had reasserted for the pope his superior place.

20. The Council of Trent

It was the Reformation that compelled the Catholic Church to crystallize its dogmas. Thomas Aquinas had performed this service as a theologian, [164] but out of the Council of Trent (1547-1563) [165] there came a church surprisingly clean, thoroughly organized, with a theology logically and clearly stated, and having at its service a mighty auxiliary the Jesuits—for aggressive work.

21. The Captivity Of the Pope in 1798

Two hundred years later came the deadly wound. (Revelation 13:3, 12) The Papacy had never been progressive or tolerant in its rule of the papal territories. The Italian people were weary of the oppressions of both dukes and popes. When Napoleon's armies entered Italy claiming to be liberators, there were many who received them. The Papacy resisted the intrusion of the French armies, and in 1798 General Berthier unseated the pope, Pius VI, relieved him of the Papal States, and put him in prison, where he died. [166] The Papacy was relieved of its temporalities.

The Concordat of 1801 between Napoleon and the pope brought to the Papacy a measure of restoration, but in 1809 the incumbent pope became a prisoner of Napoleon, and not until his liberation in 1814 did he return to Rome with his temporalities restored.

With the restoration in Europe of conservative legitimacy as a reaction to the republicanism of the Napoleonic era, came a revival of the Papacy, aided by the busy Jesuits, as an active force in European politics.

22. Disaster in 1870

Disaster came upon the Papacy in the latter part of the nineteenth century with the efforts of the Italians to unite their disjointed provinces into a kingdom of Italy. For a score of years in mid-century, patriotic statesmen sought to effect the unification of the Italian peninsula. One by one the dukes and free cities yielded or were forced to yield. Determined to retain its Papal States, the Papacy was the last to succumb. In 1870 Italian troops occupied the Papal States, which became a part of the kingdom of Italy; the pope was bereft of his temporalities; Rome, instead of being a papal city, became the political capital of the kingdom of Italy; and the pope became a voluntary prisoner in the Vatican palace, bemoaning the loss of the Papal States and his rank as a political ruler.

23. The Papacy Assertive in Disaster

But it was during those very days, so dark for the Papacy, so bright for the Italians who had been liberated from oppressive papal rule, that the Papacy exercised one of its most forthright claims, the right to declare dogma.

a. The Immaculate Conception

On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX defined as "of faith" the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. It had for many centuries been held that Mary was personally sinless in her life. Beginning with Duns Scotus, the Celtic philosopher, in the thirteenth century, it had been argued that Mary was conceived sinless by Anne. It became a dogma required of the faithful only a century ago:

"Since we have never ceased in humility and fasting to offer up our prayers and those of the Church to God the Father through his Son, that he might deign to direct and confirm our mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, after imploring the protection of the whole celestial court, and after invoking on our knees the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, under his inspiration WE PRONOUNCE, DECLARE, AND DEFINE, unto the glory of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, the honor and ornament of the holy Virgin the Mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the increase of the Christian religion, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and in our own authority, that THE DOCTRINE WHICH HOLDS THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY TO HAVE BEEN, FROM THE FIRST INSTANT OF HER CONCEPTION, BY A SINGULAR GRACE AND PRIVILEGE OF ALMIGHTY GOD, IN VIEW OF THE MERITS OF CHRIST JESUS THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND, PRESERVED FREE FROM ALL STAIN OF ORIGINAL SIN, WAS REVEALED BY GOD, AND IS, THEREFORE, TO BE FIRMLY AND CONSTANTLY BELIEVED BY ALL THE FAITHFUL. Therefore, if some should presume to think in their hearts otherwise than we have defined (which God forbid), they shall know and thoroughly understand that they are by their own judgment condemned, have made shipwreck concerning the faith, and fallen away from the unity of the Church; and, moreover, that they, by this very act, subject themselves to the penalties ordained by law, if, by word or writing, or any other external means, they dare to signify what they think in their hearts." [167]

b. The Syllabus of Errors

Exactly ten years later the same pope enunciated the Syllabus of Errors, a document probably as reactionary in the context of its time as any paper ever solemnly put forth. It stands under papal authority, but is not a dogmatic decree:

"The Syllabus of the principal errors of our time, which are stigmatized in the Consistorial Allocutions, Encyclicals, and other Apostolical Letters of our Most Holy Lord, Pope Pius IX."

1. PANTHEISM, NATURALISM, AND ABSOLUTE RATIONALISM.

1. There exists no supreme, most wise, and most provident divine being distinct from the universe, and God is none other than nature, and is therefore subject to change. In effect, God is produced in man and in the world, and all things are God, and have the very substance of God. God is therefore one and the same thing with the world, and thence spirit is the same thing with matter, necessity with liberty, true with false, good with evil, justice with injustice.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

2. All action of God upon man and the world is to be denied. Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

3. Human reason, without any regard to God, is the sole arbiter of truth and falsehood, of good and evil; it is its own law to itself, and suffices by its natural force to secure the welfare of men and of nations. Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

4. All the truths of religion are derived from the native strength of human reason; whence reason is the master rule by which man can and ought to arrive at the knowledge of all truths of every kind.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November, 1846.

Encyclical Letters, Singulari quidem, 17th March, 1856.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

5. Divine revelation is imperfect, and, therefore, subject to a continual and indefinite progress, which corresponds with the progress of human reason.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November,

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

6. Christian faith contradicts human reason, and divine revelation not only does not benefit, but even injures the perfection of man.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November, 1846.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

7. The prophecies and miracles set forth and narrated in the Sacred Scriptures are the fictions of poets; and the mysteries of the Christian faith are the result of philosophical investigations. In the books of both Testaments there are contained mythical inventions, and Jesus Christ is himself a mythical fiction.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November, 1846.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

2. MODERATE RATIONALISM.

8. As human reason is placed on a level with religion, so theological matters must be treated in the same manner as philosophical ones.

Allocution Singulari quadam perfusi, 9th December, 1854.

9. All the dogmas of the Christian religion are, without exception, the object of scientific knowledge or philosophy, and human reason, instructed solely by history, is able, by its own natural strength and principles, to arrive at the true knowledge of even the most abstruse dogmas: provided such dogmas be proposed as subject-matter for human reason.

Letter ad Archiep. Frising. Gravissimas, 11th December, 1862. To the same, Tuas libenter, 21st December, 1863.

10. As the philosopher is one thing, and philosophy is another, so it is the right and duty of the philosopher to submit to the authority which he shall have recognized as true; but philosophy neither can nor ought to submit to any authority.

Letter ad Archiep. Frising. Gravissimas, 11th December, 1862.

To the same, Tuas libenter, 21st December, 1863.

11. The Church not only ought never to animadvert upon philosophy, but ought to tolerate the errors of philosophy, leaving to philosophy the care of their correction.

Letter ad Archiep. Frising. Gravissimas, 11th December, 1862.

12. The decrees of the Apostolic See and of the Roman Congregations fetter the free progress of science. Letter ad Archiep. Frising. Tuas libenter, 21st December, 1863.

13. The method and principles by which the old scholastic doctors

cultivated theology are no longer suitable to the demands of the age and the progress of science. Letter ad Archiep. Frising. Tuas libenter, 21st December, 1863.

14. Philosophy must be treated of without any account being taken of supernatural revelation.

Epist. ad Archiep. Frising. Tuas libenter, 21st December, 1863.

N. B. To the rationalistic system belong, in great part, the errors of Anthony Gantner, condemned in the letter to the Cardinal Archbishop of Cologne, Eximiam tuam, June 15, 1857, and in that to the Bishop of Breslau, Dolore haud mediocri, April 30, 1860.

3. INDIFFERENTISM, LATITUDINARIANISM.

15. Every man is free to embrace and profess the religion he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason.

Apostolic Letter, Multiplices inter, 10th June, 1851.

Afflocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

16. Men may in any religion find the way of eternal salvation, and obtain eternal salvation.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November, 1846. Allocution Ubi primum, 17th December, 1847.

Encyclical Letters, Singulari quidem, 17th March, 1856.

17. We may entertain at least a well-founded hope for the eternal salvation of all those who are in no manner in the true Church of Christ. Allocution Singulari quadam 9th December, 1854.

Encyclical Letters, Quanta conficiamur, 17th August, 1863.

18. Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion, in which it is possible to be equally pleasing to God as in the Catholic Church.

“Encyclical Letters, Noscitis et Nobiscum, 8th December, 1849.

4. SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, SECRET SOCIETIES, BIBLICAL SOCIETIES

“Pests of this description are frequently rebuked in the severest terms in the Encyc. Qui pluribus, November 9, 1846;

Alloc. Quibus quantisque, April 20, 1849;

Encyc. Noscitis et Nobiscum, December 8, 1849;

Alloc. Singulari quadam, December 9, 1854;

Encyc. Quanto conficiamur mcerore, August 10, 1863.

5. ERRORS CONCERNING THE CHURCH AND HER RIGHTS.

19. The Church is not a true, and perfect, and entirely free society, nor does she enjoy peculiar and perpetual rights conferred upon her by her Divine Founder, but it appertains to the civil power to define what are the rights and limits with which the Church may exercise authority. Allocution *Singulari quadam*, 9th December, 1854. Allocution *Multis gravibusque*, 17th December, 1860. Allocution *Maxima quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

20. The ecclesiastical power must not exercise its authority without the permission and assent of the civil government.

Allocution *Meminit unusquisque*, 30th September, 1861.

21. The Church has not the power of defining dogmatically that the religion of the Catholic Church is the only true religion.

Apostolic Letter, *Multiplices inter*, 10th June, 1851.

22. The obligation which binds Catholic teachers and authors, applies only to those things which are proposed for universal belief as dogmas of the faith, by the infallible judgment of the Church.

Letter ad Archiep. Frising. *Tuas libenter*, 21st December, 1863.

23. The Roman Pontiffs and oecumenical Councils have exceeded the limits of their power, have usurped the rights of princes, and have even committed errors in defining matters of faith and morals.

Apostolic Letter, *Multiplices inter*, 10th June, 1851.

24. The Church has not the power of availing herself of force, or any direct or indirect temporal power. Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostoliccr*, 22d August, 1851.

25. In addition to the authority inherent in the Episcopate, a further and temporal power is granted to it by the civil authority, either expressly or tacitly, which power is on that account also revocable by the civil authority whenever it pleases.

Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

26. The Church has not the innate and legitimate right of acquisition and possession. Allocution *Nunquam fore*, 15th December, 1856.

Encyclical Letters, *Incredibili*, 17th September, 1863.

27. The ministers of the Church, and the Roman Pontiff, ought to be absolutely excluded from all charge and dominion over temporal affairs.

Allocution *Maxima quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

28. Bishops have not the right of promulgating even their apostolical letters, without the permission of the government.

Allocution *Nunquam fore*, 15th December, 1856.

29. Dispensations granted by the Roman Pontiff must be considered null, unless they have been asked for by the civil government.

Allocution *Nunquam fore*, 15th December, 1856.

30. The immunity of the Church and of ecclesiastical persons derives its origin from civil law. Apostolic Letter, *Multiplices inter*, 10th June, 1851.

31. Ecclesiastical courts for temporal causes, of the clergy, whether civil or criminal, ought by all means to be abolished, either without the concurrence and against the protest of the Holy See.

Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th September, 1852. Allocution *Nunquam fore*, 15th December, 1856.

32. The personal immunity exonerating the clergy from military service may be abolished, without violation either of natural right or of equity. Its abolition is called for by civil progress, especially in a community constituted upon principles of liberal government.

Letter to the Archbishop of Montreal, *Singularis nobisque*, 29th September, 1864.

“33. It does not appertain exclusively to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by any right, proper and inherent, to direct the teaching of theological subjects.

Letter ad Archiep. Frising. *Tuas libenter*, 21st December, 1863.

34. The teaching of those who compare the sovereign Pontiff to a free sovereign acting in the universal Church is a doctrine which prevailed in the middle ages.

Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolic*, 22d August, 1851.

35. There would be no obstacle to the sentence of a general council, or the act of all the universal peoples, transferring the pontifical sovereignty from the Bishop and City of Rome to some other bishopric and some other city.

Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolicce*, 22d August, 1851.

36. The definition of a national council does not admit of any subsequent discussion, and the civil power can regard as settled an affair decided by such national council. Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolictr*, 22d August, 1851.

37. National churches can be established, after being withdrawn and plainly separated from the authority of the Roman Pontiff.

Allocution Multis gravibusque, 17th December, 1860. *Allocution Yamdudum cernimus*, 18th March, 1861.

38. Roman Pontiffs have, by their too arbitrary conduct, contributed to the division of the Church into eastern and western.

Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolice*, 22d August, 1851,

6. ERRORS ABOUT CIVIL SOCIETY, CONSIDERED BOTH IN ITSELF

39. The commonwealth is the origin and source of all rights, and possesses rights which are not circumscribed by any limits.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

40. The teaching of the Catholic Church is opposed to the wellbeing and interests of society. Encyclical Letters, *Qui pluribus*, 9th November, 1846.

Allocution Quibus quantisque, 20th April, 1849.

41. The civil power, even when exercised by an unbelieving sovereign, possesses an indirect and negative power over religious affairs. It therefore possesses not only the right called that of *exequatur*, but that of the (so-called) *appellatio ab abusu*.

Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolico*, 22d August, 1851.

42. In the case of conflicting laws between the two powers, the civil law ought to prevail. Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolicw*, 22d August, 1851.

43. The civil power has a right to break, and to declare and render null, the conventions (commonly called *Concordats*) concluded with the Apostolic See, relative to the use of rights appertaining to the ecclesiastical immunity, without the consent of the Holy See, and even contrary to its protest.

Allocution In Consistoriali, 1st November, 1850.

Allocution Multis gravibusque, 17th December, 1860.

44. The civil authority may interfere in matters relating to religion, morality, and spiritual government. Hence it has control over the instructions for the guidance of consciences issued, conformably with their mission, by the pastors of the Church. Further, it possesses power to decree, in the matter of administering the divine sacraments, as to the dispositions necessary for their reception.

Allocution In Consistoriali, Ist November, 1850.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

45. The entire direction of public schools, in which the youth of Christian states are educated, except (to a certain extent) in the case of episcopal seminaries, may and must appertain to the civil power, and belong to it so far that no other authority whatsoever shall be recognized as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement of the studies, the taking of degrees, or the choice and approval of the teachers.

Allocution In Consistoriali, Ist November, 1850.

Allocution Quibus luctuosissimis, 5th September, 1851.

46. Much more, even in clerical seminaries, the method of study to be adopted is subject to the civil authority.

Allocution Xunquam fore, 15th December, 1856,

47. The best theory of civil society requires that popular schools open to the children of all classes, and, generally, all public institutes intended for instruction in letters and philosophy, and for conducting the education of the young, should be freed from all ecclesiastical authority, government, and interference, and should be fully subject to the civil and political power, in conformity with the will of rulers and the prevalent opinions of the age.

Letter to the Archbishop of Fribourg, Cuum non sine, 14th July, 1864.

48. This system of instructing youth, which consists in separating it from the Catholic faith and from the power of the Church, and in teaching exclusively, or at least primarily, the knowledge of natural things and the earthly ends of social life alone, may be approved by Catholics.

Letter to the Archbishop of Fribourg, Cuum non sine, 14th July, 1864.

49. The civil power has the right to prevent ministers of religion, and the faithful, from communicating freely and mutually with each other, and with the Roman Pontiff.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

50. The secular authority possesses, as inherent in itself, the right of presenting bishops, and may require of them that they take possession of their dioceses before having received canonical institution and the apostolic letters from the Holy See.

Allocution Nunquam fore, 15th December, 1856.

51. And, further, the secular government has the right of deposing

bishops from their pastoral functions, and it is not bound to obey the Roman Pontiff in those things which relate to episcopal sees and the institution of bishops.

Apostolic Letter, Multiplices inter, 10th June, 1851.

Allocution Acerbissimum, 27th September, 1852.

52. The government has of itself the right to alter the age prescribed by the Church for the religious profession, both of men and women; and it may enjoin upon all religious establishments to admit no person to take solemn vows without its permission.

Allocution Nunquam fore, 15th December, 1856.

53. The laws for the protection of religious establishments, and securing their rights and duties, ought to be abolished: nay, more, the civil government may lend its assistance to all who desire to quit the religious life they have undertaken, and break their vows. The government may also suppress religious orders, collegiate churches, and simple benefices, even those belonging to private patronage, and submit their goods and revenues to the administration and disposal of the civil power.

Allocution Acerbissimum 27th Sept 1852. January, 1855.

Allocution Probe inemeritis, 22d

Allocution Cum saepe, 26th July, 1855.

54. Kings and princes are not only exempt from the jurisdiction of the Church, but are superior to the Church, in litigated questions of jurisdiction.

Apostolic Letter, Multiplices inter, 10th June, 1851.

55. The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church. Allocution Acerbissimum, 27th September, 1852.

7. ERRORS CONCERNING NATURAL AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

56. Moral laws do not stand in need of the divine sanction, and there is no necessity that human laws should be conformable to the law of nature, and receive their sanction from God.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

57. Knowledge of philosophical things and morals, and also civil laws, may and must depart from divine and ecclesiastical authority.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

58. No other forces are to be recognized than those which reside in matter; and all moral teaching and moral excellence ought to be made to consist in the accumulation and increase of riches by every possible means, and in the enjoyment of pleasure.

Allocution Maxima dunalern, 9th June, 1862.

Encyclical Letters, into conficiamur, 10th August, 1863.

59. Right consists in the material fact, and all human duties are but vain words, and all human acts have the force of right.

Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

60. Authority is nothing else but the result of numerical superiority and material force. Allocution Maxima quidem, 9th June, 1862.

61. An unjust act, being successful, inflicts no injury upon the sanctity of right. Allocution Yamdudum cernimus, 18th March, 1861.

62. The principle of non-intervention, as it is called, ought to be proclaimed and adhered to. Allocution Novos et ante, 28th September, 1860.

63. It is allowable to refuse obedience to legitimate princes: nay, more, to rise in insurrection against them.

Encyclical Letters, Qui pluribus, 9th November, 1846.

Allocution Quisque vestrum, 4th October, 1847.

Encyclical Letters, Noscitis et Nobiscum, 8th December, 1849.

Apostolic Letter, Cum catholica, 26th March, 1860.

64. The violation of a solemn oath, even every wicked and flagitious action repugnant to the eternal law, is not only not blamable, but quite lawful, and worthy of the highest praise, when done for the love of country. Allocution Quibus quantisque, 20th April, 1849.

8. THE ERRORS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

“65. It can not be by any means tolerated, to maintain that Christ has raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

66. The sacrament of marriage is only an adjunct of the contract, and separable from it, and the sacrament itself consists in the nuptial benediction alone.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

67. By the law of nature, the marriage tie is not indissoluble, and in many cases divorce, properly so called, may be pronounced by the civil authority.

Apostolic Letter Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851. Allocution Acergissimum, 27th September, 1852.

68. The Church has not the power of laying down what are detriment impediments to marriage. The civil authority does possess such a power, and can do away with existing impediments to marriage.

Apostolic Letter, Multiplices inter, 10th June, 1851.

69. The Church only commenced in later ages to bring in detriment impediments, and then availing herself of a right not her own, but borrowed from the civil power.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

70. The canons of the Council of Trent, which pronounce censure of anathema against those who deny to the Church the right of laying down what are detriment impediments, either are not dogmatic, or must be understood as referring only to such borrowed power.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

71. The form of solemnizing marriage prescribed by the said Council, under penalty of nullity, does not bind in cases where the civil law has appointed another form, and where it decrees that this new form shall effectuate a valid marriage.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

72. Boniface VIII. is the first who declared that the vow of chastity pronounced at ordination annuls nuptials.

Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic,, 22d August, 1851.

73. A merely civil contract may, among Christians, constitute a true marriage; and it is false, either that the marriage contract between Christians is always a sacrament, or that the contract is null if the sacrament be excluded.

74. Matrimonial causes and espousals belong by their very nature to civil jurisdiction.

Letter, Ad Apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

Allocution Acerbissimum, 27th September 1852.

"N. B. Two other errors may tend in this direction, those upon the abolition of the celibacy of priests, and the preference due to the state of marriage over that of virginity. These have been proscribed; the first in the Encyclical Qui pluribus, November 9, 1846; the second in the Apostolic Letter Multiplices inter, June 10th, 1851.

9. ERRORS REGARDING THE CIVIL POWER OF THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF.

75. The children of the Christian and Catholic Church are not agreed upon the compatibility of the temporal with the spiritual power.
Apostolic Letter, Ad apostolic, 22d August, 1851.

76. The abolition of the temporal power, of which the Apostolic See is possessed, would contribute in the greatest degree to the liberty and prosperity of the Church.
Allocution Quibus quantisque, 20th April, 1849.

N. B. Besides these errors, explicitly noted, many others are implied rebuked by the proposed and asserted doctrine, which all Catholics are bound most firmly to hold, touching the temporal sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff. These doctrines are clearly stated in the Allocutions *Quibus quantisque*, 20th April 1849, and *Si semper antea*, 20th May 1850; Apost. Letter *Quum Catholica Ecclesia*, 26th March, 1860; Allocutions *Novos*, 28th September, 1860; *Jamdudum*, 18th March, 1861; and *Maxima quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

10. ERRORS HAVING REFERENCE TO MODERN LIBERALISM.

78. [sic] In the present day, it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion shall be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other modes of worship.

Allocution *Nemo vestrum*, 26th July, 1855.

78. Whence it has been wisely provided by law, in some countries called Catholic, that persons coming to reside therein shall enjoy the public exercise of their own worship.

Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th September, 1852.

79. Moreover, it is false that the civil liberty of every mode of worship, and the full power given to all of overtly and publicly manifesting their opinions and their ideas, of all kinds whatsoever, conduce more easily to corrupt the morals and minds of the people, and to the propagation of the pest of indifferentism.

Allocution *Nunquam fore*, 15th December, 1856.

80. The Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and civilization as lately introduced.

Allocution *Yamdudum cernimus*, 18th March, 1861. [168]

c. Papal Infallibility

On July 18, 1870, the Jesuit-controlled Vatican Council enunciated the dogma of the infallibility of the pope in any pronouncement made *ex cathedra* on matters of faith and morals. It had always been claimed that the church was infallible. It had long been generally understood that the pope was infallible. In 1870 it became a dogma of the church to believe him to be so:

“Concerning the Infallible Teaching of the Roman Pontiff.

“Moreover, that the supreme power of teaching is also included in the Apostolic primacy, which the Roman Pontiff as the successor of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, possesses over the whole Church, this Holy See has always held, the perpetual practice of the Church confirms, and ecumenical Councils also have declared, especially those in which the East with the West met in the union of faith and charity. For the Fathers of the Fourth Council of Constantinople, following in the footsteps of their predecessors, gave forth this solemn profession. The first condition of salvation is to keep the rule of the true faith. And because the sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ can not be passed by, who said: ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,’ [Matthew 16:18.] these things which have been said are approved by events, because in the Apostolic See the Catholic religion and her holy and well-known doctrine has always been kept undefiled. Desiring, therefore, not to be in the least degree separated from the faith and doctrine of that See, we hope that we may deserve to be in the one communion, which the Apostolic See preaches, in which is the entire and true solidity of the Christian religion. [From the Formula of St. Hormisdas, subscribed by the Fathers of the Eighth General Council (Fourth of Constantinople), AD 869 (Labbe’s Councils, Volume V. Pages 583, 622).] And, with the approval of the Second Council of Lyons, the Greeks professed that the holy Roman Church enjoys supreme and full primacy and pre-eminence over the whole Catholic Church, which it truly and humbly acknowledges that it has received with the plenitude of power from our Lord himself in the person of blessed Peter, Prince or Head of the Apostles, whose successor the Roman Pontiff is; and as the Apostolic See is bound before all others to defend the truth of faith, so also, if any questions regarding faith shall arise, they must be defined by its judgment. [From the Acts of the Fourteenth General Council (Second of Lyons), AD 1274 (Labbe, Volume XIV. p. 512).] Finally, the Council of Florence defined: [From the Acts of the Seventeenth General Council of Florence, AD 1438 (Labbe, Volume XVIII. p. 526).] That the Roman Pontiff is the true vicar of Christ, and the head of the whole Church, and the father and teacher of all Christians; and that to him in blessed Peter was delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ the full power of feeding, ruling, and governing the whole Church. [John 21:15-17.]

“To satisfy this pastoral duty, our predecessors ever made unwearied efforts that the salutary doctrine of Christ might be propagated among all the nations of the earth, and with equal care watched that it might be preserved genuine and pure where it had been received. Therefore the Bishops of the whole world, now singly, now assembled in Synod, following the long-established custom of churches [From a letter of St. Cyril of Alexandria to Pope St. Celestine I, AD 422 (Volume VI. Part 2, Page 36, Paris edition of 1638)], and the form of the ancient rule [From a Rescript of St. Innocent I. to the Council of Milevis, AD 402 (Labbe, Volume III. p. 47)], sent word to this Apostolic See of those dangers especially which sprang up in matters of faith, that there the losses of faith might be most effectively repaired where the faith can not fail. [From a letter of St. Bernard to Pope Innocent II. AD 1130 (Epistle 191, Volume IV. p. 433, Paris edition of 1742).] And the Roman Pontiffs, according to the exigencies of times and circumstances, sometimes assembling ecumenical Councils, or asking for the mind of the Church scattered throughout the world, sometimes by particular Synods, sometimes using other helps which Divine Providence supplied, defined as to be held those things which with the

help of God they had recognized as conformable with the sacred Scriptures and Apostolic traditions. For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter, that by his revelation they might make known new doctrine; but that by his assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the Apostles. And, indeed, all the venerable Fathers have embraced, and the holy orthodox doctors have venerated and followed, their Apostolic doctrine. Knowing most fully that this See of holy Peter remains ever free from all blemish of error according to the divine promise of the Lord our Savior made to the Prince of his disciples: I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren. ' [Luke 22:32. See also the Acts of the Sixth General Council, AD 680 (Labbe, Volume VII. p. 659).]

“This gift, then, of truth and never-failing faith was conferred by heaven upon Peter and his successors in this chair, that they might perform their high office for the salvation of all. That the whole flock of Christ, kept away by them from the poisonous food of error, might be nourished with the pasture of heavenly doctrine; that the occasion of schism being removed, the whole Church might be kept one, and, resting on its foundation, might stand firm against the gates of hell.

“But since in this very age, in which the salutary efficacy of the Apostolic office is most of all required, not a few are found who take away from its authority, we judge it altogether necessary solemnly to”

one to die. But on the part of the church is mercy in view of the conversion of them that err; and therefore she does not condemn at once, but ‘after the first and second admonition,’ as the apostle teaches. After that, however, if the man is still found pertinacious, the church, having no hope of his conversion, provides for the safety of others, cutting him off from the church by the sentence of excommunication; and further she leaves him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated from the world by death.” [193]

“Temporal princes shall be reminded and exhorted, and if need be, compelled by spiritual censures, to discharge every one of their functions. And that, as they desire to be reckoned and held faithful, so, for the defense of the faith, let them publicly make oath that they will endeavor, bona fide with all their might, to extirpate from their territories all heretics marked by the church; so that when any one is about to assume any authority, whether spiritual or temporal, he shall be held bound to confirm his title by this oath. And if a temporal prince, being required and admonished by the church, shall neglect to purge his kingdom from this heretical depravity, the metropolitan and other provincial bishops shall bind him in fetters of excommunication; and if he obstinately refuse to make satisfaction this shall be notified within a year to the Supreme Pontiff, that then he may declare his subjects absolved from their allegiance, and leave their lands to be occupied by Catholics, who, the heretics being exterminated, may possess them unchallenged, and preserve them in the purity of the faith.” [194]

“In the Bull Ad extirpanda (1252) Innocent IV says: ‘When those adjudged guilty of heresy have been given up to the civil power by the bishop or his representative, or the Inquisition, the podesta, or chief magistrate of the city shall take them at once, and shall, within five days at the most, execute the laws made against them. ’ . . . Nor could any doubt remain as to what civil regulations were meant, for the passages which ordered the burning of impenitent heretics were inserted in the papal decretals from the imperial constitutions *Commissis nobis* and *Inconsutibilem tunicam*. The aforesaid Bull Ad extirpanda remained thenceforth a fundamental document of the Inquisition, renewed or reinforced by several popes, Alexander IV (1254-1261), Clement IV (1265-1268), Nicholas IV (1288-92), Boniface VIII (1294-1303), and others. The civil authorities, therefore, were enjoined by the popes, under pain of excommunication to execute the legal sentences that condemned impenitent heretics to the stake.” [195]

“In actual fact, the church at first dealt more leniently with heretics, excommunicating them, confiscating their property . . . till at last she was compelled to inflict the extreme penalty; ‘secondly experience shows (says Bellarmine, ‘De Laicis,’ I, 3, c. 21) that there is no other remedy: for the church gradually advanced, and tried every means, first excommunication alone, then a pecuniary fine was added, then exile, FINALLY SHE WAS COMPELLED TO FALL BACK ON DEATH [the capitals here are the author’s own]. Heretics despise excommunication and say that that bolt is powerless; if you threaten them with a pecuniary fine, they neither fear God nor respect men, knowing that they will find fools enough to believe them and support them. If you imprison them or send them into exile, they corrupt those near them with their words and those at a distance with their books. SO THE ONLY REMEDY IS TO SEND THEM SOON TO THEIR OWN PLACE’ [the capitals are the author’s]. The society of the church and its public order, against the disturbance of which there are many ecclesiastical charges, must necessarily be preserved, that men’s souls may be sanctified by the true faith and good works, and that they may gain eternal Salvation.” [196]

“He who publicly avows a heresy and tries to pervert others by word or example, speaking absolutely, can not only be excommunicated but even justly put to death, lest he ruin others by pestilential contagion; for a bad man is worse than a wild beast, and does more harm, as Aristotle says. Hence, as it is not wrong to kill a wild beast which does great harm, so it must be right to deprive of his harmful life a heretic who withdraws from divine truth and plots against the salvation of others.” [197]

“Therefore we conclude that the church cannot of itself put to death any one, but nevertheless it has the right to sentence obstinate or relapsed heretics, not only to corporal punishments, but also to condemn to capital punishment, if it shall have judged it expedient; whence those enemies of the faith equally err from the truth who falsely charge that the church has of itself consigned some heretics to the pyre, and many Catholic apologists, who think that all sentences of death must be attributed to the secular power, or timidly

concede that the church, yielding to the spirit of the times, has deviated a little in this matter. History surely testifies that the Roman Inquisition, if not in express words, at least in equivalent terms, has sentenced heretics to capital punishment, to be inflicted without fail by the secular arm, with manifold censures lest it fail of its duty; who, then, would dare to say that the church has erred in so serious a matter?" [198]

The military crusade against the Albigenses of Provence was only bloodier in the sense that it was more concentrated in time and place than the Inquisitorial crusades against heretics prosecuted everywhere in succeeding years. Informers shared in the confiscated property of convicted heretics against whom they had testified, and confessions were gained, not in the free testimony of brave men eager to witness for their Lord, but as a result of agonies of torture so brutal that no worse are found in the records of nations far removed from the teachings of Christ, and the minds of men revolt in the very telling of them.

We dare not estimate the number of those who suffered depredation, imprisonment, wounding, or the cruel death of torture and of the stake. Certainly it does no good, but rather harm, to indulge in exaggeration. But we are safe in saying that over the centuries, men, women, and children suffered persecution by the thousands. When we include those who died in the religious wars between nations, the number increases vastly, but only in certain cases can these be counted as persecutions.

No wonder that the "pale horse" (Revelation 6:7, 8) is so gruesome and that the souls "under the altar" are pictured allegorically by Inspiration as crying out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true" (verses 9-11)?

We must not think that the warfare against the saints forecast in Bible prophecy ceased with the Protestant Reformation. Anglicans persecuted Wycliffe's Lollards, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Puritans, Independents, and Separatists. On the ground of difference in religion, Lutherans made unhappy the lives of Roman Catholics, Anabaptists, and the Reformed of Calvin's theology. Zwinglians persecuted Anabaptists. Calvinists harried Anabaptists, Socinians, and dissenters of the stamp of Servetus, who was publicly burned at the stake in Geneva for heresy. The daughters of Babylon (Revelation 17:5) [199] had as a basis for persecution the same principles as the mother harlot. They failed of full persecuting success, not by intent, but from lack of opportunity, of unity of action, of the skill of experience, and of fullness of cooperation by the civil man.

The Time, Times, and Half a Time

The days were shortened. (Matthew 24:22; Mark 13:19, 20, 24) The 1260 days during which the saints were to be under the hand of the harlot mother and her daughters lacked a little of their full period because of deep resentment against persecution on the part of the liberal thinkers of the latter years of the eighteenth century, and, in particular because of the sneers of the influential Voltaire, who, seated at the court of Frederick the Great of Prussia, demanded in stinging phrases of contempt that religion cease its bloodletting. [200] Persecution was made loathsome by thoughtful men who had seen more of the ruthless intolerance of organized religion than of the sweet charity of true Christianity.

The beginning and ending of the 1260-day period, "the time, and times, and half a time" of Revelation 12:14, have already been examined, and placed at 538 and 1798. [201] Judgment must be used in describing what occurred in Catholicism and faltering Protestantism during this period.

The term "Dark Ages" means something quite different to modern historians, and to Seventh-day Adventists. Knowing this, we should use the expression understandingly. To the historian the term describes the period following the collapse of Roman imperial rule in the West in 476, marked by decadence if not collapse of classical culture there, and lasting until the re-establishment of a Western imperial line under Henry the Fowler in 918. [202] After this restoration there came a recurrence of revivals of culture and learning, culminating in the Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which the historian is compelled to recognize. History does not call the centuries after 900-DarkAges."

To the Adventist the term describes a period of spiritual darkness. "The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages." [203] It was still pressing its obscurantism in the fourteenth century, for "Wycliffe came from the obscurity of the Dark Ages." [204] The term means something quite different to different people.

It should be remembered that the 1260-day period, extending to within little more than 150 years of our own day, includes astonishing cultural revivals among the medieval Celts, Germans, French, and Italians; the Renaissance already mentioned. The Reformation; the era of the Pietists and of the Methodists' revival; and the Age of Enlightenment.

It should be remembered too that the 1260-day period was not a time of unvarying papal achievement. We do not refer only to the severe losses suffered by Papacy and Roman Church because of the Reformation-losses incurred 250 years before the close of the prophetic period cited. We refer to the fact that, at the beginning of the period, for instance, the pope of Rome was a contemptible figure, for years a hostage if not captive of the emperor Justinian in the city of Constantinople. [205] We refer also to the period from about AD 900, the collapse of the last remnants of the Carolingian line, till the accession of Emperor Henry III, in 1039-a period

which no Catholic of any ethical turn of soul can examine without a blush of shame. We refer to the almost completely amoral, and agnostic, if not atheistic, Papacy of the fifteenth century. We refer to the seventy years of Babylonish Captivity of the popes, in the fourteenth century, when they were seated at Avignon, subservient to French kings. We refer to the papal schism that followed when two and even three popes were simultaneously claiming the title. We refer to the careless popes preceding and coinciding with the Reformation.

What interpretation can be given of the 1260-day period?

The Papacy did not begin in 538. It was already beginning when Paul wrote that “the mystery of lawlessness does already work.” 2 Thessalonians 2:7, A. R. V. It made its first bold bid for power when it introduced Sunday observance in the middle of the second century. But by 538 the political machinery had operated to recognize papal ecclesiastical hegemony and to remove the Arian German kings who were obstructing the political power of the popes. The combination of ecclesiastical and political power of the popes, which is what the nature of the little horn” requires, is seen in the person of Gregory the Great, 590-604, whose career illumined the closing years of the sixth century, pointed up by the year 538. [206]

The prophecy of the 1260 years that follow does not require invariable and constant papal supremacy. Even the devil was unable to give to his chief agent on earth that sort of complete success. But during this period the Papacy not only has no religious rival; it has no equal within Christendom.

It wielded an astonishing political power while it dominated religious life, and persecuted almost without hindrance all religious dissidents, and had few sustained failures in its political machinations. The papal head was both a pope and a king, and was able to fulfill many times its boast that it was superior to all earthly princes.

Change Times and Law

The Papacy was “to think to change the times and the law.” (Daniel 7:25, A. R. V.) That the Papacy established Sunday is indisputable. That it influenced Constantine to issue the first Sunday law 175 years later is a matter of information from inspired authority. [207] Its contempt for the Sabbath [208] and concern for Sunday [209] have already been cited. Hence Sabbath is frowned upon in Roman Catholic catechisms, where the right of the church to establish days of worship is claimed, and illustrated in the Sunday.

The second commandment is omitted from Roman Catholic catechisms. Were it not, images would have to be taken from the churches. But this the church will not permit. The iconoclasts in the East in the eighth century, goaded by Jews and Moslems alike, sought to rid Christian churches of images but failed. Councils held under Charlemagne in Germany approved the objectives of the iconoclasts. [210] But when the Papacy took hold of the problem, sentiment changed. Three-dimensional images were retained in the West, and images in two-dimensional form were restored in the East. We quote:

“The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God’s commandments. Says Daniel, of the little horn, the papacy, ‘He shall think to change the times and the law.’ [Daniel 7:25, RV] And Paul styled the same power the ‘man of sin,’ who was to exalt himself above God. One prophecy is a complement of the other. Only by changing God’s law could the papacy exalt itself above God; whoever should understandingly keep the law as thus changed would be giving supreme honor to that power by which the change was made. Such an act of obedience to papal laws would be a mark of allegiance to the pope in the place of God.

“The papacy has attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath.

But papists urge, as a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood. This cannot be the change foretold by the prophet. An intentional, deliberate change is presented: ‘He shall think to change the times and the law.’ The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfils the prophecy. For this the only authority claimed is that of the church. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God. [211]

The correspondence between the identifying marks of the “little horn- of Daniel 7 and the leopard beast of Revelation 13 is so marked, and so clearly understood, that we pass it with only this mention.

The Image to the Beast

But what of the image to the beast? We understand that the two-horned beast of Revelation 13 is the United States, with its civil and religious liberty through its unique separation of church and state. But the image is seemingly only now being formed.

In seventy-five years Protestantism has been rent over questions of higher criticism and modernism, and particularly in the United States a result has been the formation of a self-conscious conservative group called fundamentalists. Whether among these or the almost equally self-conscious liberals will be found activities leading to the formation of the image one dare not prophesy. Certainly the fundamentalists are more earnest in their convictions, in their Biblicism, and in their support of the enforcement of Sunday laws than the liberal wing.

But among the liberals church unification is a basic objective. So far these unifications have avoided dogmatic complications. They have been formed on the organizational level. There have been a half-dozen kinds of successful church union:

1. The unification of denominational fractionated bodies, as with the Methodists.
2. The union of local congregations in a town, to form a community church.
3. The uniting of two or more independent church bodies into one religious communion, as with the United Church of Canada and the Congregational and Christian Churches in the United States.
4. The formation of local and State councils of churches in the United States.
5. The formation of the National Council of Churches in the United States, formerly the Federal Council of Churches, with counterparts in other countries.
6. The formation of the World Council of Churches, mainly functional, but beginning to show marked concern with dogma.

Are these the laying down of lines of final conflict? We must wait and watch alertly. These are the plain statements from Mrs. E. G. White concerning Protestantism and its procedures:

“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” [212]

“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of Spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.” [213]

“In the movements now in progress in the United States to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the state, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance, a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority. It is the spirit of the papacy, the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God, that is permeating the Protestant churches, and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them.” [214]

The Papacy and the Future

And what of the Papacy in the future? Here again flashes a warning rather than an illuminating light from unfulfilled prophecy.

John tells us that “the whole earth wondered after the beast,” apparently after the healing of the “death-stroke.” (Revelation 13:3, 12, A. R. V.)

Daniel says, after prophesying that “they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time,” that “The judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” Daniel 7:25, 26, A. R. V.

John says further, concerning the harlot and the beast on which she is seen seated, that - “the ten horns that thou saw are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast. . . . And the ten horns which thou saw, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh,

and shall burn her utterly with fire. For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished.” Revelation 17:12-17, A. R. V.

Here is a remarkable prophecy which seems to point to coming confusion in the kingdom, and among the allies, of the beast.

The dragon-beast himself, the Antichrist par excellence, will presently be manifested. Satan himself will come to earth, during the falling of the plagues just before the second Advent of our Lord:

“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Savior’s advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. [Revelation 1:13-15.] The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’ The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands, and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Savior uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.” [215]

In that delusion the true people of God will not be trapped. Through the persecution of the Papacy, into the time of the collapse of that power and the “overmastering delusion” of Satan, they will remain faithful, empowered by the Holy Spirit, fortified by God’s Holy Word, and covered, yea, infused, by the righteousness of their blessed Savior. Then the true Christ comes.

“Here is the end of the matter.” “The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Daniel 7:28, 27, A. R. V.

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12. The Message And The Finishing Of The Work

Present Unmeasured Outreach of the Third Angel's Message and the Finishing of the Work

E. D. DICK

Sabbath Sermon, September 6, 1952

We are in the midst of a great Bible Conference. Gathered here are the administrative leaders of our work, representative evangelists and pastors, Bible and history teachers of our colleges and training schools, and leaders of the varied activities of the church. These represent a broad cross section of our worker group throughout the world. It is to these that I speak primarily this morning.

I desire to speak on "The Present Unmeasured Outreach of the Third Angel's Message and the Finishing of the Work." I do this in the full knowledge that I have shared with this, my home church, some of the thoughts that I shall present to you this morning.

We are met together to examine the foundation pillars of our message—not that there has arisen any questionings or doubting or distrust or disbelief, which may have made this meeting necessary. Such is not the case. For in the language of the grand old hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" we are like a mighty army." Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod; we are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity."

Nevertheless, it is well for us to restudy, review, and reexamine the great truths of our message; and I trust that such examination, such study, will lead to a better understanding of the truth, a clearer conviction of its correctness, a deeper appreciation of its beauty, and a

fuller sense of its uniqueness, importance, and imperativeness. Every presentation has been strong and helpful, and as a result of the Bible Conference I trust that there may arise in the hearts of all of us as workers a new dedication to the living out of these grand truths that have made us a people, and that there may be a new commitment on the part of the whole church to a great dynamic offensive in the giving of the message of salvation to a doomed and perishing world.

The climactic event toward which our message points is the Second Coming of Christ. The knowledge of this message brings to those who accept it an obligation, a task—the giving of that message to every kindred, nation, tongue, and people. The success in the performing of that task determines the soundness of the message itself. I want you to think of that. I repeat—the success in the performing of that task determines the soundness of the structure of the message itself, for if we fail in the giving of the message, the message itself fails. We preach that the gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. But some are questioning the possibility of the completion of the task—whether we can really give the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

Some say that we have been preaching this message a long time—and we have—and that there is yet much to do—and there is. Therefore some have even questioned the soundness of the message. Again some say in their hearts, “My Lord delays His coming, the task is too great; it can never be done,” and forget that God has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing.

Indeed, the task is great. As leaders we would not be true to our trust if we said otherwise. The task is great. To those living in pleasant places such as we, with adequate modern facilities of all kinds, particularly in transportation and communication, the task may seem somewhat simple. But when one faces the situation of proclaiming the truth in the great cities of the Western World and in the great populous areas of the Orient, where darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, one receives a new and very different concept. Scarcely can we comprehend the magnitude of the undertaking.

One may simplify the problem by expecting that the gospel shall be carried to completion by the circulation of our truth-filled books and periodicals. We are told the work of the other angel referred to in Revelation 18, which is to come down from heaven to lighten the whole earth, is to be fulfilled largely by our publishing houses. Some therefore say that therein is the answer. Our publishing houses are doing a wonderful work. Remarkable indeed is the fact that approximately a million dollars’ worth of our literature is being circulated throughout the world every month. But, brethren, the answer is not so simple as that. Statisticians estimate the population of the world to be about 2,400,000,000, and that 60 per cent of these, or 1,440,000,000 can neither read nor write. Six out of every ten, sixty out of every hundred, six hundred out of every thousand of earth’s peoples are illiterate. These same experts tell us that the population of the world is increasing at the rate of 60,000 a day. Yes, 60,000 a day!

I repeat, the task is indeed great, but our God, who has promised to supply all our needs, has ways and means for accomplishing every duty, both to give us victory over sin in our individual lives and finish the work expected of the church. His bidding are His enabling.” All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” He says, “Go you therefore.” Yes, the fact that all power is given unto Him constitutes the basis of our hope. It is unthinkable that Jesus should assign us a task impossible to accomplish.

But let me give you a further reason for choosing to speak on this subject. Some months ago I was in a missionary’s home in Korea. We stood looking out of the window of his home on a village below. Hundreds of people were coming and going. Scores of creaking oxcarts filled the streets. To the left of this village was another, and behind that another, and to the right still another. As we talked together our missionary thoughtfully said, “People, people, people—being born into this world faster than they are being reached by the third angel’s message.” Do you believe that?

Some time ago I heard one of our men of influence say to a large audience, “We were nearer the completion of the work in 1920 than we were in 1950.” Do you believe that? I don’t. Not in any sense. I do not accept that concept of the situation. God has ways and means, brethren and sisters, for the finishing of this work, and not for one moment should we ever doubt it.

With this rather lengthy introduction, I want to read two scriptures: Turning first to Isaiah 43:1-6, let us note as we read how intimately God relates Himself to His church:

“But now thus said the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not [it just seems as though He is making love to us, does it not?]: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. [Isn’t that good? I just like to read those words.] When thou passes through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walks through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou was precious in my sight, thou has been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up: and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.”

I wish this morning that we had time to meditate upon those intimate assurances of God's relationship to us, His blessings, and the promise of His protection, but we must pass on.

Turning now to our second text, Romans 9:28, I read, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Yes, brethren and sisters, He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness. Along with this I wish to read two excerpts from the Spirit of prophecy. All are familiar with these." The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones." [1]

How rapid? "He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness. How short? Here is one further reference: "The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly. The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised. We do well to meditate upon these statements. "Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised." [2]

It is right that we should be stirred by the sight of the multitude. One of the most lasting and haunting impressions I received as I visited the Orient was the sight of the multitudes. People, people, people everywhere! Wherever one went—the railway stations, the streetcars, and the markets were crowds of people. It is right that we should be stirred by the sight of the multitude. Jesus was. I like to think often of the statements concerning Him as recorded in Matthew, the ninth chapter and the thirty-sixth verse, "When he saw the multitudes," we read, "he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." In the fourteenth chapter and the fourteenth verse it is recorded that "Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." Yes, it is right that we should be stirred by the sight of the multitude, but there is danger of two extremes, one that we fail to see them as individuals, each a soul to be saved, and the other to feel that there are too many and the work can never be accomplished.

Brethren, I want to bring to you this statement from volume 5. "Brethren, it is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Savior in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Savior. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; He sits between the cherubim; and amid the strife and tumult of nations He guards His people still. He measures every trial. He watches the furnace fire that must test every soul. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands." [3]

Thank God for that. Yes, brethren and sisters, He watches over us, and He has blessed our work in the years that have come and gone. I like to think of it—of its beginnings, of its trials, and of its triumphs. It brings a certain satisfaction to me to think that we are working in 716 languages throughout the world, that this message is being published in 197 languages, and is being preached and taught in 519 others. It brings to me a certain satisfaction to know that the world membership at the close of 1951 was more than 800,000.

It gives me pleasure to learn of the progress of the work throughout the world; that in the Southern European Division every week since the last General Conference there have been baptized the equivalent of a church of 178 members. That in our Southern African Division every month since the last General Conference 1,500 have been baptized. That in our Inter-American Division in one place in one day 950 were baptized; that in our great Congo Union in Central Africa 1,698 people were baptized in one day. That we are broadcasting the message in 950 radio broadcasts every week throughout the world field; and that in our Bible schools we have throughout the world approximately 1, 187,000 enrollees.

I say these facts give great joy, but I want to say too, brethren and sisters, that I believe this message has gone far beyond its measured bounds—yes, far beyond its measured bounds and that is my subject." The Present Unmeasured Outreach of the Third Angel's Message and the Finishing of the Work."

The gospel is the good news that though we have sinned, we need not perish. The way of deliverance has been provided through faith in Jesus, the Son of the living God. The central purpose in the preaching of the gospel is to seek and to save the lost. One is saved, delivered from sin's penalty and sin's power, by faith, which is a transaction by which the sinner surrenders, turns from his ways of sin, and accepts Jesus as his personal Savior. By this simple act of faith he is justified. Christ's righteousness is imputed unto him. He who was dead in trespasses and sins is made alive. He is at that moment and up to that point saved. Salvation comes into the soul, and from that point forward he arises to walk by faith, following in the footsteps of his Master so far as the light of truth has shone into his soul, and he accepts progressively new revelations of truth and conforms his life to these. I want to say, brethren and sisters, that this is a work of faith, and that one may enter this experience though he be uncultured and unlearned.

Well do I remember an experience when I was at our Rusangu Mission in Northern Rhodesia on a Sabbath morning some years ago. We were going to have a baptismal service that day. Early that morning there came an old, dried-up, wrinkle-faced woman, clothed in cow skins, hobbling along with a crooked stick for a cane. She came to the back door of the mission and asked whether an old woman

like her could be baptized in skins. Could she be baptized in skins? A thousand times Yes. Salvation is not a matter of silks and satins. Oh, no! She had faith in her Lord Jesus Christ. And having this faith in Jesus as her Savior, and walking in all the little light that had shone on her pathway, she was therefore ready to be baptized. Later I went to another mission field, and found a requirement that before a person could be baptized he must first learn to read and write. This was done to lift the standard of the church. Wonderful regulation, isn't it? I suggest, brethren, if it is good to have such a regulation as that for those primitive people, we should have a similar regulation in, this land of enlightenment, requiring everybody to have a BA or an MA degree before he is baptized. No, salvation is not a matter of education, it is not a matter of culture or dress, but it is reaching out by simple faith and taking hold of Jesus the Savior.

This leads me to make two general statements: first, that one may make his decision for eternal life by his relation to a very small beam of light; second, that our standing before God depends upon the use we make of the light We have. In support of these I read two statements from *The Desire of Ages*.

“Our standing before God depends, not upon the amount of light we receive, but upon the use we make of what we have. Thus even the heathen who choose the right as far as they can distinguish it, are in a far more favorable condition than those who have had great light, and profess to serve God, but who disregard the light, and by their daily life contradict their profession.” [4]

“Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God.” [5]

We would do well to meditate upon the implications of these statements. In consideration of these I wish to raise two questions. First, How little light, how very little light, must one have and follow, and thereby be saved in the kingdom of God? And the second is like unto the first, How little light may one refuse and reject and thereby be lost in the kingdom of God? I repeat it, brethren and sisters, that one may make his decision for eternal life by his relation to a very, very small beam of light. That is something we in enlightened lands ought to keep in mind as well. One may make his decision for eternal life by listening to one sermon or one appeal; by the reading of one book or a chapter in a book, a pamphlet, a tract, or a paragraph; by the listening to one radio broadcast; by seeing a telecast; or by receiving one personal visit. It is not necessary, it seems to me, that one stand out in the full blaze of a long series of evangelistic meetings, weighing every argument presented pro and con before he makes his decision for eternal life. His relation to eternal life may be determined by his attitude toward a very small beam of light.

Let us think of this simple illustration. Think of this room. It is very light in here. A call might come to leave the room. Would we have any difficulty getting out in the full blaze of the light? I think not. But suppose the lights were turned off, all the windows were blacked out, and all the doors closed except the one in the middle at the rear. Would we have any difficulty going out the door? We could see the exit plainly. Would we have any difficulty reaching the door? I think not. But suppose those doors were closed and just a little crack appeared between the doors. Then would we have any difficulty? No, I think not if the light were coming through the crack. We could follow that light. We might stumble over the chairs, we might detour about a bit, but we would find the way out. Oh, yes, by simply following even the beam coming through the keyhole. One's attitude toward eternal life may be determined by his relation to a very small beam of light.

This leads me to say that our message has gone far beyond its measured bounds. It is not necessary for us, I repeat, to stand in the full blaze of this truth as we do here in this enlightened land with all the opportunities and privileges that are ours to make one's decision for eternal life. In support of this thought I wish to tell you of some experiences.

Our brethren in the Far Eastern Division write of a little, island off the coast of New Guinea, where we have no worker.” A group of people wrote to our office stating that they were Seventh-day Adventists, and asked for someone to come to instruct them further and baptize them. We have not learned how these people first heard of the message. There are twenty-four in the group. They were far beyond our measured bounds.

Our brethren in Southern Asia write: “We are continually surprised by the uniform testimony from all parts of our field of a spiritual awakening among many people. The East Pakistan Mission, which has a membership of five hundred souls and is indigenously manned, brings us a report of some fifty families that have been interested in the truth through the efforts of a single lay worker. Some of these have already begun to pay tithe and secretly to keep the Sabbath.” These too are far beyond our measured bounds.

From South America comes the story of a woman who kept the Sabbath for sixteen years not knowing there was another Sabbath keeper in the whole world. When she went out of her house one day she saw a Catholic priest who was burning some books that he had collected from the people. He was burning them before he left for Europe. The fire attracted the children of the neighborhood. It always does. And as the priest went into the house for another armload, he said to the boys who were looking on, “Don't take any of those,” which was a good invitation for them to help themselves, and they did. A woman standing by said, “Give me some of those

books.” Among them was one of our books. As she read, it led her to study the Bible and to the Sabbath truth, and she began at once to keep the Sabbath. There she lived for sixteen long years keeping the Sabbath alone before knowing there was another Sabbath keeper in the whole world. Yes, brethren and sisters, how little light, how very little light, must one have and follow to find his way to the kingdom of God.

I think too of the thief on the cross. You will recall the whole story, how the one began to malign the Savior because He didn't remove Himself and them from the cross, and you will recall how the other one said trustfully, “Lord, remember me when thou comes into thy kingdom.” And Jesus said simply that it would be done. I think of what little light blazed into the heart of Nicodemus, how he cherished that light, and how faithful he was to Jesus in the hour of need.

I recall too the simple object lesson of how Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and how those who looked upon it were healed. I was touched by the thought that Taylor G. Bunch brought out on this point the other night. He said the sick were brought out of the houses, and when they were so sick they couldn't turn their heads to see the serpent, their companions lifted them so they could look that they might live. Brethren, there is life in a look, in a sincere full hearted dependence upon Jesus as the Savior.

This truth was deeply impressed on my heart by an experience that came to me a number of years ago. I was traveling up the West Coast of Africa by ocean steamer on my way home to England. When we called in at the port of Freetown, Sierra Leone, our missionaries came aboard and urged that I break my journey and go upcountry to see a missionary family whose three-year-old child had just died. I consented and made my way to the lonely mission station, where I found the brokenhearted family. We talked and wept together. Then it was arranged that we have a meeting for the native people. The time came for the meeting. There was a large crowd in attendance. The chief and his counselors sat on the front row. Brother Tranborg, the missionary, and I joined together in singing that trustful song:

“I am so glad that our Father in heaven Tells of His love in the Book He has given, Wonderful things in the Bible I see; This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.”

“O, if there's only one song I can sing, When in His beauty I see the great King, This shall my song in eternity be: O, what a wonder that Jesus loves me.”

When we had finished, the old chief rose, clapped his hands, and demanded that we sing the song again. And when we finished singing it through the second time, he demanded that we sing it again. We did. And when we concluded he stood, and looking our missionary earnestly in the face, said, “I want to know, sir, how you can sing. Only last week you buried your little boy. How can you sing?” Brother Tranborg told him of the hope based on the teaching of the Bible that someday he would receive little Eric into his arms again when Jesus comes. We spent the entire evening in explaining the simple hope of eternal life through faith in Jesus. His heart was touched, and he followed so far as he knew the light.

But a short time after this he came running up the hill to the mission house holding his hands across his abdomen and indicating great pain. He said, “They have poisoned me, they have poisoned me, I will die, I will die. I want to die in the house of your God. And he went out to the primitive mission church, and in a few hours he died. A Nicodemus! I think so. And, brethren, I think there are thousands of Nicodemuses who are following all the light they know. So I say we cannot measure the extent to which this message has gone.

And when I begin to talk thus, somebody says, “Well, what about Russia and China in the light of current developments?” There has been so much unfavorable publicity concerning Russia that we question whether or not we have any work there. The last official contact we had with Russia was in 1928. Then we had sixteen thousand members. But many believe that there are many, many more believers in Russia now. We have good reasons to think so. I cannot take time this morning to tell you all the reasons why we think thus, but let me cite a few. I want first to tell you by indirect inference what makes me think thus. I think this is true because of what took place in Yugoslavia. The people there are a similar people, and they struggled against similar influences. We were cut off from Yugoslavia for twelve years, from 1939 to 1951. When we were cut off we had a membership there of three thousand. When the curtain lifted last year we had a membership of eight thousand and a Sabbath school membership of twelve thousand. These people during that time suffered terrible persecution. They were beaten; they were imprisoned. Some gave their lives, but they were faithful. The leaders told us when we met with them in Southern Europe last year that “to be baptized with water was good, to be baptized by the Spirit was beautiful, but to be baptized with fire was strengthening.” Brethren, they have been baptized with fire. But during that time they had been able to add thirty-five ministers to their working force and had built sixty five new churches. I repeat again, they are a similar people, meeting similar obstacles. During the years they were cut off, the membership increased 266 per cent.

And now just a few direct evidences. I want first to give you two spiritual axioms: “God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform,” and, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” I wish also to bring to you this statement from Acts of the Apostles: “The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel.” [6] I think we ought to study the purposes of persecution in the plan and work of God.” To scatter His representatives abroad, where they

could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them. Driven from Jerusalem, the believers ‘went every where preaching the word.’ [7]

You know, brethren and sisters, from 1908 to 1918 practically all our ministers sent into Russia were banished. I mustn’t take time to read, but I have here a long list of those who were banished or imprisoned for the truth’s sake. But what has taken place? When we had our council meeting in Darmstadt in 1928 the leaders from Russia were there. You will remember the revolution took place in 1918. Thereafter our believers suffered great persecution. At the Darmstadt council our representative from Russia reported:

“Brethren, it is seventeen years since we have had the privilege of meeting with you in council. All these trying years we have had to carry on the work, doing our best without the counsel of our general brethren that we so much appreciate. In 1920, when the new order was introduced in our country, our membership was 6,500. At the end of last year, 1927, the membership was 13,404—more than doubled. And I can say to you, dear brethren, in all this time we have not swerved a finger’s breadth from the Advent message that we received from you long years ago.” [8]

In their published report of 1928, a copy of which I received through one of our workers who was in the Stalingrad campaign in World War II, the membership stood at 16,000. Kindly note: 6,500 in 1920; 13,404 in 1927; and 16,000 at the close of 1928. I wonder why we should think that when we stopped hearing from them, the work stopped. You know if I were in a building that didn’t have a good roof and it started to leak, dripping here and there, I’d conclude that it was raining, wouldn’t you? And we continue to hear reports from here and there in Russia, and they all indicate that we have a very substantial membership there.

I cannot take time to tell you of the many reports that have come to us, but just one further thought. When the war broke out in 1939 we had thirty-eight hundred members in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. They were good members. Our largest church in Europe was in Riga, Latvia. This church had a thousand members. Since that time those nations have been denationalized; our people have been scattered throughout Russia. I wonder what has happened. Do you think they gave up the truth? I think not. No, brethren and sisters, they have been the seed that has been sown, and we have reason to believe there is a fruitage springing up. W. R. Beach told me just yesterday that he believed that there were literally thousands of believers there. He first said hundreds of thousands, and then he said at least seventy-five thousand. Well, who knows? I have this report from a Russian soldier who was attached to the Russian Army of occupation in East Germany. He was an Adventist, and said, “In my village at least 75 per cent of the population are Adventists, and in many villages up to 50 per cent. A great awakening is taking place in that country; many are being baptized. However, they are loosely organized. It is practically impossible to effect any kind of organization.” Well, there are substantial reasons for us to believe that that report is true.

But what about China? It is true that our organization has been crushed and our institutions have been taken over. But, brethren, in China the message is implanted deep in the hearts of faithful leaders and members, and I believe they will be true to the truth. Not all. We will have some losses, but through their faithful witness many will accept this truth and be saved in the kingdom. But this work is not to go on and on. It is going to be finished. I want to bring to you this statement of assurance:

“When divine power is combined with human effort, the work will spread like fire in the stubble. God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern; angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God.” [9]

Yes, brethren, the work will be finished by phenomenal methods, with phenomenal power. ‘When divine power is combined with human effort,’ it says, “God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern.” I wonder what that means. Some may say, “It’s radio.” Or says another, “Television.” Number Man has discovered or discerned these. He knows how to manufacture and to operate them. It must mean some other method beside these.” Agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern.” What methods? What agencies? It seems to me, brethren and sisters, it is none other than the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the loud cry, that is to come upon this people.

We read in Joel, the second chapter, the statement that in the last days God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. I like to think that—on all flesh. That includes the heathen. That includes the people in Central Africa, Central Asia. There will be a spirit of inquiry in the hearts of the people, an outreach for truth, for light, for salvation, and it says, “It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance.” Verse 32. Yes, God is going to work in strange ways. He is going to employ new agencies. He will speak to the people throughout the world, and the work will go forward with a mighty surge.” When divine power is combined with human effort, the work will spread like fire in the stubble.” This thought is one that I think we have not fully explored: “Angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God.” Somebody says, “Angels are going to finish this work,” and why do I need to give, why do I need to sacrifice? We must not draw that conclusion, for it says, “Had they not neglected to answer the claims of God.” If we don’t answer the claims of God in doing the work we should, we will have something else to answer for, will we not? Surely. If we do not answer the claims of God and shirk this responsibility and say, “Well, there’s no use for me to give, for me to sacrifice, the Holy Spirit is

going to do it, the angels are going to do it,” we will have something else to answer for-neglect, neglect.

I would like to bring to you just one or two further statements: “We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the cooperation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God’s right hand, ‘all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.’” [10]

Yes, brethren and sisters, if the church of God does not arise to finish the work, God will move in to complete the task, and we will lose the blessing that might have come had we not neglected to answer the claims of God. It will seem that He has taken the reins in His own hand, because the work is going to be finished. Be sure of that, brethren and sisters.

“In this work all the angels of heaven are ready to cooperate. All the resources of heaven are at the command of those who are seeking to save the lost. Angels will help you to reach the most careless and the most hardened, and when one is brought back to God, all heaven is made glad.” [11]

“In working for perishing souls, you have the companionship of angels. Thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand angels are waiting to co-operate with members of our churches in communicating the light that God has generously given, that a people may be prepared for the coming of Christ.” [12]

Oh, yes, brethren and sisters, let us not grow weary in well-doing. Let us not say that the Lord delayed His coming, the task is too great, we cannot finish it. God has a way, and he is going before us, and He will accomplish it when the church arises and unites with Him in the doing of that great work. Mrs. White says:

“I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory.” [13]

That’s God’s program, brethren and sisters. (Read *The Great Controversy*, pages 610-612.) The work will be finished quickly. Of this we are told, “The bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning represents the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion.” [14] That’s worthy of our thoughtful meditation. Thank God, He is going to finish the work. He will cut it short in righteousness. And let me bring to you one further paragraph of assurance:

“Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. They would have to fight ‘against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.’ But they would not be left to fight alone. He assured them that He would be with them; and that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks, the General of the army of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work, and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success.” [15]

Thank God for that. I repeat it again, “He took upon Himself the responsibility of its success.” Brethren, it cannot fail. He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness. God speed on that glad day, and prepare us one and all for the day of His coming.

13. The Mediatorial Ministry Of Jesus Christ

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true. But into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with blood of others. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world bath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Hebrews 9:24-28.

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son

of perdition. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.” 2 Thessalonians 2:14, 15.

The message concerning the mediatorial ministry of Christ is God’s answer to the apostasy of the last days. It is the heart of Christianity. It is to keep and inspire God’s people in the great and final conflict between truth and error, righteousness and sin.

Our relationship to this message is not for the purpose of discussion and debate among ourselves. Altogether too much is made of jots and tittles in connection with nonessential details of prophecy dealing with the conflict centering on the sanctuary and its services. Our business is to discover the blessedness of Christ’s ministry for a lost and deceived world. The enemy of souls is determined to profane the blood of Christ and to nullify His mediatorial ministry. We are to exalt Christ as the minister of the true sanctuary in heaven and to sound the warning message against the worship of the beast and his image. It is in the interest of this urgent necessity that the mediatorial ministry of Christ is set forth in this presentation.

The subject is presented under the following headings:

1. Christ’s Commission as Related to His Mediatorial Ministry.
2. Christ and His Sanctuary.
3. Christ, Our High Priest in Heaven.
4. Christ as King.

General Observations

Before Christ’s commission as related to His mediatorial ministry is discussed, four general observations need to be made.

1. It is to be noted that Christ’s redeeming work is mediatorial throughout. It covers the whole period of time from the entrance of sin into the universe to its final extinction and the annihilation of its instigator. It concerns the full and complete redemption of a lost world. It embraces a complete vindication of God’s character and of His purpose for all His creation.

From ancient times—Christ entered into the breach caused by the tragedy of sin. He began with a declaration of war against Satan and his host, and He continues until the last battle in this warfare is finished and final victory of righteousness is established. In this gigantic struggle Christ has been made the captain of man’s salvation. There was no time in the history of sin when Christ was not in the midst of the great conflict. It was Christ who was introduced into the relationship between God and man when Adam fell into sin in Eden. Christ was the seed who would bring the blessings of salvation to the world, and ultimately crush the serpent’s head. Throughout the Old Testament times Christ was the rock that accompanied all the promises of God.

“Since the sin of our first parents, there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man, and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of

redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man’s Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Savior who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.

“Christ was not only the leader of the Hebrews in the wilderness, the Angel in whom was the name of Jehovah, and who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, went before the host, but it was He who gave the law to Israel. Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His Father’s law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone.

“It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets ‘prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.’ It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. ‘The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’”

“Jesus was the light of His people, the light of the world, before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven’s brightness

that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.” [1]

In the course of time He entered into the story of man’s salvation as the divine-human Son of God. (Hebrews 1: 1, 2) With the coming of Christ in the flesh His mediatorial ministry assumed its greatest proportions and significance. His earthly ministry was as essential to the plan of salvation as His ministry in heaven. The cross was just as essential as His priesthood.

The redeeming work of Christ is commonly understood to embrace His ministry as prophet, priest, and king. This is essentially true, but in surveying His work we must remember that though He entered upon these various offices at certain distinct times, He has not relinquished one office in order to assume the next one. As He moved from one position to the other He only expanded His ministry to embrace more and more of the lost dominion. He has never lost one ray of glory. After His earthly ministry was finished He returned to the glory He had with the Father before the world was brought into existence. And when finally His work of redemption is fully completed, He will emerge as Lord of lords and King of kings, in possession of the full dominion. He will reign forever, and the redeemed of the earth will reign with Him as kings and priests.

2. The mediatorial ministry of Christ is primarily concerned with the tragedy of sin. Sin caused a separation between God and man. Through Christ, God and man have been brought together again.” God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” 2 Corinthians 5:19.

The initiative in this work of reconciliation came from God. Through the gift of His dear Son the Father drew near to sorrowful, tempted man.

“In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men. . . .

“By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan’s purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Savior has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.” [2]

In dealing with this awful tragedy of sin the Father and the Son had determined to accomplish a complete work. Every work of the devil would be destroyed (1 John 3:8), and every enemy would be subjected to the power and reign of the Son (Hebrews 10: 12, 13).

3. Such a work called for an infinite price. It required the sacrifice of the life of God’s beloved Son. This sacrifice Christ offered to make. He came to this world and gave “himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.” Ephesians 5:2. He “gave himself for our sins.” Galatians 1:4.

Because of His perfect love for both His Father and fallen man, Christ gave Himself in order that the two might be brought together. His sacrifice reached in both directions; it was “a sacrifice to God” and also a sacrifice “for our sins.” He was the “Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both.” [3]

4. In coming to this earth as Mediator between God and man, Christ had to accomplish a twofold

task. He needed to carry out certain assignments as the representative of His Father, and as the one who would also become man’s advocate before the Father. This task is referred to in Hebrews 3:1 as follows: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” We are to consider Him as “Apostle and High Priest.” These two offices doubtless go together in His mediatorial ministry.

First He is to be considered as apostle. As apostle He is the one sent out to speak on behalf of God. This is precisely what happened.” God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.” Hebrews 1:1,2. Before He could apply the merits of His saving sacrifice, Christ had to speak the words of salvation.

In this sense He was that prophet spoken of by Moses.” I will raise them up a Prophet,” the Lord told Moses, “from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.” Deuteronomy 18:18. God had a message for the world, and only His Son could give it. This message was to become the basis of all righteousness and judgment. It was to prepare the way in the hearts of Christ’s followers for His ministration in their behalf at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven.

1. Christ’s Commission as Related to His Mediatorial Ministry

The word “commission” quite adequately describes the work Christ must accomplish in qualification for the priesthood. Goodspeed renders “Apostle and High Priest” “commissioner and high priest.” In fulfillment of His great commission Christ accomplished the following: He provided the necessary sacrifice for sin, He revealed the will of His Father, He dealt with the forgiveness of sin, He established His Messianic role, and He gave prophetic guidance to His followers for the future. These accomplishments will now be considered in the order stated.

A. Providing the Sacrifice

“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.” Hebrews 8:3. If Christ is to become high priest, He must have some sacrifice to offer. This sacrifice Christ provided.

“As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim.” [4]

The providing of this sacrifice was possible only at an infinite cost. It included more than just the death on the cross. As the Father’s representative He must fulfill all righteousness. Every day of His humiliation in sinful flesh was a day of suffering. It was in the days of His flesh that He “offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.” Hebrews 5:7. He learned “obedience by the things which he suffered.” Verse 8. In giving His life in loving ministry as man’s Redeemer, He was bringing gifts and sacrifices every day. Not once did the temptation to shed this body and return to His Father leave Him. The suffering of guilt grew in intensity as He neared the cross, until there in Gethsemane it would have crushed out His life had not an angel strengthened Him. He shed blood as it were as He agonized for the sins of the whole world before He was nailed to the cross. (Luke 22:44) Our Savior verily sacrificed Himself. The violent death He suffered at the hands of the enemy marked the full measure of His sacrifice. His death relieved the suffering and made it His supreme victory over sin.

B. Revealing the Will of God

God’s will is revealed in His holy law. Jesus came to reveal God’s will by teaching the true meaning of the law. This was imperative, because Christ was primarily concerned with sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. Throughout the centuries the Jews, by their traditions, had vitiated the true understanding of God’s will as revealed in His law.

Prophecy had said of Christ, “He will magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42:21. The law that was challenged by Satan as unnecessary for holy, sinless beings, and subsequently broken through transgression, Christ came to teach and vindicate. Concerning this mission, He declared, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Matthew 5:17.

He came to fulfill the law in two ways: to obey it fully as our example and to explain and expand its meaning. As the day fulfills the dawn, the full-blown flower the bud, and the finished picture the rough sketch, so Christ came to magnify and exalt the true character of God as reflected in His law. In all of Christ’s interpretations of the law, and the application of its principles, He sought to reveal the spiritual implications of the commandments. He was not satisfied with good intentions. The law revealed the perfection required of man, and therefore He sought to bring forth the fruits of character in the lives of His hearers.

With Christ the law was the perfect standard of righteousness. Perfect obedience to each commandment, even the least, was required. Just punishment would follow any disobedience. A righteousness exceeding that of the scribes and Pharisees would have to be presented by those who would enter the kingdom of heaven. That righteousness would come from Him. (Matthew 5:18-20) He accepted that standard for Himself and lived up to it. He learned “obedience by the things he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” Hebrews 5:8, 9. By precept and example He met every demand of God’s law. This He did in order that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:4-8), and deliver man from the condemnation of the law, “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us” (Romans 8:4). So completely did He succeed in this work that when His life in the flesh was over Satan could bring no just charge against Him. (John 14:30; 19:6)

C. Dealing With the Forgiveness of Sin

Christ’s approach to the whole problem of sin marked the beginning of a new day. He dealt with sin as the sin bearer, the One who had power to forgive sin. The ax was “laid unto the root of the trees” (Matthew 3:10), as John had already announced. His fan was in His hand to “thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner,” and eventually to “burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Verse 12. The words of Christ, supported with His perfect life, were so sweeping and devastating to the accepted ways of salvation that the outlook of the whole world was changed. Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom, saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel.” Mark 1:14,15.

What Jesus had to say about the forgiveness of sin was entirely new. He set forth the true principles of the kingdom of heaven: repentance and believing the gospel. What a contrast this was to the legalistic, self-righteous system of religion that characterized the teachings of the day. Here He was treading on most sacred ground.

This fact was highlighted in His healing of the paralytic. (Mark 2:1-12) When Jesus saw the faith of the four men who had brought the stricken man, "He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Verse 5. This was considered blasphemy by the Pharisees. To claim to forgive sin was going too far. Curing the sick did not justify or excuse it. They could think of others-Levites, rabbis, and others who could heal the sick and cast out demons. But forgiving sins belonged only to God, except as it could be secured through the priests by means of certain prescribed sin offerings. (Leviticus 4; Numbers 15) For someone not of the priestly heritage to forgive sin was an offense worthy of death. Yet Jesus claimed the power to forgive sin.

Through His prophetic ministry Jesus proclaimed the goodness of God. He called people to repentance and directed them to God's forgiveness. The coming of the day of the Lord meant for Him, not condemnation of sinners, but the blessing of forgiveness. The Spirit of the Lord God anointed Him "to preach good tidings unto the meek; to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isaiah 61:1. God in Christ took a hand in dealing with sin and its captives. The sin and sorrow of the whole world were being laid upon Him. He was the sin bearer, and He Himself was the sacrifice for sin. Why then should He not forgive the sins of a penitent soul that believed on Him? For that very purpose He had come into the world.

D. Establishing His Messianic Role

Jesus made no public announcement of His Messiah ship, but He prepared the inner circle of His disciples for a correct understanding of His Messianic mission. It was most important for Jesus to establish His Messianic role in the minds and hearts of His disciples. There must be no uncertainty in their minds as

to His work as the Messiah. The preaching of the gospel and the future security of the church rested upon the Rock of the Messiah ship. Thereon the church was to be built, and the powers of death would not be able to overcome it. At first the disciples did not understand the great importance of these revelations. Later they would understand." Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, you may believe that I am he." John 13:19. As is so often the case with divine revelation, the Messiah ship could not be understood or appreciated until the great things pertaining to it had taken place. This is still true regarding the understanding of future events. Often the church must wait till events have occurred before they can be fully recognized and understood. The Messiah was expected by the people. Indeed, He had already come, and Jesus had verified His arrival as the Messiah. (John 4:25,26) But He was careful not to announce His Messianic role publicly until the disciples were ready for it.

He took special steps to prepare the inner circle for His Messianic mission He was about to assume fully. At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom say you that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matthew 16:15,16. Thereupon Jesus responded, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Verse 18." Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." Verse 20.

"After Peter's confession, Jesus charged the disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ. This charge was given because of the determined opposition of the scribes and Pharisees. More than this, the people, and even the disciples, had so false a conception of the Messiah that a public announcement of Him would give them no true idea of His character or His work. But day by day He was revealing Himself to them as the Savior, and thus He desired to give them a true conception of Him as the Messiah."

On the mount of transfiguration the inner circle of the disciples were given another glimpse of the Christ. (Matthew 17:1-9) This time He charged them not to say anything about this experience "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." Here Jesus was seen in company with Moses and Elijah, the great molders of true religion. The disciples received a new conception of the mission and stature of Jesus.

"They [the disciples] were given a clearer insight into the work of the Redeemer. They saw with their eyes and heard with their ears things that were beyond the comprehension of man. They were 'eyewitnesses of his majesty,' and they realized that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, to whom patriarchs and prophets had witnessed, and that He was recognized as such by the heavenly universe."

E. Giving Guidance for the Future

Finally Jesus directed His disciples, and through them His church in coming generations, to the prophecy of Daniel for further understanding concerning His ministry, with the admonition: "Who reads, let him understand." Matthew 24:15.

The disciples had begged of Him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Verse 3. Whereupon He warned them against coming deceptions, false christs, wars, persecutions, betrayals, false prophets,

increasing iniquity, and the disappearance of love from the hearts of men. Nevertheless, the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in all the world, and then the end would come.

Having briefly sketched the religious and political events that the people of God were to experience throughout the coming generations, Christ pauses to concentrate upon the 11 abomination of desolation” that was foretold in the prophecy of Daniel. (Verses 15-25) This He did in order to give the church a sure foundation for its faith and hope. Throughout His ministry, as well as after His resurrection, Christ had pointed to the fulfillment of prophecy. He made it plain that Moses and all the prophets had spoken of Him; yes, more than that, He was the very one who had inspired them to bring their messages.

This the apostles understood very well. As they reviewed the words of the Master in later years they testified, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10); and, as Peter witnessed at length, “we have not followed cunningly devised fables. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:16-19).

The word of prophecy was to be the sure guide for the people of God. The prophecy of Daniel would be understood more and more clearly as the history of the church progressed. For many generations portions of this great prophecy remained closed. But it also contained the promise that in “the time of the end” knowledge would be increased (Daniel 12:4) and the wise would understand (verse 10). With the arrival of “the time of the end- there came an understanding of the prophecy of Daniel. The rise and fall of

the great world empires could be traced through the pages of history. Above all, the great prophecies concerning the sanctuary and the ministration of Christ unfolded before the minds of God’s inquiring children. The mediatorial ministry of Christ came into its true perspective. The great time prophecies could be traced to the very portals of the temple of God in heaven, where Christ, our Great High Priest, is now completing His mediatorial work on behalf of sinful, repentant souls,

Summary

In dealing with the tragedy of sin, Christ voluntarily entered the breach as the “Daysman” to bring God and man together. He became man’s substitute and surety. As such it was necessary that He come in the likeness of sinful flesh and become “an offering for sin” (Isaiah 53:10), that justice might be fully satisfied. This made the ministry of Christ on earth and His ministry in heaven part and parcel of His great redeeming work. The cross cannot be separated from the life and teaching that preceded it and of which it was the crown. Neither can the cross be separated from His subsequent ministry at the right hand of God in the temple in heaven.

Christ came in the flesh in order to serve in a dual capacity. First as apostle, or commissioner, and then as high priest. The first office covered His earthly ministry. The second He entered upon after His resurrection. Both were not fully understood or appreciated until the prophecies concerning them were fulfilled. Christ prepared the inner circle of His disciples as much as possible for a right understanding of His mission, but even that instruction had little meaning until Jesus had ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit had taught the meaning of Christ’s words to His followers. The church would continue to discover new understanding of the prophetic word throughout the centuries after the resurrection. Indeed, some of the great prophecies would not be understood until eighteen centuries had passed, until the end of the longest time prophecy on record in the Scriptures. It is here that the prophecy of Daniel becomes the sure guide for the future experience of the church.

2. Christ and His Sanctuary

A. The Prophecy Concerning the Sanctuary

God chose to make the sanctuary the center of true worship. His way, or plan, of dealing with man is in His sanctuary. (Psalm 77:13) During the history of the Hebrew people, until Christ’s crucifixion, the sanctuary was God’s meeting place with sinful men. The wilderness tabernacle, or sanctuary, was brought into existence at Mount Sinai, and continued to remain the center of worship all through the wilderness wandering and the conquest of the land of Canaan. Then the Solomonic and subsequent temples in Jerusalem were honored by God’s presence in them.

The Babylonian captivity of Israel brought great spiritual sorrow to the exiles, particularly because the sanctuary was desolate and its services interrupted. In an effort to preserve the worship of the true God, the Jews built small synagogues in the various places of exile, ever praying toward Jerusalem and looking forward to a restoration of worship in the Temple. With this burden resting heavily upon his heart, Daniel prayed most earnestly that God might reveal His glory again in His sanctuary. Said Daniel, “O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.” Daniel 9:17.

The seventy years of desolation that was visited upon Jerusalem was nearly past. The time was near for the captivity to be turned. Daniel believed the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning Jerusalem, and now pleaded with God to forgive Israel’s sins and restore the

exiles to their spiritual home, and let His face shine in mercy upon them from the sanctuary. God heard and answered the prayer of His “beloved” servant. While he was still praying, the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the former vision, touched him and said, “O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. . . . For thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.” Verses 22, 23.

Now Gabriel gave Daniel the great prophecy concerning the Messiah.

“As a compensation for the 70 weeks in which the people, the city, and temple have been entirely prostrate, 70 weeks of years, seven times 70 years of a renewed existence, shall be secured to them by the Lord. And the end of this period, far from bringing the mercies of God to a close, shall for the first time

bestow them on the Theocracy in their complete and full measure. With it, the finished forgiveness of sins, the introduction of everlasting righteousness, the actual conferring of the saving blessings, which the prophets promise, the anointing of a holy of holies, coincide.” [7]

Gabriel began where he had left off on his previous visit by saying, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Verse 24.

Seventy weeks of years of renewed and continued existence were to be given to the Hebrew nation and its holy city. Beginning with the decree to build and restore Jerusalem, this period was to extend to the Messiah, or the “Anointed One.” In the middle of the seventieth week the Messiah was to be “cut off.” (Verses 25-27) Although Christ was “cut off” in the middle of the week, the confirmation of the covenant continued until the end of the week. For three and a half years the Jews refused to accept Christ, although the services in the Temple had been interrupted by the tearing of the veil. By offering Himself a sacrifice once for all, He put an end to all Levitical sacrifices. His sacrifice superseded them, set them aside. When the Substance had come, the shadows were done away.

B. The Work of the Messiah Foretold

In this great prophecy the work of the Messiah was foretold. indeed, the primary object of the seventy-week prophecy was to designate the Messiah and to give the time of His appearance. This work, briefly summarized, was to be:

a.” To finish the transgression.” Throughout their entire history Israel had broken God’s covenant. Warning after warning had been sent to them by the prophets, but no amount of affliction or instruction could bring that nation to keep the covenant. The covenant could not be kept in their own power. Jesus came to break the power of transgression, to bruise the head of the serpent, to take away the usurped dominion of the tyrant, and to set up His kingdom of love in the hearts of men upon the ruins of Satan’s kingdom, that where transgression and death had reigned, righteousness and life might reign through Christ.

b.” To make an end of sins.” Margin: “To seal up sins.” “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:1 He took upon Himself flesh and blood, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14. The “Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8. He came to make an end of sin, to take it away and abolish it, that it might not rise up in judgment against us. He came “to seal up sins,” that they may not appear or break out against us, to accuse and condemn us. A seal is set upon sin, as when the devil is cast into the bottomless pit a seal is set upon him. (Revelation 20:3)

c.” To make reconciliation for iniquity.” “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. Sin had alienated man from God. Christ came to bring man and God together. By His atoning sacrifice He satisfied the justice of God, and by His life He opened the way for man to return to God.

“The Lord Jesus Christ was set forth ‘a propitiation’ (Romans 3:25). This propitiation was ‘in his blood,’ which shows that he is speaking of the death on the Cross. The propitiation is the penalty for sin, the penalty for the broken law, and it is rendered unto God. There is the mystery that God is the one who makes the sacrifice, and God is the one to whom the sacrifice is made. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.”

Christ died for the sins of the whole world.” He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2. The iniquity of us all was cast upon Him. (Isaiah 53:6) He “tasted death for every man.” Hebrews 2:9.

d.” To bring in everlasting righteousness.” Instead of putting an end to the sinner Christ found another way-to save the sinner from sin by providing righteousness for him. Had man stood in the beginning, his innocence would have been his righteousness; but being

fallen; man must have something else to plead. Christ provided the plea: The merit of His sacrifice is our righteousness. With this we answer all the demands of the law.” Of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness.” 1 Corinthians 1:30.” For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Man could not atone for his sin; therefore God provided righteousness for him. Paul wrote: “There is none righteous, no, not one,” and, “All the world may become guilty before God.” “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:10,19,23.” But now,” the apostle continues, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” Verses 21,22.

“Against that black picture of sin abounding, Paul is now giving the glorious message of a ‘righteousness of God.’ The wrath of God was revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Men need righteousness, and they do not have it. Now there is the revelation of a righteousness which God is to give to man.”

“The problem of all problems with regard to sin is: How can God clear the guilty? The answer is that God cannot clear the guilty, unless the penalty is fully paid. The propitiation is the penalty for sin, the penalty for the broken law, and it is rendered unto God.” Here then is the good news. God declares righteous everyone that has faith in Jesus, whether he be a circumcised Jew or an uncircumcised Gentile. The ground of this righteousness is the righteousness of Christ and His blood; but there is also a condition: the condition is faith.” [9]

e.” To seal up the vision and prophecy.” Prophecy had written Christ’s biography in advance-His birth, His life and work, His betrayal and death, His burial and resurrection, and His ascension and priesthood. Now He came to seal all Old Testament prophecies that referred to Him as the Messiah. He accomplished them, fulfilled them, confirmed the truth of them.

The prophecy stated, “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.” Daniel 9:25. Sixty-nine of the seventy weeks would pass, and then the Messiah would come. The decree that marked the beginning of the seventy weeks of years came in 457 BC. The 483 years reached to AD 27. Precisely at that time Messiah was anointed “with the Holy Ghost and with power-(Acts 10:38) at His baptism. Christ entered upon His ministry. He introduced the new covenant and confirmed it for one week. That marked “the beginning of the gospel.” (Mark 1:1.)

God’s eternal purpose to save men, His everlasting covenant, which existed from the beginning, now came into full force as the new covenant. Israel had broken the covenant, but God is faithful and still holds to His purpose to save. Through Christ a new covenant relationship was established, based on better promises. (Jeremiah 31:31-34) This covenant Christ came to confirm (1) by His teachings and miracles, (2) by His death and resurrection, (3) by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and (4) by bestowing the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the believers. His anointing by the Holy Spirit was an earnest of the anointing of the whole church, that the work He began could be continued by the same power and authority. (Acts 1:8; John 14:12)

C. The Anointing of the Most Holy

This is a climactic step in Daniel’s outline of the work of the Messiah, and it brings its directly into the sanctuary in heaven. Having completed the offering of His sacrifice, Christ is here seen entering into the presence of His Father (Hebrews 9:24) as “minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Hebrews 8:2). The Hebrew words used here (Daniel 9:24) and translated “the most Holy” are regularly employed of the sanctuary, not of persons.” To consecrate a most sacred Place,” Moffatt. The anointing of the “most Holy- must refer, then, to the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary, when Christ ascended.

The anointing of the most holy was a glorious event. It was made the occasion when two events vitally affecting man’s salvation took place. One of these events was the exaltation of Christ at the right hand of God in heaven. The other was the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon the church upon earth. They both happened simultaneously, and the latter was the result of the first, and it took both of them together to constitute the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary, or the “most holy.”

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter connects these two great manifestations of Christ’s glory, Having affirmed the resurrection of Jesus and followed Him into heaven, the apostle said, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he bath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.” Acts 2:33. Here the apostle connects Christ’s exaltation with the reception of the Holy Spirit.

Christ’s exaltation prepared the way for the coming of the Spirit. We do well to contemplate these two events in their order. As to His exaltation, the apostle Paul wrote that God has “highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11.

This took place initially after His resurrection, when Christ ascended to heaven with the trophies of His sacrifice.” When he ascended on high,” we are told, “he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.” Ephesians 4:8, RSV. The saints that came “out of the tombs after his resurrection” (Matthew 27:51-54, RSV.) accompanied Him to the courts of glory, and joined the heavenly beings in the inauguration services of the world’s Redeemer.

Here is a most beautiful description of this glorious event.” All heaven was waiting to welcome the Savior to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

“As they drew near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels,-

“Lift up your heads, O you gates; And be you lift up, you everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in!”

“Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond,

“Who is this King of glory?”

“This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise,-

“The Lord strong and mighty,

The Lord mighty in battle!

Lift up your heads, O you gates;

Even lift them up, you everlasting doors;

And the King of glory shall come in!”

“Again is heard the challenge, ‘Who is this King of glory?’ for the angels never weary of hearing

His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply,

“The Lord of hosts:

He is the King of glory!

“Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion, all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.

“But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave-sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His Second Coming. He approaches the Father, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing. Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished,’ He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: ‘Father, it is finished. I have done thy will, O my God. I have completed the work of redemption. If thy justice is satisfied, ‘I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am.’”

“The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. Christ’s toiling, struggling ones on earth are I accepted in the beloved. ’ Before the heavenly angels and the representatives of unfallen worlds, they are declared justified. Where He is, there His church shall be. ‘Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. ’ The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him.’ [10]

Christ is now exalted at the right hand of His Father. The angels worship Him. The work of redemption has been completed justice is satisfied. The heavenly beings join in a new song: "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and

honor, and glory, and blessing." Revelation 5:12. His atoning sacrifice has been accepted, and the prayer that those whom He brought with Him be accepted and remain with Him was answered. As the "wave sheaf," or the first fruits, of the harvest, they represent the great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His Second Coming. Now Christ is ready to intercede on behalf of His struggling children and witnesses here upon earth.

Before His departure from the earth He promised to send the Comforter to His disciples." I will pray the Father," said He, "and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17. This request Christ presented to His Father immediately and received the promise. Pentecost was the signal upon earth that the promise of the Holy Spirit had been given. Jesus had been anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism as a token of the anointing of the whole church by the same power. Now having been made "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), He has been given all power in heaven and earth to use in the work of salvation.

The disciples were to tarry in Jerusalem and "wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4), which He had spoken of before. Now when "the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one place. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:1-4. Pentecost was the signal upon earth that the inauguration of Christ as man's Redeemer had been accomplished.

"When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people." [11]

The exaltation of the Savior as both Lord and Christ, the reception of the Holy Spirit by Christ for the church, the acceptance of the merits of His atoning sacrifice, and His entrance into the presence of the Father on behalf of the sinner are all comprehended in the anointing of the most holy. The sanctuary in heaven thus became the center of the work of salvation. From now on all true worship centers in the sanctuary in heaven. This was the moment Christ pointed to when He said to the Samaritan woman, "Believe me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." John 4:21. Neither Gerizim nor Zion, nor any other place upon earth, would ever be the center of true worship after Christ's work on earth was accomplished and He had taken His place at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

D. The True Sanctuary in Heaven

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:1, 2.

The attention of the true worshiper is now directed to the sanctuary in heaven, "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." When Christ died upon the cross and the veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), the glory of the Lord departed, not only from the Jewish Temple, but from this earth. Never again would there be an earthly sanctuary that could contain the glory of Christ and could be considered the center of true worship upon this earth. There would be places of worship scattered over the whole earth, but the divine center of all worship would be in heaven, to which everyone would have equal access through Christ, the great High Priest.

Jesus prepared the Jews for this moment of desolation that was to come over their city and Temple. With tears in His voice He told them on the occasion of His last visit, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:38. By their rejection of Christ, of divine love, and of mercy they had brought about the judgment that was now upon them. Through the prophet Hosea the Lord had forewarned them of their doom. The message sounded down the centuries: "O, Israel, thou has destroyed thyself "for thou has, fallen by your iniquity." Hosea 13:9; 14:1.

But despite the great happenings surrounding the crucifixion, resurrection, and glorification of Christ, the Jews refused to accept the fact that the center of true worship was now in heaven and not upon earth. By mighty works and miracles on Pentecost and for three and a half years following, God tried to appeal to hardened hearts. Instead of heeding warnings of mercy and responding to appeals of love, the

Jews made a public issue of their rejection of Christ as their high priest in heaven.

This happened in connection with the preaching of Stephen. Stephen, “a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, was ordained by the apostles to preach the gospel in Jerusalem. (Acts 6:5) He did “great wonders and miracles among the people” (verse 8), and “the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith” (verse 7). Stephen preached concerning the ministry of Christ in heaven. The fact that a great number of priests accepted the gospel shows that Stephen left no room for the earthly priesthood in his teaching.

There is further evidence, however, that Stephen tried to direct the minds of his hearers to Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. First of all, the charge the council brought against him through false witnesses substantiates the fact. They charged, “This man ceases not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.” Verses 13,14. No greater self-condemnation could have come to the Jews than was implied in this charge. They verily admitted that Stephen had told them that the Temple had been left desolate, and that the Mosaic ceremonies had been done away. By this charge they openly refused to accept the fact that their earthly sacrifices and ceremonies had lost all significance, and that they had rejected Christ their Savior.

Second, Stephen climaxed his great sermon with the truth that “the most High dwells not in temples made with hands”; but as the prophet had said, “Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will you build me? said the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?” Acts 7:48-50. The glory of Christ was far too great to be contained in any man-made house. Even Solomon’s Temple was only a vain attempt, but God favored it with His presence. But now that the Desire of all nations had come, and had been rejected and sacrificed, there is no place on earth worthy to receive Him. Only at the right hand of “the Majesty in the heavens” could He find “rest.” Now they openly scoffed at Stephen and rejected the message. At last God’s faithful servant condemned them for their stubbornness and hardness of heart, and for resisting the power of the Holy Spirit. (Verse 51) Whereupon they “gnashed on him with their teeth,” and set about to take his life.

This brings us now to the third evidence in Stephen’s preaching—God wanted the world to understand that all true worship must center in heaven. Stephen, having faithfully delivered his message, is now in the hands of a murderous mob. His strength is failing him. He must seal his message with his own life. The charge that was hurled against his Master was now brought against him. But God would not allow the message to pass with the messenger. He opened heaven itself, and let His servant and all the people behold Jesus at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Once more Stephen, “being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” Verses 55, 56. In great rage they cast him out of the city and hurled stones upon him until he died.

Thus ended the seventy weeks of years. The story of the earthly sanctuary was forever closed, and the true worshipers were seen looking into the heavens to Jesus, their Lord and Christ, ministering in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. From now on the sanctuary in heaven is the center from which the work of salvation is conducted.

“The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ’s work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin.” [12]

Henceforth Satan is determined to subdue the truth concerning the mediatorial ministry of Christ. Beginning with the stubborn Jews and continuing with apostate Christendom, Satan has been determined to blind the hearts of men with reference to Christ’s work in the heavenly sanctuary. The plan of redemption, as revealed through Christ as man’s substitute and surety, has been corrupted in the minds of men. Instead of looking to Christ as man’s representative before God, an earthly representative has been set up by Satan. The apostles saw that subtle shift of faith from Christ to antichrist already at work in their day. The time came when a complete counterfeit mediatorial system was set up in Satan’s temple upon earth, and through his agents Satan has set himself up as God, to be worshiped as God. Later on we deal specifically with this development as the conflict between righteousness and sin progresses.

There remains one more prophecy pertaining to the earthly sanctuary which would be fulfilled. This prophecy stated, “And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolation are determined.” Daniel 9:26. Upon His last departure from the Temple the disciples showed Christ the beauty of the structure, only to receive the reply: “There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Matthew 24:2. To the Christians the Lord gave a sign of the city’s doom and of their last chance to flee from it alive. In AD 70 the sign appeared as the Roman armies approached for the siege, and suddenly withdrew for no other reason than that Christ had provided a final opportunity for His children to find safety. Some time later the siege was resumed by Titus, and both Jerusalem and the Temple were utterly destroyed. Thus the final stroke of divine judgment was inflicted upon the desolate Temple and the city of a rejected people.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was one of the bloodiest and most desolating events ever visited upon a people, their city, and center of worship. So terrible was it that it has become an object lesson for the destruction of the Whole world with its final idolatry and wickedness. Never would Jerusalem become the center of true worship again “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

When the great conflict between sin and righteousness will be finished, and the earth is made new, then in the New Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, the redeemed of the Lord will once again come to worship before Him. Until then their worship is directed into the sanctuary in heaven where Christ, their High Priest, makes intercession for them.

3. Christ, Our High Priest in Heaven

The subject of Christ as our high priest in heaven is such a great and sublime theme that it is impossible to deal with it fully in the space allotted for this paper. It is hoped that this brief introduction of the subject will stimulate further intensive study on the part of the reader. From the vast store of available material the following phases of the subject have been selected, and will be briefly treated. (1) Christ, our Great High Priest; (2) Christ, High Priest of a greater and more perfect tabernacle. (3) Our merciful and faithful High Priest; (4) Christ, Mediator of the New Testament; and (5) the Minister of the true sanctuary.

A. Christ, Our Great High Priest

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” Hebrews 4:14. The emphasis in this reference is on the special rank given to Christ as our high priest. He is referred to as a “great” high priest. Ultimate greatness in the high priesthood is limited to Jesus the Son of God. He alone is worthy to “receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Revelation 5:12. He only has been “highly exalted,” and to Him alone has been given a name “which is above every name” that “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11.

There are three things that designate Christ as our great high priest. First, He was “made” an high priest. The initiative in that respect came from God the Father; it did not come from Christ Himself. For “Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.” Hebrews 5:5. It was God who called Christ and made Him high priest. (Hebrews 5:10; 6:20.) There was no spirit of self-exaltation in the heart of Christ. He laid no claim to this high position. Although He met all the conditions, and measured up to all the qualifications, He remained humble even after His resurrection. Not until after the Father had given the command: “Let all the angels of God worship him” (Hebrews 1:6), did He take His place at the right hand of His Father as our great high priest.

The next act designating Christ as our great high priest was the confirmation of His calling by an oath.” Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.” Hebrews 6:17. In adding His oath to the promise of salvation through Christ, God put forth two unchangeable things which forever settled the position given to His Son. The two unchangeable things are “the immutability of his counsel,” or “unchangeable character of his purpose” (RSV.), and the adding of His oath. In both God presented things that are a part of His character. They both remain true and unchangeable because God’s purpose does not change, and He is faithful to His oath. God cannot lie.

In further consideration of this oath we read, “The law makes men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.” Hebrews 7:28. The word of the oath which made Christ high priest came since the law, or after the giving of the law. When was that? The answer is found in Acts 13:32,33: “And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us

their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again. As it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” Here the apostle brings the promise and the oath together, and also designates the time of the confirmation by the oath. It was at the time of Christ’s resurrection. As the Son of God came forth through the portals of the grave the Father claimed Him by the oath: “This day have I begotten thee.” Thus Jesus was “declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4), and as the Son of God, Jesus was made our great high priest (Hebrews 4:14).

The third factor designating Christ as our great high priest was the fact of His endless life. Isaiah had foretold it when he said, “It pleased the Lord to bruise him. He has put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Isaiah 53:10. Note the statement, “He shall prolong his days.” The “seed” of the promise could not be held in the grave. There was endless life in that Seed, and His days would be prolonged.” For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there arises another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” Hebrews 7:14-16. It was the power of an endless life that entered into the making of the priesthood of Christ. God had purposed to save the world through His Son, and that purpose was based upon the power of endless life.

In order to emphasize the endlessness of the life and office of Christ as our great high priest, the example of Melchizedek is cited. In office, character, genealogy, and calling he was “made like unto the Son of God.” Verse 3. Christ rose after the “similitude of Melchisedec.” In Psalms 110:4 it is stated, “The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” As “King of righteousness,” and “King of peace,” and as “priest of the most high God” Melchizedek was a type of Christ. The fact that Melchizedek’s genealogy was not known did not hinder his call to the priesthood. Like Christ he had the necessary qualifications for the office, and there was no need for genealogic lineage.

The fact that Christ sprang from Judah, “of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood,” was no more a hindrance to the Son of God being called to the priesthood than was the absence of a genealogy a hindrance to Melchizedek’s call to the priesthood. The type therefore fits perfectly, the main point being the power of an endless life, inherent in the Seed, whose days would be prolonged, and typified by the absence of a genealogy of Melchizedek, giving “neither beginning of days, nor end of life,” but making him a priest forever.

B. Christ, High Priest of a Greater and More Perfect Tabernacle

The sanctuary in heaven, of which Christ is high priest, transcends anything of its character the world has ever known, or could possibly know.” But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.” Hebrews 9:11. Moses received a pattern according to which he built the tabernacle in the wilderness, but it was far from being like the real sanctuary in heaven. It reflected the essentials of the true, but in size, materials, and furniture it was earthly, made with hands.

The Scriptures refer to this “greater and more perfect tabernacle” in various terms. It is spoken of as the “temple of God” (Revelation 11:19, Psalm 11:4; Revelation 16:17; Habakkuk 2:20), as the “holy habitation- (Zechariah 2:13; Jeremiah 25:30), as the “true tabernacle” (Hebrews 8:2; 9:24), and as the “holiest,” or “holy place” (Hebrews 9:8,12; 10:19).

In the Revised Standard Version the word “sanctuary” is employed in Hebrews 9:8 and 10:19. James Moffatt renders Hebrews 9:8 thus: “By this the holy Spirit means that the way into the Holiest Presence was not disclosed as long as the first tent (which foreshadowed the present age) was still standing.”

M. L. Andreasen points out that the term “holiest of all” (Hebrews 9:8) occurs eight times in the book of Hebrews, and that “the original Greek is the same in all eight places, and in each case is in the plural.” [13]

“Let it therefore be understood and emphasized that the original is plural in every case. That it can never mean the ‘holy place’ only, or the ‘most Holy’ only; but that in each of the eight cases it is in the plural and means ‘holies,’ or ‘holy places,’ and includes both the holy and the most holy apartment.” [14]

Eyewitness descriptions of the sanctuary in heaven are recorded in the Scriptures. John saw the temple of God “opened in heaven” (Revelation 11:19), and the “ark of his testament” could be seen. On

another occasion he beheld “a door was opened in heaven,” and “a throne was set” and there were “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne” (Revelation 4:1-5), a clear reference to the seven-branched candlestick. Stephen saw “the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” Acts 7:56.

These scriptures tell us a number of things about the sanctuary in heaven. (1) The sanctuary is a real place in heaven. It has the throne of God in it. It contains the ark of the testament, wherein are kept the commandments of God. Before the throne are seven lamps. (2) These references show that the sanctuary in heaven is divided into separate places, or apartments. According to the earthly sanctuary, which was built after the heavenly pattern, there must be two apartments in the sanctuary in heaven. (3) It is evident from these scriptures that a ministration or service was going on when John and Stephen were given a view of the temple. Christ was seen standing at the right hand of the Father.” And out of the throne proceeded lightning and thundering and voices.” Revelation 4:5. There was busy activity, and Christ was in charge, which is evident from the fact that He was seen in a standing position.

A full and complete description of this greater and more perfect tabernacle is not available to us. Enough has been revealed to give us the necessary understanding of the plan of salvation. Beyond that we must wait until, as the redeemed of the earth, we shall have the unspeakable joy of beholding our Savior face to face in the kingdom of glory, and worshipping before Him in His holy temple.

The Lord is not pleased when we bring forth fanciful suppositions about the heavenly sanctuary. Such things belong to satanic deceptions of the last day, and must be shunned if we wish to maintain a clear vision of God’s truth for our time.

“In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?” [15]

“Satan is striving continually to bring in fanciful suppositions in regard to the sanctuary, degrading the wonderful representations of God and the ministry of Christ for our salvation into something that suits the carnal mind. He removes its presiding power from the hearts of believers, and supplies its place with fantastic theories invented to make void the truths of the atonement, and destroy our confidence in the doctrines which we have held sacred since the third angel’s message was first given. Thus he would rob us of our faith in the very message that has made us a separate people, and has given character and power to our work.” [16]

C. Our Merciful and Faithful High Priest

As our merciful and faithful high priest, Christ comes preciously near to the human family. At once we recognize Him as one “taken from among men.” Hebrews 5:1.” For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 2:16, 17, RSV.

a. Clothed in Human Nature-Jesus entered into our salvation when it was darkest. As a member of the human family He grew up “as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.” Isaiah 53:2. He was attacked by the enemy when He was still an infant. All the natural hazards of life He met and overcame. The soil out of which He grew offered Him little support. Even His face revealed the marks of rugged warfare with the enemy.” He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” He took the full course in the school of earthly life. In His own body He learned to know sorrow and grief.” He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” Although He Himself never sinned, or did anything worthy of stripes, yet as the Son of man He learned the agony and pain of punishment.” Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” Hebrews 5:8.” For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15.

Taken from among men, Christ bears on His body the marks of the fellowship of His suffering with the human family. He fully understands the members of our sinful race. There is no weakness, no struggle with sin, which He does not fully know about and understand. How wonderful it is that He was

called from among men, from our very midst! Now we may claim Him as our merciful and compassionate representative before the throne of God, and He in turn claims us as children entitled to membership in the family of heaven upon gospel terms. What comfort it must have brought to Stephen’s heart when in the midst of his awful sufferings He saw the Son of man, not the Son of God, at the right hand of God. He is there as the Son of man when He represents us before the throne of heaven. It is for that reason we may “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Verse 16.

“Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while invested only with His love. He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed in our nature.” [17]

“The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father’s throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.” [18]

Clothed in human nature, and having been made perfect through suffering here upon earth, Christ is now able to represent us fully and completely before His Father. He represents us before His Father as really and effectively as though we were standing beside Him. When the Father’s arm encircled His Son, it encircled every human soul that accepts Christ as His substitute and surety.

This approach to the Father through Christ is referred to as the “new and living way.”

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised).” Hebrews 10:19-23.

In His dual nature, as the Son of man and the Son of God, He has opened the way to the throne of grace to every believing soul.” Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25.

b. Holy, Separate From Sinners-Having now beheld our merciful and faithful High Priest as one taken from among men, we must see Him in His holiness also, “for such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Verse 26. As important as it is for Him to be acquainted with man, it is also necessary that He know the Father. He must know and understand how a holy God views sin, and what infinite love was manifest in the heart of God to find a way of salvation for the sinner. Christ was God manifest in flesh reconciling the world to Himself. Even before He was born He was said to be holy, for the angel said to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.” Luke 1:35, RSV. In Him the divine and human natures were brought together. In Him “dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Colossians 2:9.

He is a “blameless” high priest. The earthly priests had infirmities (Hebrews 7:27, 28) and had to first make sacrifices for their own sins before they could bring sacrifices for the people. He is ‘blameless, unstained, and separated from sinners.’ Verse 26, RSV. His ministry reaches down from the holiest presence of God. He was the glory of the Father from the days of eternity, He glorified the Father in the days of His flesh, and as our great high priest He is exalted to the glory He had with the Father before the world was. With Paul we must say, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16.

The words written by Edwin Markham about Abraham Lincoln may well be applied to Jesus Christ: “But most he read the heart of common man, Scanned all its secret pages stained with tears, Saw all the guile, saw all the piteous pain. And yet could keep a smile above his lips, Love and forgive, see all and pardon all. His only fault, the fault that some of old Laid even on God-that he was ever wont To bend the law to let his mercy out.” [19]

Martin Luther expresses the emotion of the heart one experiences when in contemplation of the great mystery of God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself: “When I am told that God became man, I can follow the idea, but I just do not understand what it means. For what man, if left to his natural prompting, if he were God, would humble himself to lie in the feedbox of a donkey or to hang upon a cross? God laid upon Christ the iniquities of us all.

“This is that ineffable and infinite mercy of God which the slender capacity of man’s heart cannot comprehend and much less utter—that unfathomable depth and burning zeal of God’s love toward us. And truly the magnitude of God’s mercy engenders in us not only a hardness to believe but also incredulity itself. For I hear not only that the omnipotent God, the creator and maker of all things, is good and merciful, but also that the Supreme Majesty was so concerned for me, a lost sinner, a son of wrath and of everlasting death, that he spared not his own Son but delivered him to the most ignominious death, that, hanging between two thieves, he might be made a curse and sin for me, a cursed sinner, that I might be made just, blessed, a son and heir of God. Who can sufficiently declare this exceeding great goodness of God? Therefore the holy Scripture speaks of far other than philosophical or political matters, namely of the unspeakable and utterly divine gifts, which far surpass the capacity both of men and of angels.” [20]

Christ, by virtue of being the Son of God, has the nearest access to the Father. No one else can come that near. He appears “in the presence of God for us.” Every barrier that separated man from God has been removed through Christ. We, as sinners, who couldn’t endure the presence of God for a moment, now have an advocate with the Father, right in His very presence! How much more could be done to make Christ our merciful and faithful high priest!

Every high priest taken from among men “is ordained for men in the things pertaining to God.” Hebrews 5:1.

“As the general character of the prophet was that of one qualified and authorized to speak for God to men, so the general idea of a priest is that of one qualified and authorized to treat in behalf of men with God.” [21]

This is true of Christ as our high priest. He ministers “for men in things pertaining to God.” Here we discover that our High Priest ministers in a capacity in which no man can serve for himself. In representing man’s relation to God in divine things Christ only is qualified to serve. This rules out all other priests or would-be priests, since Christ was inaugurated as our Redeemer in heaven. Men may serve as Christ’s ambassadors upon Earth, preach the gospel of reconciliation with God, but only Christ can represent men before God in things pertaining to their salvation. His is the only name under heaven given among men “whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. He is the only way. We “must” be represented by Him, and only by Him. There is no other name acceptable to God in this respect. This fact is settled once and for all time.

This “new and living way” that has been opened and consecrated for us is the exact opposite of salvation through man’s way, or by works. God’s grace has provided the means of salvation, and we may receive them by faith. The “best robe,” representing the righteousness of Christ, was awaiting the return of the prodigal son. As by faith he drew near to his father’s house that robe was called for and placed upon him. He did nothing to provide that covering for himself. The father had provided it. It was the product of his grace. The son received the blessing of it by faith.

The devil would have the sinner first make himself good before drawing near to God. But that is not God's way. By faith the sinner may come with the full burden of his sins and be accepted in the name of Jesus. The righteousness of Christ, accepted by faith, covers the past life. As sins are confessed, Christ is faithful and just to forgive them, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Then as "we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. Here is revealed a daily, living experience with Christ. By obeying the Word of God as Christ obeyed, our lives are brought into harmony with His life. We have fellowship one with another. He recognizes us as His children, and He represents us before God in our relation to God. He pleads the merits of His blood on our behalf, and thus cleanses us from all sin.

Our great High Priest has entered into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us. Now Paul raises the question: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." Romans 8:33,34. Armed with such representation before the Father, God's children can have no charges brought against them by the enemy. When he points at man's unrighteousness, God speaks up and says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan." Zechariah 3:2. And to the penitent soul clothed with filthy garments, the Lord says, "Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Verse 4. Yes, truly it is God that justifies. Then when Satan points at man's sins and imperfections in order to condemn him in the judgment, Jesus intercedes and pleads the merits of His blood. Those sins have been confessed. They have been forgiven and covered with the blood of Christ never to rise up in judgment to condemn the righteous.

4. Christ, Mediator of the New Testament

Another phase of Christ's high priestly ministry is revealed in Hebrews 9:15. There He is pointed to as "the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The word "testament" is better rendered "covenant." Moses was the mediator of the old covenant. (Exodus 20:19; 32:30-32; Galatians 3:19) Christ is the mediator of the new covenant. The condition of salvation in ancient days was the same as in the new covenant-faith in Christ. Therefore, nothing was lost to those who were called, whether before the cross or after the cross. The promise of eternal inheritance holds good for all time. Where the law of Moses came short in providing forgiveness for certain sins, faith in Christ made the blessings of forgiveness efficacious in all sins." By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:39.

As mediator of the new covenant Christ's blood covers not only all sins under the new dispensation but also all sins under the old dispensation. There was no perfect sacrifice for sin until Christ came and offered Himself. He was the perfect Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and His sacrifice superseded all previous sacrifices. In fact, all the sin offerings pointed toward Christ, and had Christ not offered Himself for sin, the promise of eternal inheritance would not have been secured for anyone. The whole world would have been eternally lost. As it is, redemption has become "eternal" (Hebrews 9:12) for all who have and will come to God through Christ.

God has always dealt with sin, from the time Adam and Eve sinned in Eden, on the ground of the blood of Christ." He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32. All heaven was emptied in the gift of Christ in order to secure salvation for the whole world." For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Hebrews 7:19-22.

Among other messages of hope that came to the Jewish captives in exile was that of Jeremiah concerning the new covenant. He prophesied:

"Behold, the days come, said the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, said the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, said the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts. And will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, said the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Here is a definite promise of a new covenant to take the place of the one Israel had broken. This new covenant was not to be "according to the covenant" God made with Israel at Sinai. This covenant was to affect the "inward parts" of the people; their hearts were to be changed, and God's law was to be written on the hearts and in the lives of the people. Those who entered into this covenant were to experience forgiveness of sins. They were all to know God by personal experience. God was to become a personal Savior from iniquity, and sin was not to be remembered against them any more.

That message had a genuine gospel ring. Never had the way of salvation been made so plain. A new day had come in the disclosure of God's plan to save man.

In the letter to the Hebrews this is called “a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” Hebrews 8:6. These “better promises” concern the better ministry of the covenant, the ministry of Christ. (Verses 1, 2) The time was coming when the earthly sanctuary would be removed, and Christ would become high priest at the “right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”

Jeremiah foresaw that day, and he based his hope on the original promises God made concerning the seed of the covenant, also referred to as “a righteous Branch,” a king that should reign and prosper, and “execute judgment and justice in the earth.” (Jeremiah 23:5, 6) This promise of the Seed had been given to Adam (Genesis 3:15) and was repeated to Abraham and the other patriarchs. It was the promise of Christ, the minister of the new covenant. Jesus was Himself the Jehovah who appeared to Abraham and gave the promise of the Seed. But Abraham “rejoiced to see” the day of Christ, “and he saw it, and was glad.” (John 8:56)

The new covenant is understood in the light of God’s covenant with Abraham. Through the faith of Abraham, the father of all the faithful, the promise was made “sure to all the seed.” Romans 4:16. The new covenant and the covenant with Abraham are virtually the same. The mediatorial work of Christ was the center of both: “If you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29.

The covenant at Sinai did not change the covenant God confirmed to Abraham. (Verse 17) It is only in Christ that there is any value in the new covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the new covenant that was not promised to Abraham. We must share the promises and blessings with Abraham.

“Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Verses 7-9.

The second, or new, covenant existed in every essential feature, except its ratification, long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called second because its ratification occurred after the covenant made and ratified at Sinai.

In the promise of Christ the Seed, the sacrifice on the cross is comprehended. He was the Lamb without blemish, “foreordained before the foundation of the world.” 1 Peter 1:20. The blood of Christ shed from the foundation of the world was the blood of the new covenant. (Luke 22:20.) In Mosaic days faith in Christ was manifested by the sacrifice of the sin offering, pointing forward to the shedding of the blood of Christ. Under the new covenant Christ brought the sacrifice of His own blood, once and for all.” Once has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Hebrews 9:26.

No sins were ever pardoned except by the shedding of blood. Some impurities might be removed by water and fire, but the stain of sin could be removed only by blood. It is universally true that sin never has been, and never will be, forgiven except in connection with, or in virtue of the shedding of blood. All sin that is forgiven is remitted through the blood of the atonement.

It was because Christ shed His blood as a sacrifice for sin that He is made “the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” Verse 15.

5. Minister of the True Sanctuary

We are told that Christ is minister of the “true tabernacle.” (Hebrews 8:1, 2) The emphasis that the true tabernacle is the one “which the Lord pitched, and not man” must have some significance. As has been shown in this study, God went to great length to direct the hearts of His children toward the heavenly sanctuary. He even allowed the earthly Temple to be completely destroyed in order to erase the very thought of perpetuating the idea that God’s worship was centered somewhere upon earth. Now that Christ has ascended to the right hand of God, the true sanctuary is in heaven.

Though Hebrews 8:1, 2 doubtless refers to the sanctuary in heaven in contradistinction to the tabernacle in the wilderness, the truth is that God distinguishes on the basis of who the builders were. The true tabernacle is one the Lord pitched and not man. Man pitched the one in the wilderness.

He also built the Temple in Jerusalem. God had directed that building to be constructed. It fulfilled its purpose. Now God emphasizes the fact that man has nothing to do with the building of the true tabernacle. And God does not intend that man should ever build another sanctuary to serve as the place of His presence, and where Christ should minister as high priest. In fact, any attempt to set up a sanctuary upon earth to take the place of the one in heaven is regarded by the Lord as blasphemy. For that would be a denial of Christ as the living way consecrated for us. It would be a denial of the sonship and priesthood of Christ.

a. Antichrist-Of this fact Satan was only too well aware. No sooner had Christ ascended into heaven than Satan began to set up a counterfeit system of worship here upon earth. The first thing he did was to inject a denial of the incarnation into the hearts of the people. This cropped up strongly in apostolic times. John wrote that antichrist was to come, in fact “many antichrists” had already come. (1 John 2:18) Antichrist was recognized by the fact that he “denies that Jesus is the Christ,” and he denies the Father and the Son relationship. (Verse 22) The apostle differentiates between the Spirit of God and the spirit of antichrist on the basis of the fact that Christ came in the flesh: “Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is

not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come. And even now already is it in the world.” 1 John 4:2, 3. This heresy is the very essence of apostasy. Peter calls the denial of Christ that has “bought” us “damnable heresies.” (2 Peter 2:1) This heresy is also the apostasy of the last days.

Worship was shifted from Christ to antichrist. This shift began with the Jewish nation when they rejected the Messiah. The stoning of Stephen at the end of the seventy weeks of years marked the public turning away of that nation from Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70 was designated by Christ as the sign of the “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel, the prophet. As the Roman armies, holding aloft the emblems of their heathen gods as the source of their power, surrounded the city the “abomination of desolation” was recognized by the Christians.

“Through paganism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his great triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. By contemplating and worshiping their own conceptions, the heathen had lost a knowledge of God, and had become more and more corrupt. So it was with Israel. The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin.” [22]

b. Setting UP of a Counterfeit Mediatorial System-In order to thwart the mediatorial ministry of Christ in heaven Satan set up a counterfeit mediatorial system upon earth. He thus endeavors to divert the sins of the people from the sanctuary in heaven. This false mediatorial system is symbolized by the “little horn” of the “fourth beast” (Daniel 7:19-25) and by the later phase the little horn” of the he goat (Daniel 8:9-12) in the prophecy of Daniel.

A close examination of these two symbols shows that they represent the same power. This proves to be a religion-political power especially interested in matters pertaining to religion and worship. Its great energies are directed: (1) against the Most High and the saints of the Most High (Daniel 7:20, 21, 25); (2) against the host and the Prince of the host (Daniel 8: 10, 11). (3) To take away the daily and the place of His sanctuary (verse 11); and (4) to cast down the truth to the ground (verse 12). This same power, under different symbols, is brought to view again in the prophecy of John the revelator. (Revelation 13:4-9.) Through the “beast” the worship of the dragon, or Satan, was set up on earth.

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kingdoms, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Verses 5-8.

The apostle Paul wrote of this same power. His words help to complete its description. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, he wrote of the “man of sin” thus: “Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

These scriptures describe Satan, through the beast powers, as directing his warfare against the true worship of God, against our great High Priest, against the followers of Christ, and against the truth. The sufferings and tribulations that came to God’s people as the result of this blasphemous warfare continued for centuries. God in His mercy had to shorten those days in order to save His elect from being completely destroyed from the earth. The scenes of this carnage as presented to Daniel were too terrible for him to behold. He fainted and was sick for certain days. (Daniel 8:27)

Through the development and setting up of the Papacy, Satan succeeded in bringing about an idolatrous worship here upon earth more mysterious and deceptive than anything ever known before. It has become known as the “mystery of iniquity.” Into that system was received the paganism of all lands and ages. Through his representatives the devil set himself up in his temple to be worshiped above the God of heaven. In the arrival of papal supremacy over the nations of the earth a decisive step in the setting up of this counterfeit system of religion was taken. The pope declared himself “not only a Priest forever, but also King of kings and Lord of lords.” (See Bible Readings for the Home [C. H. L. ed.], Pages 179-181.)

“The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator, and that none could approach God except through him; and further,

that he stood in the place of God to them, and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Thus the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them. Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity.” [23]

In contrast with this great apostasy the early church looked to Christ, the minister of the “true” sanctuary, set at the right hand of God “in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.” Ephesians 1:20-22.

c. Christ Directing the Work of Salvation-As a part of His mediatorial ministry, Christ directs the work of salvation from His sanctuary in heaven. Through His appointed agents He carries on as mediator of -the new covenant. The power of that ministry is felt throughout the universe. When in ancient times He gave the law at Mount Sinai, His power was manifested. The mountain quaked, and God’s glory appeared as burning fire upon it. So awe inspiring was the scene that even Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake.” Hebrews 12:21. Israel never forgot that great day in their history. But now One has come who is greater than Moses, and He has entered into the true tabernacle as minister of the new covenant. To the church the word comes:

“You are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel. See that you refuse not him that speaks.” Verses 22-25.

As He speaks from heaven His word is like a two-edged sword, -quick, and powerful,” penetrating into the innermost recesses of the soul and spirit of man, discerning even the very thoughts and motives of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12) He commissions His angels to go forth as His “ministering spirits,” to serve for the sake of those who shall be heirs of salvation. (Hebrews 1:14) These “excel in strength” as they carry out the commands of their great leader. (Psalm 103:20,21.) To these He adds the power of the Holy Spirit. As His servants proclaim the Word of Christ, the good news of salvation, the Word is accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit and heavenly angels, and no combination of earthly armies, carnal or spiritual, can thwart the work of salvation. As God’s special messages have gone to the world through the centuries, the powers of evil have been halted, and the way into the heavenly sanctuary has been made plain. As wave after wave of persecution and bloodshed swept over the church, threatening the very existence of God’s elect upon the earth, the Spirit of God has lifted up a standard against the enemy. (Isaiah 59:19) As the church reached the time of the end a final message of salvation was to go forth from the presence of God, a message especially directed against the beast powers who oppose the worship of the God of heaven. When the time came for this message to go to the world, the days of tribulation were cut short in order to open the way for its proclamation with great power and glory.

This message must be presented to the world. It is not a smooth, palatable message the people, particularly the enemies of God, want to hear. Indeed, they will not tolerate the free preaching of this message. What, then, are we to do about this task? Are we to go on preaching only a soft, easygoing message? Or are we to give the last warning message a certain sound?

We speak of the coming latter rain, and it is well that we do. But for what purpose will the latter rain be sent? The Lord has told us plainly that the latter rain will be sent to “give power to the loud voice of the third angel.”

“ ‘The commencement of that time of trouble,’ here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.” [24]

A “loud voice is anything but a piped-down proclamation of God’s message. We have done well in proclaiming the messages of the first and second angel. But it is the third angel’s message-the warning against the beast and its image that is to be proclaimed with a loud voice. Although great care, caution, tact, and, above all, love must be revealed in the preaching of the third angel’s message, the injunction still stands that it must be proclaimed with a loud voice. When this is done then there will be a great heart-felt need of the power of the Holy Spirit, and God will abundantly supply that need. There is no need for the latter rain as long as we proclaim an easy-going message that the people love to hear. But when the message that is presented strikes at the very apostasy of the last days

and calls people out of Babylon and leads them to change their whole manner of life and worship, it is then that the power of the Holy Spirit will come in the form of the latter rain. It has been thus in the past when special messages were sent to the world, and it will continue true until God's work is finished upon earth."

"In every generation God has sent His servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. But the people desire smooth things spoken to them, and the pure, unvarnished truth is not acceptable. Many reformers, in entering upon their work, determined to exercise great prudence in attacking the sins of the church and the nation. They hoped, by the example of a pure Christian life, to lead the people back to the doctrines of the Bible. But the Spirit of God came upon them as it came upon Elijah, moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; they could not refrain from preaching the plain utterances of the Bible, doctrines which they had been reluctant to present. They were impelled to zealously declare the truth, and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear the warning.

"Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of Spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power, all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven." [25]

"The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost. As the 'former rain' was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the up springing of the precious seed, so the 'latter rain' will be given at its close, for the ripening of the harvest. 'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. 'Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain. 'In the last days, said God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh. 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. '

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close." [26]

d. The Judgment-Much more could be said of Christ's high priestly ministry, but one phase of His work claims our special attention. This is particularly true because of the fact that we are living in the time of the end. Among the many phases of His ministry as our high priest, Christ has come to "put away sin. ---(Hebrews 9:26.)

The putting away of sin includes the work of judgment. Christ's sacrifice provides not only for the forgiveness of sin but also for its complete eradication, putting it out of sight so that it will never rise again.

The putting away of sin is not completed until the penalty for sin has been fully paid. This phase of Christ's ministry is a part of the judgment. On the Day of Atonement the special service of that day was not completed until the high priest had finished his ministry in the most holy, laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, placed upon it "all the sins of the children of Israel," and sent it away to perish in the wilderness. Likewise in Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, after atonement has been made, Christ will put away sin once and for all when He casts Satan and all his agents into the lake of fire. The controversy between Christ and Satan, between righteousness and sin, did not end at the cross. Even now while Christ is serving as our great high priest, this struggle is going on relentlessly and in great fury. In the light of the sanctuary in heaven the "triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin" is clearly revealed.

(1) The Time of the Judgment. The scenes of desolation and suffering that Daniel saw in vision were not to continue unchecked forever. God's word had determined the limitation of the great apostasy. When the one angel asked, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the

transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" the answer came quickly from another angel: "Unto two thousand three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8: 13, 14.

Daniel had earnestly prayed, "O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." Daniel 9:17. He was thinking of the desolation of the Temple in Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity. He pleaded with God to let His face shine upon that sanctuary, to restore its worship and glory among the nations. God heard and understood that prayer. In the answer that came from the angel the sanctuary in Jerusalem was remembered.

But the time period mentioned reached far beyond the existence of the Temple in Jerusalem. The 2300 days of years, beginning in 457 BC, reached far beyond the seventy weeks of years allotted to the Jewish people and the Temple. They reached down through the centuries another 1810 years, or to AD 1844. In this one sentence the angel covered the whole period of time intervening between the restoration of ancient Jerusalem and the time when the church would come up to the “city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.” Hebrews 12:22-24. To Daniel this language remained mysterious. To the church also the full meaning of these words remained hidden until the long prophetic period had terminated.

Repeatedly Daniel sought for light concerning this vision. Finally the Lord said to him: “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” Daniel 12:9, 10. During the long period of persecution, later known as the Dark Ages, the saints would be purified and tried. At last the time would come when the people of God would find understanding of these things pertaining to the sanctuary.

In 1798 the supremacy of the Papacy was broken. The 1260 years were over. With the arrival of 1844 light came on the sanctuary question. The glorious results of the Protestant Reformation, which once more exalted the Bible as the sole rule of Christian faith, were manifest. The doctrine of the priesthood of Christ and of justification by faith stirred the hearts of the Christians, and brought about an era of revival of faith that was destined to encircle the whole earth. Thereupon followed the Second Advent movement and the proclamation of the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-12. The first of these three messages stated that the hour of God’s judgment had come, and called upon the world to “worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Verse 7.

The coming of the judgment-hour message following immediately upon the termination of the desolating work of the little horn after 1798, fits into another scene witnessed by Daniel. Daniel said:

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:9, 10.

This scene of the judgment is presented between two important points in the work of the beast power: between the time when the “little horn” is speaking great things against the Most High and the time when the beast is “slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” (Verses 8, 11.)

This shows that a work of judgment is to take place at the time when the devastating work of the little horn was interrupted. This would have to be some time after those days had terminated, or after 1798. With the prophetic period of 2300 days closing in 1844, it must follow, therefore, that the cleansing of the sanctuary spoken of by the angel (Daniel 8:14) has reference to the coming of the judgment seen by Daniel in his vision. The setting up of the judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary must be one and the same thing.

(2) The Work of judgment. Viewed in the light of the earthly sanctuary service, “which was a figure for the time then present,” on the Day of Atonement, the cleansing of the sanctuary aptly denotes a work of judgment. This atonement was made once a year because of the “uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins.” Leviticus 16:16. On the Day of Atonement the priest made an atonement for the people to cleanse them and the tabernacle from all their sins. (Verses 29-34) This was a day of heart searching and affliction of soul. (Verses 29, 31) Every one who failed to make proper provision for his sins was cut off from the congregation. This happened once each year in the completion of the cycle of service in the sanctuary.

The cleansing of the earthly sanctuary was typical of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary.” The patterns of things in the heavens” were purified by the sprinkling of the blood of animals, “but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Hebrews 9:23.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” “Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others. But now once in the end of the world bath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Verses 11, 12, 25, 26.

Christ made the atoning sacrifice once for all, and when He entered the “holy places” in heaven He “entered in once into the holy place [places], having obtained eternal redemption for us. Eternal redemption indicates that the full price was paid, and by His sacrifice the work of redemption is to be fully and eternally completed.

“Now once in the end of the world bath he appeared to put away sin.” The term “in the end of the world” no doubt applies to the time when Christ came as a sacrifice for sin. Some more recent translations (Weymouth, Moffatt, Menge) might be understood to refer to the end of the world. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the one offering Christ made covers His entire administration, throughout the Christian dispensation, until He comes the “second time without sin.” (Verse 28) All that occurs during that time is covered with His sacrifice. The whole work of putting away sin is covered, including His work of atonement during the judgment. He appeared once at the cross; He will appear in the world again at His Second Coming.

There is another coming that takes place between the first and Second Comings. This other coming is mentioned in Daniel 7:13. Of this the prophet said, “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.”

“Christ had come, not to the earth, as they [Adventists in 1844] expected, but, as foreshadowed in the type, to the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the Ancient of days. ‘I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came not to the earth, but to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.’”

“Both the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 and the first angel’s message pointed to Christ’s ministration in the most holy place, to the investigative judgment, and not to the coming of Christ for the redemption of His people and the destruction of the wicked.

“The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Daniel 8:14. The coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Daniel 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event. And this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25.” [28]

The Scriptures pointed to a judgment. Solomon said, “God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.” Ecclesiastes 3:17. And again: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. The apostle Paul reasoned with Felix “of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” Acts 24:25. Although that judgment was still future in Paul’s day, yet the apostle expressly stated that God has “appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained.” Acts 17:31.

The investigative judgment concerns everyone, for “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5: 10. Through the ministry of the angels a careful record is made of every life. The books containing these records are examined in the investigative judgment. John said, “The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:12. The various kinds of books used in the judgment are “the book of life,” (Revelation 13:8; 20:13-15) and the books of “remembrance” (Malachi 3:16; Psalm 56:8).

At the beginning of the investigative judgment in 1844 Christ was seen to enter into a new phase of His mediatorial ministry. He came near to the Ancient of days. (Daniel 7:13) Both God, the judge, and Christ, the Mediator, became vitally engaged in a work that seems to have brought them closer together than ever before in connection with the work of the sanctuary in heaven. Christ entered the most holy to perform the work of atonement. He ceased His ministration in the first apartment. The time had come when the general ministry pertaining to forgiveness of sins was ended. This had been going on in the first

apartment of the temple for eighteen hundred years. Now, another additional portion of His mediatorial work had to be taken up, this time in the most holy. There is no lapse in, or omission of, any part of the former service occasioned by the move into the most holy.” So Christ had only completed one part of His work as our intercessor, to enter upon another portion of the work, and He still pleaded His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners.” [29]

Christ opened another door before He closed the first one (Revelation 3:7, 8), indicating that a door was always open through which the sinner had access to the Father.

This work is known as the investigative judgment. Christ is making up “a people for his name” (Acts 15:14) to share with Him the kingdom that He is soon to receive from the Father. Before the “marriage of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:7) takes place the guests of the wedding must be examined. This was made clear by Christ’s parable of the marriage as recorded in Matthew 22. Before the wedding the king examined the guests to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on, are accepted of God, and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing work in the sanctuary above. [30]

One book, the book of life, is especially mentioned in connection with the judgment. This is the register of heaven. It contains the names of those who have accepted Christ as their Savior from sin and have given public expression of their faith. Doubtless Adam's name leads the list, for this book has been in existence since the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8.) The saints in Old Testament times were conscious of the existence of this book. (Exodus 32:32; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1)

Christ spoke of the blessing of having our names written in heaven (Luke 10:20), and Paul specifically mentions the book of life (Philippians 4:3). Christ has entered the presence of the Father to represent those who have expressed their faith in Him, for He said: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 10:32, 33.

As a recorded name comes tip in the judgment, the book of remembrance of that person is investigated to ascertain whether that individual has kept the faith throughout his whole Christian life. If so, Christ will plead the merits of His blood on behalf of that one. The Father will accept the atonement of Christ for this person, the record is forever closed, and the name is retained in the book of life. In case the individual departs from the faith and denies the atoning sacrifice of Christ, that person's name is blotted out of the book of life. This work of investigation began with the dead in 1844 and has been in progress for more than one hundred years. Before this phase of Christ's ministry is completed, the names of the living who have once accepted Christ and whose names have been recorded in the book of life will be brought under final investigation in the judgment. Those whose names have been dealt with in the judgment are sealed for eternity. Some will be raised to life and will enter into the kingdom of God at the first resurrection. Some will not be brought forth until the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29) The investigative judgment determines who belongs to each of the two groups.

(3) The Scaling-As to those who will be living when Christ comes the second time, special provision has been made to determine their preparedness for the kingdom of God. This provision is the sealing. In the case of the dead who have been judged, death closed the activity of their lives. Their life records could be considered fully and their cases determined. With the living a special sealing work has to be done before their cases can be decided in the judgment.

When Christ returns there will be those living upon earth who will be "without fault before the throne of God." Revelation 14:5. They will have the seal of God. (Revelation 7:2-4.) John saw them upon the earth after the third angel's message had been given to the world. There they were keeping "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. They have gone through great trial and persecution because they had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name." Revelation 15:2. The observance of the Sabbath will be connected with this scaling.

"The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation. The mark of the beast is the opposite of this-the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God." [31]

However, there is more to this scaling work than Sabbath observance.

"Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works." [32]

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God."

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost." [33]

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God." [34]

"It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character." [35]

“Jesus is in His holy temple, and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins, and will pardon all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before He leaves the sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the sanctuary, then they, who are holy and righteous, will be holy and righteous still; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God.” [36]

The sealing work is rapidly nearing completion. The winds of strife are increasing in intensity. God is holding them in check so that the earth will not be destroyed before the scaling of “the servants of our God in their foreheads” is completed. But God’s mercy will end in due time.

“With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered, with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of His wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading of mercy in their behalf.” [37]

When the last name has been dealt with and Christ lifts His hands and says, “It is finished,” then His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is over. At this juncture the words of Christ apply:

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:11,12.

(4) The Blotting Out of Sin. Before Christ comes the second time the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished.

Peter said, “Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” Acts 3:19, 20. The time is coming when final disposition is to be made of sin. Merely forgiving sins will never put an end to sin. Christ could keep on forgiving sins forever, but if He took no steps to dispose of sin, there would never be an end to this blight that came upon the world and the universe.

“The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the Second Advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out ‘when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ.’ When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be.” [38]

4. Christ as King

The next scene in the prophecy is that of Christ in the act of receiving the kingdom.

“And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:14.

This same scene is portrayed under the seventh trumpet: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15.

At this the Savior lays aside His priestly attire and puts on the royal robes. The intercessory work in the temple is finished. Now Christ comes to “execute judgment” (John 5:27; Jude 14, 15), to “give reward” to His servants, and to “destroy them which destroy the earth.” (Revelation 11:18). Upon His departure from it, the temple was filled with smoke till the seven last plagues of the seven angels are fulfilled. (Revelation 15:8)

For the first time in the duration of sin Christ has ceased His mediation on behalf of sinful men. This is something new, or as the prophet said, “strange.” (Isaiah 28:21) Heretofore wrath has been mingled with mercy. Now His wrath is unmingled. Sin and all its traces must be forever eradicated; neither root nor branch is to remain (Malachi 4: 1) by the time this “strange act” is completed. The seven last plagues will accomplish their retributive work. After the last plague Christ comes to gather His elect to Himself.” A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.” Psalm 50:3. The wicked will be destroyed by the “brightness of his coming.” (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Now Christ is prepared to make final disposition of sin itself. In the typical service of the Day of Atonement, after the high priest had completed his ministry of cleansing both the tabernacle and its furniture, he placed his hands upon the head of the “scapegoat” (Leviticus 16:8), and confessed over him “all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat”; then he sent the goat away “by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness” (verse 21).

The Hebrew word for scapegoat is Azazel. The text states that Aaron was to cast lots upon the two goats, “one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat [“Azazel,” margin].” Whom does Azazel stand for? “Azazel” means “a wicked spirit,” or the angel who revolted and persisted in rebellion and sin. That means Satan. Mrs. Ellen G. White describes the antitypical event:

“Now the event takes place, foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the day of atonement. When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of the sin-offering, then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord. And in presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him ‘all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.’ In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels, and the host of the redeemed, the sins of God’s people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.” [39]

“As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away ‘unto a land not inhabited.’ So Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God’s people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin, and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil.” [40]

In the binding of Satan for a thousand years we see the sending away of the scapegoat in antitype. (Revelation 20:1-3)

This teaching frequently raises the question, Since the sins are placed on the head of the scapegoat and an atonement is made with him (Leviticus 16:10), do we not then make Satan our savior? We answer No. The vicarious atonement for the sins of repentant sinners has already been completed when the scapegoat ceremony takes place, and those sins have been blotted out. It is therefore logical to ask, How then are there any sins to be placed on Satan? Here is the answer:

“Most sins admit of shared responsibility. The person committing the sin is often mostly to blame, though this is not always the case. Some are more sinned against than sinning. The man who educates a child to steal cannot escape responsibility by saying that he himself does not steal. The principle of joint responsibility is illustrated in the sin of our first parents. Satan tempted them, and they fell. Because of Satan’s part in the sin, the serpent was cursed; because of Adam and Eve’s sin, they were banished from Eden. God did not hold Adam and Eve solely responsible, neither did He excuse them. Satan was guilty; so was man. This principle of joint responsibility, illustrated in God’s treatment of the first sin, still holds

good. It is God ordained, and its justice finds response in man’s own sense of right.” [41]

F. D. Nichol illustrates the moral principles involved by the following allegory:

“A group of men have been arrested, tried, and convicted of certain crimes. A heavy fine is imposed upon them. They are in a hopeless state, for they are penniless. But their hopelessness is changed to joy; a rich philanthropist offers to pay their fine. They accept and are free. The case is apparently settled. But no; the court, continuing its investigations, discovers that a person of fiendish cunning has really dominated these poor men, and has seduced them into their course of wrongdoing. He is captured, and judgment meted out to him. He is made to pay a heavy fine-much heavier even than that from which the poor men have been freed by the gracious act of the philanthropist; for the court reasons that the fiend is doubly guilty.

“Now, it may truly be said that the philanthropist atones, or makes satisfaction, for the crimes of these poor men. Yet in another sense we could speak of the archfiend’s atoning for those very crimes. There is no confusion of meaning, even though each gives satisfaction to justice in a basically different way. Nor by declaring that the archfiend gives satisfaction for those crimes do we minimize in the slightest degree the adequacy and sufficiency of the philanthropist’s gracious act toward the penniless men. [42]

Satan cannot escape some share of responsibility for all the sins that have ever been committed. On this Mrs. Ellen G. White remarks: “Since Satan is the originator of sin, the direct instigator of all the sins that caused the death of the Son of God, justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final punishment.” [43] “He must suffer for all the evil that he has done, and be punished for the sins that he has caused to be committed.” [44]

It should be noted that Satan’s suffering is not vicarious but punitive. He makes an atonement for his sins only in the sense that a criminal makes atonement to society for his crimes by suffering a just punishment. In this way we can understand Leviticus 16:10. When Satan and his host who have spurned salvation through Christ are at last destroyed in the lake of fire, an end is made of sin.

Satan knows that this is coming. Therefore, in order to deceive men regarding the true remission of sin, he operates a false, counterfeit system of mediation of his own. He sets himself up as God in his own temple. Through his “man of sin” he operates a system of religion based on pious good works as a snare to the whole world. The Pope and his priests claim to have received from Christ the work of mediation between God and man. These claim power to forgive sin by their authority. Every effort is made to deceive the whole world. As the end of the world approaches, Satan’s success in this respect will be overpowering. By special decrees the people of the whole world will be compelled openly to acknowledge the beast and its image, and to worship the same. At the same time God’s children will refuse to acknowledge the beast and its worship. They will not accept the mark of its worship, but they will be sealed in their foreheads with the seal of God.

When this time comes, the blood of Christ will be brought to an open shame by universal rejection and wicked commerce. There remains only one thing: Christ’s coming to give reward to His faithful people and destroy those who destroy the earth. Punishment, full and complete, may now be meted out to Satan and his evil agents and to all who worship the beast and his image. These are cast into the lake of fire “and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:10, 14, 15.

Now the reign of sin is forever ended. Now a great feast of rejoicing takes place, known as the marriage of the Lamb. The earth made new is now restored as man’s Paradise and eternal home. All traces of sin are gone, and the eternal purpose of God looms into glorious view before the redeemed. They unite in singing a “new song.” Once before, John had heard them sing “a new song” in faith of all the provisions of salvation made through the sacrifice of Christ. (Revelation 5:9,10) Now they sing again “as it were a new song” (Revelation 14:3), saying, “Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments” (Revelation 19:1, 2). These voices seem to have come forth from the sea of glass that is before the throne of God. The joy now spreads. A special voice comes out of the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, and you that fear him, both small and great.” Verse 5. Whereupon John heard “as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundering, saying, Allelula: for the Lord God omnipotent reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready.” Verses 6, 7.

All things are now made new. The New Jerusalem has come down from God out of heaven, “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Revelation 21:2. The saints arrayed in “fine linen, clean and white” are now at home. They have been made unto their God “kings and priests,” and “shall reign on the earth.” (Revelation 5: 10) Now they are in the presence of God. They have entered into that life which was hid with Christ; their bodies are changed into the likeness of Christ’s glorious body; they stand in their own righteousness, “for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” Revelation 19:8. Man will appear before God as though he had never sinned.” And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4.

Before concluding the representation of the glories of the new heaven and the new earth, the Holy Spirit cannot refrain from reminding us that “there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie. But they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Verse 27. For us everything depends upon having our names written in the Lamb’s book of life when Christ comes to receive His kingdom. Now, while Christ is still interceding on behalf of sinners, we must make sure that our sins are all blotted out of the books in heaven, and our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life for all eternity.

14. The Advent Message

Leroy E. FROMM

Our Task Is to Reconstruct and Complete

God has had His master workmen throughout the centuries, building the beautiful edifice of prophetic truth. These were to be skilled craftsmen who should never need to be ashamed of their work, and who would ever build in true accord with the master plan and specifications. (2 Timothy 2:15) God Himself was the master planner and designing architect. Jewish expositors, prior to the Christian Era, began to lay the firm footings and to plant the solid foundations, as well as to build the lower walls of the imposing structure that would rest directly upon them. And the workmen-interpreters, in early church times, were to erect the main portion of the superstructure of the prophetic faith of the church, which in turn was built upon the foundation of Christ and the apostle and prophets, after men like Paul and John established the foundations and set the cornerstones. (Ephesians 2:20.)

As in the building of the great cathedrals of old, part was to be added to part as the years of history unrolled. So block was placed upon block, and section added to section, in this developing structure. And just as fast and as far as history fulfilled prophecy through the centuries, its progressive developments were to be recognized as they were unfolded. Additional prophetic faith portions would thus be added to the basic structure from time to time, which was to be completed in fair and imposing form in these latter days. And

as we come down through the first three or four centuries, we discover that these early men built solidly, and in a really remarkable way. Their construction has stood the test of time.

But in the passage of the next few centuries there arose false and faithless workmen, ruinous wreckers, who sought to overturn the earlier sturdy foundations and to break down the solid, symmetrical structure up built by the early church, so far as prophetic interpretation was concerned. Thus the beautiful edifice of prophetic exposition, erected by the early church, was grossly mutilated. So distorted did it become by early medieval times that its original form and outline could scarcely be recognized. These false workmen left their cluttered debris scattered everywhere, with a distorted, misshapen structure in its stead.

Like the false prophets in Israel of old, these unfaithful men built with “untempered mortar,” intermingling the holy and the profane, hiding their eyes from God’s Sabbath, insinuating subtle “lies,” seeking personal gain and group aggrandizement, and saying, “Thus said the Lord God, when the Lord has not spoken.” Those were days when, as with His ancient people, God sought for faithful men to stand in the “hedge” and to fill up the “gap.” But the earlier record states, sadly, that He “found none.” (Ezekiel 22:28-30)

Then came a long lull in the building program, covering several hundred years. When these had passed, pre-Reformation and Reformation times produced a group of godly, scholarly men who earnestly gathered up the foundation stones laid down by the men of earlier generations. Building operations were begun anew, restoring to a large degree the semblance of that original interpretative edifice. Once more it

rose in fair and comely form in the sight of all men. And they added other features and sections to the edifice, not previously discerned, but now disclosed by the restudy of the Blueprint. There were, however, sections of the distorted structure that were allowed to remain as they were certain parts that were in direct conflict with the original plans and specifications. These were left untouched and uncorrected, at the time, with all their blemishes and distortions.

Then, some time after the Reformation, still another group of destructive workmen, called rationalists or modernists-actually latter-day departing from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-7)-assailed the Reformation structure that had been rebuilt, and which had been patterned after the early church structure. Thus a second serious disturbance of the building took place, which God had designed to stand unmoved through the centuries. Much that the Reformers had restored they again tore down and cast aside.

And now we find fresh ruins and rubble scattered about, and a distorted, misshapen, modernistic structure taking form, with much of the original apostolic and restored Reformation building material still in discard in the debris, untouched and unutilized.

Then comes the crowning climax, as the capstone of the sound prophetic interpretation of the centuries is placed upon this imposing edifice by the modern builder-craftsmen of this prophetic temple. All this, you may say, is a historical parable. True; but it is based upon unassailable historical realities, and it constitutes the epitome of our theme and the outline of our studies.

In these latter days, as God’s remnant workmen, we are called upon not only to reconstruct the Reformation edifice but to restore the neglected early church structure as well, and to bring everything into harmony with the divine Blueprint. We are even to restore original features omitted by the Reformers. And we are likewise to rebuild the parts distorted and rejected by the latter-day perversions of the Reformation positions. Not only are we confronted by this dual task, but we are commissioned to finish this uncompleted structure, carrying it through to consummation with the capstone of the present truth features of these latter days, thus bringing the full structure to completion.

Our authorizing commission, our specific assignment, is recorded in the familiar words of Isaiah 58:8-14. Listen to it as light breaking forth as the morning, with the luminous righteousness of God in the forefront, as our advance guard, His glory as our rear guard, and the Lord Himself as our director and counselor. Then comes the clear outline:

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shall be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words. Then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Verses 12-14.

Ours is therefore specifically a reconstruction task. We are to restore the ancient structure of prophetic truth that twice has suffered grave disfigurement at the hands of unfaithful workmen. Not only are we now to repair “the breach” in the wall of truth, and to “build the old waste places,” and to restore the paths to dwell in, but we are specifically commissioned to “raise up the foundations of many generations.” We are to gather together all the true foundational building materials that have been hewn out through past generations, including those that have later been dislodged and tossed aside. These are to be brought together again, in balanced and symmetrical

form, as originally designed of God for the faith of His church. We are to restore its beauty and harmony and strength. And we are to extend our work of recovery back to the dawn of the Christian Era.

Ours is therefore fundamentally a restoration, not the formation of a new structure. It is tied in inseparably with the efforts of all past builders of prophetic truth. All past truths and applications are to be retrieved. Not one block or stone of sound, true exposition is to be left out as worthless or needless. In this way we shall truly build again the foundations and superstructure of “many generations” into the stately edifice of truth originally designed by God. That is our bounden commission under the Advent movement.

Augmenting Force for Our Final Witness

We are recognized pre-eminently as a people of prophecy, and we hold that we have a mandate and a mission from God for the proclamation of a message that is unique in all the annals of man. Our

cause and our course have been outlined in advance by the infallible pen of inspiration. We have the authorizing credentials for our task, stamped with the insignia of heaven. (Revelation 14:6-12) Consequently, an obligation rests upon us not placed upon any other group in the world today. No man, or body of men, can disannul that heavenly commission. And no one can exempt us from the responsibility of faithfully and competently proclaiming that message to all mankind.

We were brought onto the stage of world action for a specific purpose. The precise timing and fundamental scope of this movement identify it as of truly heavenly origin. Its historical rise and development and its ultimate climax and triumph are all portrayed upon the pages of inspired prediction. We are therefore a people of unparalleled privilege and accountability. High honor and tremendous obligation most surely devolve upon us.

Moreover, the floodlight of the world’s pitiless scrutiny will soon be turned full upon us. The hour has now come to rise to the full measure of God’s expectancy for us today, and to acquit ourselves as He expects of us in this climactic hour of all time. More is demanded of us than of our fathers, and much more than of our forefathers in generations past. And beyond all others before us, we should be fully aware of, and able to draft upon, the inherent strength and actual invulnerability of the fundamental positions of our prophetic faith. This has been brought into our possession by Providence in the last two decades.

We now have this augmenting force for perfecting and empowering our witness to the world. We are therefore coming into position to use the maximum of its latent power and appeal in the final phases of our witness to mankind. The hour has clearly conic to utilize these full potentialities and to employ the inherent strength of our position. The world is ready. And these facilities constitute our God given reserves for time’s last hour. They are designed to help finish the work. They are to blend with the outpouring of the latter rain in the time of the loud cry. They are to be set in the framework of full righteousness by faith. They are part of the paralleling human side and equipment. Let us, then, methodically survey these wonderful aids for the finishing of our task.

Our prophetic faith has a majestic ancestry and a historical support of which few have been aware, and which is not possessed by any other religious group today. It has a compelling force that is most impressive. It has a winsome appeal that is priceless. It offers such unassailable evidence as to make possible the maximum impression. It provides such a unique appeal to reason, and has such inescapable logic in its claim upon the conscience, that it is destined to produce a conviction surpassing any approach of the past. Such is our glorious heritage. God expects us to capitalize to the full upon its latent power and strength in presenting the climax of His case and claims before mankind at this time. That is our real and really glorious position today.

Having been commissioned by our leaders to delve into these backgrounds and recover these factual evidences, and having been asked to share these findings with you at this Bible Conference, I esteem it both a high privilege and a solemn obligation not only to give the resultant findings but to express certain deep convictions that have grown out of this prolonged study. The presentation of these findings over a period of years, before various graduate and undergraduate groups, as well as popular audiences, in the Old World and in South America, Inter-America, and North America, has deepened these convictions.

The effect of such presentations has been the same everywhere. I am persuaded that this subject has worldwide application and appeal. The express declaration of the Spirit of prophecy that, when rightly presented, these lost gems of prophetic truth, recovered from the rubbish of error and reset in the framework of the everlasting gospel in its unique present-truth setting, will make an appeal to minds that could not be reached by any other approach, has been vindicated again and again. Here are some impressive declarations:

“The precious gems of the righteousness of Christ, truths of divine origin, are to be carefully searched out and placed in their proper setting, to shine with heavenly brilliancy amid the moral darkness of the world. Let the bright jewels of truth which God gave to man, to adorn and exalt His name, be carefully rescued from the rubbish of error. Let the gems of divine light be reset in the framework of the gospel. Each gem is to become the property of God’s people and find its true position in the framework of truth. The wonderful truth of God is to be sought out by every mind, and the results of many minds are to be brought together from many sources as God’s

hereditary trust. Truth that has found its proper setting, flashes brilliant rays of divine light into darkened minds, and meets the wants and necessities of the minds and hearts of fallen men who could not be reached by any other agency.” [1]

Such is the augmenting power and inherent force of these lost gems, diamonds from Daniel, pearls from Paul, and rubies from the Revelation-when restored and rightly used. And we are always safe-and only safe it might be added when we are operating in harmony with the divine Blueprint drawn up for the remnant church. So let us enter upon our study.

Contemporary Recognition of Fulfillment the Rule

Now trace with me, first of all, the great, generally recognized sequence of world empires-the unfolding of the basic outline prophecies, primarily of Daniel 2 and 7. This is foundational. These have been universally recognized by Jew, Catholic, and Protestant alike as the ABC of all prophecy. They constitute the common denominator generally assented to by all groups who study prophecy.

It is marvelous to see how, from the very dawn of prophetic interpretation onward, men have realized progressively just where they were in the advancing course of time and the divine plan and outline of the ages. And this has taken place just as rapidly as history has clearly fulfilled the prophesied events. This recognition was not simply by one man, or two, but by many men-whole groups of students of prophecy, scattered over many lands. The historical record begins with the Jews before Christ. In fact, it begins back with the Hebrew prophet Daniel himself, who expressly identified the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian as the first three of the four world powers of God’s master outline of the course of empire from Daniel’s day onward.

And in the very hour of transition they were anxiously watching the change-over from Persian to Grecian domination, and applied the symbol of the swift-moving he-goat to the conquering march of Alexander, the Macedonian monarch, and declared the notable first horn to be Alexander the Great. [2] Then they watched with concern the establishment of the Roman fourth power-which they even named, as stated in their paraphrastic translation of the book of Daniel-as the next in the prophetic line to assume control.

In addition, we find that these pre-Christian Jews understood and clearly applied the year-day principle to the seventy weeks-the one and only prophetic time period of Daniel then applicable to the Jews-a prophetic truth for the time then present. God has always had a present truth a special truth for emphasis during each period along the highway of the centuries. These Jewish exegetes also clearly understood and stated that a “time” represented a year, and that “king” indicated a kingdom. And these foundational principles for all prophetic interpretation enunciated by the early Jewish church before Christ, were carried over into the Christian church and became the accepted heritage of the early church.

Men have known where they were all along the designated course of empire, and what principal events were to follow. This is a matter of simple record. In the days of Roman might and power Jew and early Christian alike then applied Daniel’s prophetic fourth empire symbols to Rome. There was no question in their minds concerning the application.

Take the early Christian churchmen, the Ante-Nicene Fathers, from Justin Martyr onward. It is most astonishing to see how many of the very men who helped to lay the foundation for the great Latin departure in other matters, had this unique characteristic-that they still held tenaciously to the basic principles of sound prophetic interpretation long after certain of the other gospel foundations of the early church were crumbling and apostasy was beginning to overwhelm and distort the fundamental doctrines of the primitive church. As the mighty Amazon sweeps out into the South Atlantic for hundreds of miles, bearing its sweet, fresh water amid the surrounding brine, so the distinct stream of sound prophetic interpretation continued on until, by the fifth century, it was finally swallowed up by the surrounding apostasy.

A single early example must suffice. Hippolytus, bishop of Portus Romanus (died C. AD 236), an opponent of two of the bishops of Rome, wrote the earliest systematic commentary on the book of Daniel that has been preserved for us. In striking phrases he paralleled the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, naming the four empires from Babylonia to Rome, identifying his own place as in the legs of iron,” and the fourth beast-the then-present Roman Empire-the fourth and last of the world empire series. He then declared the breakup of Rome would be the next world-shaking event in line, portrayed through the symbolism of the succeeding ten toes and the ten horns of these chapters. [3]

And he further declared the smiting stone of Daniel 2, in the time of Rome’s divisions, to be Christ coming in judgment. But most remarkable of all, he expressed the belief that the little horn of Daniel 7, springing up among the Roman divisions, represented the coming Antichrist-whose development, however, and identity as an ecclesiastical system spanning the Middle Ages he did not and could not yet envision. Rather, he wondered whether it might not be some heinous, atheistic Jew. Time was foreshortened to all these early men. They did not and could not yet grasp the stretching centuries that would be involved. The year-day principle had not yet been applied to the 1260 years, and the papal apostasy had not yet developed to the point of clear identification. But the grand outline was all there-the four empires, the division of Rome, the appearance of Antichrist, and finally the Second Advent.

So our teaching today, on this basic outline, is none other than the revival and restoration of the early church interpretation on the four empires, and the permanent division of the fourth. Thus we clasp hands firmly across the years with Hippolyttis and his contemporary expositors. We have simply revived and carried forward his teachings and those of others. [4] We have merely raised up the sturdy foundations of those early generations, back near the dawn of the Christian Era. That is our strength. Rome was the tremendously present fourth empire in Hippolyttis' then present-truth emphasis. And this basic concept was shared by scholars scattered from one end of the Roman Empire to the other, writing in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew. That was indisputably the early church teaching, and it constituted a powerful group of witnesses.

Rome's Breakup, and Disintegration of Interpretation

Next comes the era of the breakup of the Roman Empire into its lesser parts, or component nations. Sulpicius Severus (died 420 AD) and Jerome (died 420 AD) are typical of this epoch, and were striking expounders in this crucial period. These and other men definitely declared that the great predicted division was now already under way. [5] The brittle clay was clearly being intermingled with the sturdy iron. Statecraft and church craft were being fatally intermingled. The breakup was a present actuality. And this now became the new point of clear contemporary recognition and concern. It was the new area of emphasis of their present truth. So we are the restorers of this added section in the foundational structure laid by the generations of the fourth and fifth centuries.

And then the next major event in the line of inspired prediction-the appearance of Antichrist, whoever he might be-was awaited with gravest apprehension. Men prayed for the continuance of the then-present Roman Empire, for they feared the more sinister depredations and persecutions of the coming Antichrist. They likewise held the clear outline of the four world powers. Many, such as Tertullian, had written that Rome was the final withholding power, [6] and that its passing would make possible the rise of Antichrist-or the beast, or little horn, as it was already variously called under the alternate symbols of Antichrist. And many feared the dread opponent would appear in the church.

Then the first great breakdown in prophetic interpretation began to take place. First subtle and then open apostasy began to appear-fatal departures from that earlier prophetic faith, brought about through the impact of such men as Origen of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Augustine of Hippo. Origen, the Neoplatonic philosopher, began first to pervert the interpretation of the prophecies by allegorizing them away from literal intent. The four empires of Daniel 2 and 7 were just spiritual progressions, advances, ascendant principles, one following the other. The literal interpretation of the promise of Christ's Second Advent was just a crude concept for the immature mind, he asserted.

Eusebius represented the first resurrection as the widespread Christian conquests through conversion of the pagans, he devil's binding typifying the restriction of his power through the early conquests of the gospel.

By Augustine the resurrection was spiritualized into the spiritual awakening of souls dead in sin, the kingdom of God was crudely carnalized and materialized into the then-present apostatizing church, and the millennium was ingeniously thrust back so as to begin with the first Advent. People were then living, Augustine stoutly asserted, in the millennial thousand years of the Apocalypse. It was a revolutionary reversal and repudiation.

Moreover, the stone that was to smite the image on the feet was already, Augustine asserted, the mountain kingdom of God, which was to fill the earth. But this, they held, was to be accomplished through man's endeavor, and the stone was to crush the nations into subjection to the advancing kingdom of God. Thus the early shadow of the coming Inquisition was already cast in those transition times, under this gross misconception. And these flanking attacks upon the early precepts of prophecy, as well as the direct attacks -by Porphyry the sophist upon the historicity of the book of Daniel, and by Dionysius striking against the apostolicity of the Apocalypse-bro tight about the collapse of early church interpretation and the obscuring of the early sound exposition. For centuries bleak shadows crept over the earth, and darkness covered the understanding of men.

Conflict Next Centers Around Antichrist

It was a dreary time, until at last the true character and identity of the predicted Antichrist began to be unmistakably discerned. Around AD 1000, when the Papacy had clearly unveiled itself, the identity of the Antichrist was boldly asserted at the Synod of Rheims in 991. [7] And a swelling chorus of voices within the Roman Church began to declare, with anguish of heart, that the beast had taken tip his scat in the see of Peter, and the ministers of Christ had become the ministers of Antichrist. That, be it observed, was within the Roman communion, among loyal sons of the church, whose hearts were bleeding because of the deepening apostasy. And outside the pale of the Roman Church, among the Albigenses [8] and Waldenses, who did not acknowledge the pope of Rome, the prophetic symbols of Daniel, Paul, and John were applied directly to the Papacy as Babylon and Antichrist, now fully developed and dominant. [9] No exposition could be more direct or incriminating.

Eberhard II, Archbishop of Salzburg, at a synod held at Regensburg in AD 1240, was the first to perceive and expound the little horn of Daniel 7:25 as the already long existent historical Papacy, which had sprung up, as prophesied, among the ten-horn divisions of the

Roman fourth power, uprooting three. [10] This completed the cluster of prophetic symbols applied to the Papacy. It was a tense, dramatic hour when John of Milicz in 1367, boldly nailed his astonishing placard on the door of the old St. Peter's at Rome, declaring that the Antichrist had already taken up his abode in the church. [11] Other voices in various lands began to proclaim a similar message. Even the Jewish statesman and scholar, Don Isaac Abravanel, in 1496, declared it to be his inner conviction that the little horn of Daniel 7:25 was none other than the rule of the pope, springing up among the ten divisions of the Roman Empire. [12] And all this, be it remembered, was before the Reformation had gotten under way.

This contention now became the new point of emphasis. It was the new special truth for the time then present—that the Papacy was indeed the prophesied Antichrist, following the breakup of the restraining Roman Empire. And this continued to be the dominant emphasis in prophetic exposition all during pre-Reformation, Reformation, and post-Reformation times. It had been the burden of John Wycliffe and Walter Brute in Britain, who expounded Daniel 2 and 7 just as we do today, with the Papacy as the little horn. It was echoed by kindred spirits in Bohemia. [13]

It was the heart of Martin Luther's twofold discovery, first of Christ and then of the Antichrist of prophecy. [14] It was the ringing battle cry that gave separating power to the Reformation. It was the startling theme of John Knox's first sermon, in 1547, in old St. Andrew's castle. [15] It soon became the battle cry, not only of the Scottish Reformer, but of the Reformation leaders of every land. Heard first in the Old World, it was carried over by the Pilgrim and Puritan fathers to the New World. Such were the developing sections of the superstructure of the lofty edifice of prophetic interpretation.

The early church had identified the Antichrist with apostasy. Now the identification of Antichrist with the Papacy was simply a clarification and amplification that brought the Reformation church into line with the fundamental teachings of the early church. Hence, it was essentially a restoration, a raising up of the foundations of former generations. They were one in view and spirit. And the other prophecies in Daniel and the Apocalypse were interpreted in consistent harmony with these basic outlines. The little horn, the beast, Babylon, the harlot, and Antichrist were simply symbolic expressions of the same apostate churchly power.

Scholars like Joseph Mede, kings like James I of Britain, scientists like Sir Isaac Newton, and men in all the secular walks of life, as well as the clerics, expounded prophecy. Writers and wood carvers, artists and sculptors, embodied their concepts in abiding form. Prophecy was again a dominant factor in religious life.

Concern Over Timing of Papal Dominance Important

But the time placement of Antichrist's spiritual dominance had now become a question of increasing importance and concern. Prophetic interpretation had been at low ebb, back in 538, and no one then sensed the significance of the events occurring before men's eyes. The revolutionary character of Justinian's imperial script recognizing the pope's spiritual primacy was not grasped at the time. Centuries passed before the Roman Church came to the place of its great dominance under Gregory VII, Innocent III, and others, and so completely revealed its real character that its prophetic identity could no longer be concealed.

Drue Cressener, in 1689, declared that the 1260 years were to be calculated from Justinian's recognition of the papal primacy to about 1800 or shortly before. [16] And many others on both sides of the Atlantic—some twenty in all—began to anticipate some great crisis soon to take place affecting the Papacy, with France as the one to deliver the fatal stroke with the sword, and the "earthquake" as some kind of internal upheaval. Thus it was that when the Revolution swept over France, and the subsequent captivity of Pius VI took place at Rome in 1798 under Berthier, Marshal of France, this event was widely declared to be the end of the 1260 years. [17] And this terminal point of the 1260 years was now the new phase of their present-truth emphasis for that transition hour.

Again we would emphasize that our prophetic positions are simply the revival, the restoration, and continuation of basic Reformation positions on the outline prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7. It was the successors of the Reformers, their spiritual descendants, who had let the prophetic torch slip and fall to the ground and go out, or at least to be sadly dimmed by the downfall. We are simply continuing the illustrious line of torchbearers. We have picked up the fallen torch, fanned it again into flame, and are carrying it forward. We are consequently the raisers up of the prophetic foundations of many generations. We are the legitimate successors in the recognized line of transmission, not only from Reformation times onward, but back of that from the early church as well, and from the Jews prior to Christ. I am proud to be an Adventist, with such a wonderful heritage. I am proud of such a spiritual ancestry.

I wonder whether we half appreciate the part that these pioneering prophetic expositors, back through the centuries, have played in the development of the sound prophetic interpretation that is our heritage today. There is danger that, because we have increased light today, we may misjudge the very men who had such a noble part in this earlier work of the past, and have made possible our clear and balanced exposition at this time. The Spirit of prophecy has much to say on this. Here is one pertinent comment:

"The fact that we have increased light does not justify us in dissecting and judging the character of men whom God raised up in former times to do a certain work and to penetrate the moral darkness of the world. These men were God's noblemen, His living agencies, through whom He wrought in a wonderful manner. They were depositaries of divine truth to the extent that the Lord saw fit

to reveal the truth that the world could bear to hear. They proclaimed the truth at a time when false, corrupt religion was magnifying itself in the world.

“I could wish that the curtain could be rolled back, and that those who have not spiritual eyesight might see these men as they appear in the sight of God; for now they see them as trees walking. They would not then put their human construction upon the experience and works of the men who parted the darkness from the track, and prepared the way for future generations. Living down in our own generation, we may pronounce judgment upon the men whom God raised up to do a special work, according to the light given to them in their day.” [18]

Interest Shifts to End Events of 2300 Years

Then, after the recognized close of the 1260 years of the old-time papal supremacy, and prior to its great restoration to power in these latter days, the interest and the emphasis in prophecy suddenly shift from Daniel 7 over to Daniel 8, which begins with the Medo-Persian Empire instead of Babylon. The new interest in time prophecy then begins to center in the 2300 years as from Persia, and approaching their terminus around 1843, 1844, or 1847. This we shall note in another study in greater detail.

The 1260 years were now, by many, considered as accomplished. Their meaning was clear, and the papal power to which they were attached was acknowledged as demonstrated. The closing events could now be checked against the opening events of this long prophetic span. One was the reversal of the other. The basic outline prophecy of Daniel 7, with its related time period, was now proved. And this concept was considered as established and in the category of standard, accepted, fulfilled prophetic exposition-the acknowledged heritage of the church.

But what of the 2300 years? How were they to be calculated? What was the key to their placement? To what fundamental events were they attached? What marked their beginning? What was to be accomplished at their close? Just what was the sanctuary, and what was its cleansing? Where would it take place? And was it tied to any other time prophecy? These and related questions were now upon the lips and in the hearts of scores of students of prophecy. The 2300 years had always been of interest, but was largely baffling in centuries past. But now that the 1260 years were ended, men began to focus their interest and concern upon the 2300 years as involving the next great area of prophecy to be fulfilled. This period now became the new focal point in the advancing line of present truth.

Dual Attacks Upon Millennium Prove Effective

We must not, however, oversimplify the progressive development of sound prophetic interpretation. Throughout the centuries sound prophetic interpretation has been constantly assailed by pagan, Jew, Catholic, and infidel. As noted, in the third century Origen and others substituted for the basic outline prophecies the idea of great spiritual forces or advances. At the same time they replaced the literal first resurrection of the righteous at the Second Advent with a spiritual resurrection of souls to spiritual life. Next, God's coming kingdom of glory was construed as the present, carnal, dominant church extending its material sway over the earth. And these substitutes for the true came to be widely accepted during the fourth and fifth centuries.

But the crowning perversion in this series of three great departures was the so-called Augustinian theory of the thousand years, introduced during the fifth century. Building upon and embracing the previous departures, Augustine simply popularized and won the dominant church over to the basic theory of Tichonius, that the thousand years of Revelation 20-an indefinite period-began at the first Advent, and span the Christian Era from the first to the Second Advent. This theory included the concept that the resurrection marking its beginning was spiritual, and that the Holy City coming down from God out of heaven, or the camp of the saints, is simply the Catholic Church extending its sway over the earth. And this crowning perversion, and reversal of all early church teaching on the millennium, fastened itself upon the Christian church for some thirteen long centuries.

Not until the Reformation was far advanced was this false Augustinian theory and its misplaced millennium repudiated, and the true millennial period placed again in the future, where it belongs, as allocated by the early church. This period was to be introduced by the personal, literal, Second Advent of Christ and the literal resurrection of the righteous dead. But, alas, this restored millennial exposition was no sooner established than Daniel Whitby (died 1726 AD), Anglican rector of Salisbury, England, introduced an entirely new millennial hypothesis-the radical theory that Christ does not return until after a thousand years of gradual world betterment, world conversion, and world peace, to be accomplished by human endeavor blended with the effusion of the Spirit. [19]

This pleasing postmillennial prospect captivated the rationalistic-minded clergy, and was soon accepted by a large sector of Protestantism. So the pre-millennial truth of the early church was perverted first by apostate Catholicism and took firm possession of that dominant wing of Christendom. It was now matched by a different but equally fallacious millennial theory, adopted by a slowly apostatizing Protestantism. Both alike misplaced the millennial period. Both placed it before the Second Advent. Both spiritualized the first resurrection. And both based their accomplishments upon human endeavor instead of divine interposition at the Second Advent. It was plainly righteousness by works.

This all complicated the latter-day giving of the designated message of the Second Advent. The warning against the beast is no longer commonly, or automatically, recognized as in some way applying to the papal power, as was formerly understood by virtually all Protestants. And that, of course, involves one of the vital features in our commissioned message to mankind. We now have first to establish the identity of the historical beast. So both the “revised” Protestant concept of the millennium, in relation to the Second Advent and the faith of Jesus, and the identification of the beast itself, in relation to the commandments of God and the change of the Sabbath, have been profoundly affected and complicated by this popular shift in interpretation. There is correspondingly greater need of understanding the why, the when, and the wherefore of these changes and their basic fallacies, so as to stand on vantage ground.

Further Complicated by Counter Interpretations

But there is still more to this story. The situation became much more complex under the impact of Roman Catholic Counter Reformation developments. Many in the early church had thought of the coming Antichrist as an individual, to appear before the Second Advent. Time was foreshortened to their eager gaze, as they looked and longed for the speedy return of Christ. Only in medieval times did the true concept of an Antichristian system become apparent, a system spanning a dozen centuries, rather than of an individual, with the 1260 days symbolizing the corresponding years of that extended system. This will be noted in our next study.

But the moral pressure of the Reformation charge against Roman Catholicism increased as every Protestant group pointed an incriminating finger undeviatingly at the Papacy. And the charge was leveled squarely against her that she was none other than the predicted man of sin, Babylon, beast, little horn, and Antichrist of the prophecies. This was amazingly general.

The pressure upon Rome from this multiple Protestant accusation became unbearable. And the arguments used were based upon the alleged specifications of the prophecies. Something must be done about it. These prophecy arguments must be parried and neutralized. Then it was that two clever Spanish Jesuits-Francisco Ribera and Luis de Alcazar-rose to the occasion and sought to deflect the Protestant contention through counter systems of interpretation. [20] Ribera sought to redirect the charge of Antichrist toward some future individual infidel Jew, and thus away from a medieval system of apostate Christianity. He sought to center it at Jerusalem instead of Rome, and asserted it would hold sway for only 3 1/2 literal years at the end of the age-not for 1260 years extending over medieval times.

On the contrary, Alcazar confined the fulfillment of prophecy mostly to the early centuries, to the overthrow of paganism and the destruction of Jerusalem. [21] Either countering concept would do, so long as the accusing finger was diverted from the Papacy. An institution of the Middle Ages would be freed from suspicion. And this dual distracting device succeeded beyond the fondest dreams of its projectors. Catholicism generally holds the Futurist view. And in the course of time Protestants began to accept one or the other of these counter interpretations, designed by Rome for the very purpose of Protestant division and frustration, so as to shield the papal church.

Protestants ultimately split into their well-known modernist and fundamentalist wings. And modernism, with its characteristic skepticism, when it has any interest or credence in prophecy at all, has usually followed Alcazar’s Preterist lead and sought to push all valid prophecy back into the early centuries and look upon Nero, Domitian, or possibly Diocletian as the Antichrist. [22]

On the other hand, militant fundamentalism, holding tenaciously to an inspired Bible, and clinging loyally to the verities of the virgin birth, miracles, atoning death, and literal resurrection of Christ has nevertheless fallen a prey to Ribera’s Jesuit Futurism. That group has almost to a man inserted a fatal gap from the cross up to a brief period just before the end of the age, when, they now hold, an atheistic dictator will appear and fulfill all the specifications attached to the malign Antichrist.

Thus the Catholic Counter Reformation’s projection of conflicting counter interpretations, designed to accomplish division and diversion, has accomplished the confusion of Protestantism in the field of prophecy. Both groups have tragically departed from the common prophetic faith of all of our Reformation forefathers. That is why we stand in contrast to, and often in conflict with, both wings of Protestantism.

Stepping Into Our Rightful Role as Expositors

Herein lies our supreme opportunity of now stepping into our rightful place as the avowed restorers of the true Protestant positions of the founding fathers of all branches of Protestantism as it formerly obtained in all Protestant lands in both hemispheres. Instead of meekly accepting an unjust consignment to the ranks of modern heretics, as concerns our prophetic faith, we should humbly but effectively assert and establish, by sound reasoning and irrefutable evidence, our actual position as the champions and sustainers of the true, historical interpretations now regrettably abandoned by most of Protestantism’s spiritual descendants. We should now rise to our full and allotted place as the revivers and continuers of the true Protestant interpretation of the Reformation. This is our rightful heritage. We are simply the last segment in God’s sevenfold true church of the centuries. These former expositors of the true interpretations were of God’s true church and were true expositors in their time. We are in the line of true succession.

Such a role for us is an utterly new concept to most Protestants, and reverses the whole historical situation. And it is the truth. When grasped, it radically changes Protestant's entire understanding of relationships. It is now coming increasingly to be seen that it is not we who have departed from the platform of the Protestant prophetic faith, but they. It is not we who have become modern heretics on prophecy, but they. We are actually the orthodox, they the heretics. Protestants can no longer justly charge us with prophetic interpretation fantasies. This so alters the situation that it seals their lips. And this change is being reflected in the attitude of many open-minded students, as they read the evidence, and of noted religious and educational leaders in both the Old World and the New. There is increasing silence concerning former charges of heresy or freakishness, and a new and wholesome respect is developing for

Seventh day Adventists as true Protestant Christians and legitimate expositors.

This new concept, I firmly believe, is destined to make possible the reaching of minds that could not be favorably touched by any other channel or approach. Many of these religious leaders are destined to yet become our friends and defenders, and to stand in the breach for us in the time of approaching crisis. Others, I am similarly persuaded, will, under the impulse of the loud cry, take their stand openly with us.

As the gulf between the growing departures of their own churches and their unchanging conceptions of truth grows wider and deeper, many honest, godly men, scattered in posts of leadership throughout the various communions, will take their stand with the remnant church. God hasten that day! And yet that will probably only be when the final issues have been clearly drawn and the loud cry is actually sounding. Meantime, we are tactfully and faithfully to sow the seeds of truth beside all waters, and to present our understanding of prophecy before the world in clear and winsome and telling ways.

The Certainties of the Advent Faith

There is something highly satisfying about the words of Holy Scripture written by Luke the physician, with his medical training and orderly thinking, when he expresses the hope that thou might know the certainty of those things, wherein thou has been instructed." Luke 1:4. This declaration conveys a distinct sense of assurance. As we observed in our initial study, there is nothing vague, hazy, or untrustworthy about the evidence that lies at the foundation of our prophetic witness to the world. And such a declaration, coming from such a source as Luke, creates a consciousness that our faith rests on that which is sound, substantial, and sure. We may well observe-

1. That intelligent faith is based on sound, unassailable fact. It is not built on pleasing fables and transitory feelings. It is not founded on pious hopes and plausible assumptions. It is not reared upon unreliable traditions and imaginative folklore. Instead, it is built upon solid, trustworthy, factual evidence.
2. That it is impossible for God to lie, and inconceivable that He should deceive. He never contradicts the laws of truth and evidence that He has established upon which we are to base our faith and verify our findings, and by which we are to evaluate and check all evidence. The truth of God ever accords with the highest demands of reverent reason, historical fact, and scientific procedure.
3. That truth has nothing to fear either from reverent investigation or from the attacks of hostile perversion. If it be truth, it is bound ultimately to triumph over its detractors. Indeed, the more it is buffeted, the brighter it shines and the more majestic it stands forth in its towering majesty.

Such observations are pertinent because, along with our increasing growth and the inevitable prominence that comes as a result, especially as we enter the crisis time of earth's last hour, we shall become the center of the world's critical and often times hostile scrutiny. Every position we hold will then become the object of bitter attack. It therefore behooves us to know, as never before, the certainty and surety of the foundations upon which our faith is built. It is imperative for us to be assured and established beyond reasonable question upon every major fact of our prophetic faith. We are specifically admonished by the Spirit of prophecy-and such counsel is buttressed by our own common sense-that these fundamentals are to be verified beyond a reasonable doubt. We are further told that if we are not so prepared and buttressed, the "wisdom of the world's great ones will be too much for us." [23]

Sure Counsels of Spirit of Prophecy

Before we enter upon our main discussion, there are two other statements from the Spirit of prophecy that are highly pertinent, which we should note. The first is similar to one cited in our initial study-it is in the same strain, and uses the same figure.

"The truths that Satan had concealed by his hellish shadow, the truths that lie had misinterpreted, and misapplied, and disconnected from the Lord of Glory, are to be reset, opened and explained, and made to appear in their heavenly beauty, to be seen as truths that shall stand fast forever. They are to be re-established in the minds of men by the living agents whom God has appointed. And error is to be revealed in its true character by the light of truth. The Lord Jesus has moved upon human minds, that they may become His

living agents to do a special work in recovering the old truths from their old forms, that they may rid them of the traditions and maxims of men, and give them to the world in their native purity, in their original splendor, freshness, and force. This is our work, brethren and sisters, in this waiting, watching time!" [24]

Yes, we are definitely to be restorers, diligent recoverers, of the lost truths that are our rightful heritage-truths that are due the world today. And again, concerning the progressive unfolding of truth, we are told:

"The Lord designs that in the revelation of truth in all ages the doctrines of grace shall be gradually unfolded to the comprehension of man. His truth unfolds as the obscurity of dawn brightens into the radiance of noonday. In searching the field and digging for the precious jewels of truth, hidden treasures are discerned. Unexpectedly we find precious ore that is to be gathered and treasured. And the search is to be continued. Hitherto very much of the treasure found has lain near the surface, and was easily obtained. When the search is properly conducted every effort is made to keep a pure and understanding heart. When the mind is kept open and is constantly searching the field of revelation, we shall find rich deposits of truth. Old truths will be revealed in new aspects, and truths will appear which have been overlooked in the search." [25]

The historical development of prophetic interpretation is the story of the quest of man after the truth of prophetic fulfillment, as the scroll slowly unrolls before his eyes. Not long ago I was chided by someone who said that we should never recount others' errors or partial truths, or misconceptions of truth. But these pioneer spokesmen were groping out of darkness into light, and it is marvelous what they saw back through the centuries. We have simply gathered up these basic truths that, with varying degrees of clarity, have been perceived one by one through the passing years, as fast as history has fulfilled each major and epochal event of prophecy. Others have labored, and we have entered into their labors. And Mrs. White expressed the devout wish that our eyes might be opened so we could see those men of old as God sees them, the men who first parted the darkness from the track. They were "not faultless," but they were "moved upon by a power above themselves," and were God's "instruments." [26]

The Throbbing Heart of All Prophecy

For centuries astronomers sought to find the law of planetary motion. They had thought that the planetary orbit was a circle, with but a single center. But their calculations would not work out with accuracy on that premise. At last a German astronomer, Johannes Kepler (d. 1630), found that instead of a circle, the orbit of the planet is an ellipse, thus having two foci. [27] Once this principle was grasped, all became harmonious and accurate. A law of planetary motion had been discovered, and calculations could then be made with precision. Similarly with the great plan of redemption. It does not revolve around merely one Advent, but two. And these two Advents constitute the twin centers of the entire plan of salvation, the focal points of all time and eternity. Around these two the complete redemption of man revolves.

It is marvelous how the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9 are tied together in the supreme, interrelated, dual prophecy of the Word. The seventy weeks of Daniel 9 had their climax in the first Advent of Christ and His crucifixion as our vicarious atoning sacrifice. After His resurrection and ascension and His acceptance by the Father, Christ began His mediatorial ministry in the heaven of heavens for us as our merciful high priest. The 2300 days of Daniel 8 climaxed in the judgment-hour phase of Christ's heavenly ministry, which will end in Christ's Second Advent in power and great glory. And so these interrelated parts of one inseparable provision of redemption are bound together. The fulfillment of the first is the assurance of the certainty of the second.

Prophecy, be it never forgotten, is not simply the bare bones, the skeleton, the mere genealogy of the nations, and their sequence upon earth, though that aspect is inherent as a setting or framework. Prophecy is not simply the deeper conflict of right and wrong in the dramatic battle of the centuries, though this is also definitely included. On the contrary, prophecy is primarily the revelation of the tremendous redemptive activity of God in behalf of, and for, the salvation of man, involving and centering in these two Advents and uplifting Christ as center of all. That gives prophecy warmth, life, and moving power.

We are admonished to study anew the books of Daniel and the Apocalypse, but always in connection with them the "Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." [28] Failure at this point has been our weakness. We have all too often presented the setting rather than the substance and center of prophecy. Oh, that prophecy might take on a new breadth and depth and height of meaning for us, tied inseparably into the throbbing heart of the gospel. Then, as never before, we would have persuasive power as we present its glorious portrayal to others.

New Type of Prophecy Begins With Daniel

Before the days of Daniel, in Old Testament times, the prophecies were largely like flash pictures. They might be called still pictures, single shots. The resultant print was distinct, and one could distinguish its leading features. But perspective and distance and relationship were not particularly differentiated. To illustrate: Perhaps two mountains are in view in the distance. They look almost as if the second were right behind and joined to the first, as if they merged one into the other. One has to go far to one side, as it were, and obtain a full side view, in order to get the perspective and to see that a great valley lies between and separates the two mountains.

Thus it was with many Old Testament prophecies of the first and Second Advents. It was often difficult to differentiate clearly between the two Advents, in time and circumstance. Clarifying help had to come from other portrayals, in order that the relationship might be understood.

Such a perspective is provided when we come to Daniel's prophecies. Here we are given a new type of prophecy—the outline prophecy, with a continuity that carries us consecutively down through the four world empires from Babylon onward. Then comes the division of the Roman fourth, and the extended period of the spiritual dominance of the papal little horn, and on to the Second Advent, with everything in sequence. Now the prophetic portrayals are continuous, progressive, and changing, like a complete reel of pictures.

Moreover, these portrayals were essentially movies, yes, talkies, if the expression may be used, or animated cartoons. Words were heard and actions were seen, and there was comprehensive continuity. They were regular telecasts, we might even say. Beasts rose out of the sea of humanity. Ten horn-kingdoms sprang up on the head of the fourth beast kingdom, and three were uprooted as the little horn burrowed his way up among the ten and did his nefarious work. His boastful, blasphemous words were heard. It was a vivid portrayal. And in Daniel 2 the stone smote the image upon the feet and then expanded into an earth-filling mountain. Thus a new, full-rounded, continuity type of prophecy had come into being. And with it came sequence and time periods, and a portrayal of the triumphant close, with the kingdom of God established forever.

Pivotal Character of 2300-Year Application

Now let us turn to the development and the consummation of the year-day principle. In time prophecy, which parallels the outline prophecies we have already surveyed. What we denominate the sanctuary truth is the majestic keystone in the imposing arch of present truth for today. It is central to our thinking and pivotal in our message to the world. It was ever considered by our honored pioneers to be the main pillar of the advent faith, for around it all other vital truths are clustered. The certainty, the soundness, of the 2300 years as ending in 1844 is consequently of paramount interest and importance to us as a people, and particularly to us as workers. It is therefore of major importance for us to trace the historical steps by which many of the most reverent and able scholars of the centuries have steadily advanced, step by step, toward this solution. Their study has covered over two thousand years of progressive application of the year-day principle, which is the basic measurement upon which the climactic terminus of the 2300 years rests.

This progressive development has led logically and inevitably to the final step of placing the terminus of the great 2300-year period in 1844. And this ultimate conclusion was reached within the compass of a comparatively few years by scores of widely scattered, brilliant, and godly scholars of various faiths, spread over the Old World and the New. And all this, be it distinctly noted, was before William Miller first published his convictions, independently reached, in book form in 1836. This fact is vital to our understanding of the case for 1844, and to its respectful consideration by the world. Once grasped, it changes our whole status before the religious world.

And the concurrence in the time calculation by this large group of independent investigators, in the decades just prior to 1844, was characteristic of the progressive emphasis of a whole series of preparatory steps taken by prior groups spread over the course of the same centuries we have traversed in following the fulfillment of the great outline prophecies. This steady build-up for the climax not only is impressive and significant but is vital to the soundness and certainty of this final step in the year-day application. Here again indisputable evidence attests that we have built wisely upon the firm foundations of litany generations in this phase of prophetic background and exposition. Ours is but the logical and inevitable climax of an old established principle, rather than of a sudden discovery of a new principle of procedure or application. It is but the crowning point in two thousand years of normal progression in exposition.

The uniformity of application of this year-day principle and the irrefutable logic of its consistent progression are most satisfying and conclusive to the mind that seeks a sound sequence in reasoning, based upon solid premises and postulates. Now let us trace, in its progressive application through the centuries, leading on inexorably to our day, this year-day principle that parallels, and is inseparably tied in with, the great outline prophecies.

Progressive Build-up for an Invulnerable Position

The centuries have built up a case for our special prophetic faith emphasis of today that is amazing. Not only is it logical and formidable, but it is uniformly consistent as it traverses the centuries. The greatest and most reverent students of prophecy throughout the Christian Era are in the direct line of transmission. The climax is tremendous in its implications. And the beginnings of this emphasis, its growth and development through the centuries, and now its climax, comport with what would be expected of such a vital principle of sound exposition.

It is first to be remembered that the 2300-year time period of Daniel 8:14, and its 1844 ending, is based upon the widely recognized tie-in with the seventy weeks of years of the adjacent chapter (Daniel 9), both of which have the same beginning. And the strength and

spread of this proposition is also far greater than most of us have been aware. Here, in condensed form, follows the fascinating story of the advancing application of the year-day principle, beginning with the “seventy weeks” of Daniel 9:24, first applied by the Jewish translators of the Septuagint before the time of Christ as weeks “of years”—the only prophetic time period in Daniel directly applicable at that early time, before the Christian Era, and pertaining exclusively to the Jews. [29]

This earliest application of the seventy weeks of years by the Jews, reaching to the cutting off of the Messiah, was then carried over into the Christian church as the foundational principle and example of all time-prophecy calculation. It thus became a part of sound, accepted exegesis, and because of its relation to Christ the Messiah, has become the special heritage of Christianity, now with a definite Christian connotation. And this application, be it particularly observed, has never been lost from the teaching of the Christian church in any of its major branches. Such was the factual and logical beginning of time-prophecy exposition for the prophecies of Daniel.

But centuries passed before any further application, by Christian scholars, was made to the longer time periods—the 1260, 1290, 1335, and the 2300 year-days. For centuries there was constricted vision of these principles, as apostasy and repudiation of the earlier prophetic interpretation precepts held sway. And Jewish writers were again the first to extend the basic year-day principle to the remaining time periods of Daniel. This they were already doing back in the eighth and ninth centuries, as attested by the writings of the well known Nahawendi of Persia and the illustrious Saadia of Babylonia. [30] From that time forward, a score of noted Jewish expositors came to apply this identical year-day principle to Daniel’s various time periods, at least six of these Hebrew writers antedating the first Christian interpreter so to do. [31] So this exposition rests upon the perception of two paralleling religious groups.

But it was not until more than a thousand years of the Christian Era had passed, and the Papacy had been identified and denominated the apostate system of Christianity of multiple prophetic depiction—beast, Babylon, harlot, man of sin, mystery of iniquity, son of perdition, and so forth that a similar conviction on time prophecy first came to Catholic Abbot Joachim of Floris, in Calabria, Italy, who became the most noted expositor of prophecy of the Middle Ages. It was in 1190 that he declared that the prophesied woman” in white, of Revelation 12, who fled from the pursuing dragon for 1260 days, was simply symbolic of the Christian church fleeing from persecution for 1260 years.” A day,” he averred, “without doubt being accepted for a year and a thousand two hundred and sixty days for the same number of years.” [32]

He did not know just when they began or when they should end, but he thought possibly by AD 1260. Nevertheless, he soundly applied, or extended, the year-day principle to the church fleeing from persecution for that fateful 1260-year period. This was an advance of utmost importance, for Joachim here set the pattern for hosts of others to follow in applying the principle to other time periods of prophecy.

Joachim’s immediate followers, scattered over most of Europe, and naturally called Joachimites, or Spirituals, five times applied the now-established year-day principle to all the remaining longer time periods of Daniel. Villanova, about 1292, specifically interpreted the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 on the year-day principle, as ending at the Second Advent. [33] This, be it particularly observed, was long before the

Protestant Reformation, and once more constituted a distinct advance in the developing application of the year day principle for this longest of all prophetic time periods. There was no agreement as to just when to date these periods, and just how to begin and end them. But a norm was set up that was ere long destined to become almost axiomatic among Christian expositors. The key to time prophecy was in their hands, and came to be commonly accepted by practically all interpreters.

Close of 1260 Years Clears Way for 2300

More and more, from the twelfth century onward, the focal point of concern and conviction came to be the Papacy as Antichrist. [34] And along with that was the inseparable corollary: just when and where were its allotted 1260 years (or 42 months, or 3.5 times), and the related time periods, to be placed and dated? At first there was great disparity as men groped for light. But closer and closer men came to accurate placement of those 1260 years. Finally, Drue Cressener of England, in 1689—exactly a century before the French Revolution broke out in 1789—declared that they began under Justinian’s legal recognition of the primacy of the pope, in the sixth century, and that this fateful period of special papal dominance would end about, or shortly before, 1800. [35] Soon others, such as Fleming, took essentially the same position. [36] As a consequence, there was wide expectancy of a climax during the French Revolution, and a widespread declaration of the period’s ending followed immediately after the events of 1798. [37] This too came to be widely accepted as axiomatic, and standard exposition.

The great apostasy was fast developing during the breakup of the Roman Empire. By the time of Justinian the popes had begun to be “men of the state,” and ultimately they were to be “masters of the state.” The imperial edict, issued by Justinian in AD 533, explicitly recognized the bishop of Rome as “Head of all the holy churches.” [38] And yet from the spring of 537 Belisarius and his army were under siege in the city of Rome, along with the bishop of Rome and his retinue, and the city was surrounded by a host of Ostrogoths. This did not end until the spring of 538, when a second army from Justinian smote the Ostrogoths, drove them away, and freed the

city. Thus the bishop of Rome was brought into position where he could, ere long, begin to exercise that primacy that had been designated by Justinian. So the provision of 533 went into effect in 538.

But the 2300 year-days had long intrigued men. And by 1440 Nicholas Krebs of Cusa had issued his impressive conjecture Concerning the Last Days, in which he dated the 2300 years as extending from Persia-the power with which the prophecy of Daniel 8 begins-to the end, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the Second Advent. [39] Cusa, as one of the most illustrious philosophers, scientists, and clerics of his day, a Roman Catholic prelate, gave prominence and authority to this interpretation. He was remarkably clear envisioned as to the fallacies of papal claims to supremacy.

Then the Protestant Reformers quickly came to accept the application of the year-day to the various time periods of both Daniel and the Apocalypse. And among these early illustrious expositors was Johann Furick (d. 1566), of Germany, who in 1564 not only wrote extensively on the accepted seventy weeks, but dated them precisely from 457 BC to AD 34, without, however, making any connection between them and any other prophetic time period. [40] And then noted expositors in France, Germany, and England began to do essentially the same-dating the seventy weeks from approximately 457 BC, as the "seventh year of Artaxerxes." [41] That date and position likewise came to be considered axiomatic by many.

But another entire century passed before John Tillinghast, Independent clergyman of England, in 1654 declared the seventy weeks, or 490 years, to be a "lesser Epock" within the greater one of the 2300 years, [42] though he was not clear as to the precise relationship and timing. Here again was another distinct advance, another link in the steadily forming chain of time-prophecy exposition. Then in different lands various men, such as Thomas Beverley of England, began to stress the 2300 years as extending from the time of Persia to earth's closing events-the end of the world, the kingdom of Christ, and the New Jerusalem. [43] The momentum on prophetic interpretation was increasing, and the emphasis on this particular phase was cumulative. Nevertheless, the 2300-year prophecy was one of those "portions of the book of Daniel, relating to the last things which had remained largely sealed until the time of the end." [44] It was the last of Daniel's great time prophecies to be clearly perceived.

Then finally, just before the tremendous upheaval of the French Revolution, and the subsequent ending of the 1260 years in 1798, Johann Petri of Germany [45] (and afterward Hans Wood of Ireland) [46] asserted that the 2300 years began synchronously with the seventy weeks, with the shorter period leading to the first Advent, and the longer period destined to lead up to the events connected with the Second Advent. This too was another decidedly new and advanced and really revolutionary principle of application. Petri's starting point, 453 years before Christ's birth, is actually essentially the same as the 457 BC of other interpreters. Thus the eighteenth century ends and the nineteenth begins, as mankind enters what many contemporaries considered the "time of the end," the latter days," or "last days." [47] It was clearly discerned to be the ending of one epoch and the crossing over into the beginning of a new era.

Simultaneous Outburst of Witness on 2300 Years

Then it was, that at the close of 1810 and the beginning of 1811, within two or three months of each other, two other men of different nationalities, on opposite sides of the Atlantic, published similar conclusions, on the 2300 years. These expositors - "J. A. B." (evidently John Aquila Brown) of England, [48] and William C. Davis of South Carolina [49] began the two periods synchronously, though "J. A. B." dated them 457 BC-AD 1843, and Davis (like Petri), 453-1847.

And following this lead there broke forth, both in the Old World and the New, a veritable chorus of voices, heard on three continents and in eight different countries (with many of them in Britain and on the Continent), all terminating the 2300 years on the aforementioned basis, and fixing upon 1843, 1844, or 1847 as the closing date. Some threescore scholarly men, representing various denominations and springing from various leading walks of life, similarly wrote and published prior to Miller's first book on prophecy in 1836. [50] This was apart from the oral heralds, who left no published works, but made the same application. Thus Miller was by no means the first, and by comparison only belatedly began to publish his findings and convictions.

But in that very same year, 1836, Bishop Daniel Wilson of India published virtually the same position (453-1847), and this from the Anglican mission press of Madras, India. [51] And that initial book by Miller expressly declared that "one or two on every quarter of the globe have proclaimed the news, and agree in the time." [52] And Miller named four - Davis of South Carolina, Mason of Scotland, Irving of England, and Wolff of Asia-with allusion to many more around New York State and New England. This declaration was literally true. And these facts are tremendously impressive. They have a vital bearing on our whole relationship to the heralding of the terminus of the 2300 years in 1844.

Miller was definitely not the originator of this interpretation, as he publicly insisted, though he came to his own individual conclusions solely through personal study. Rather, it was literally a worldwide, simultaneous awakening on the approaching end of this great prophecy, as the message now due the world. And upon investigation Miller then found this large group of widely scattered men who had previously, or contemporaneously, reached similar conclusions, many of them independently of all others. It was a spontaneous emphasis without a parallel in all past time.

I would press upon this point. The significance of this simultaneous awakening must not be lost upon us. [54] The conclusion seems inevitable that the time had come, in the providence of God, for investigation and emphasis to be placed upon this climactic feature of all time prophecy—the terminal date of the last and longest prophetic time specification. That a new and epochal event in the plan of redemption was approaching, hundreds of investigators were firmly persuaded. Various men in different countries were impelled to study and to proclaim the approaching end of the 2300 years, and its climactic events. They were not all in agreement as to just which would be the precise terminal year—whether 1843, 1844, or 1847. But they were definitely convinced that its close was near. And they differed, moreover, as to just what was about to take place—the beginning of a temporal millennium, the Second Coming of Christ, or the cataclysmic end of the world. But in any event, some tremendous event was impending. Of that all these expositors were convinced. There was widespread expectancy and concern. And the church at large was aroused and deeply stirred.

Still others, though definitely sympathetic, declined to fix upon a precise year, but averred that a new epoch was assuredly at hand in the great prophetic outline, and a fateful hour in the plan of salvation was indeed approaching. Many of these men labored and fellowshipped with the Millerites, though not seeing eye to eye on all points. Such constitutes the impressive historical background which, step by step and point by point, lay back of this climactic end-feature—two thousand years of logical, progressive build-up in presenting a case of time prophecy to the world, unparalleled in the annals of man.

“Times” Changed as Verily as the “Law”

The progressive application of the year-day principle was not, however, without its challenges and setbacks. Its acceptance was not all a smooth advance. The most conspicuous onslaught was against the 1260-year application to the papal dominance, and the countering opposition came from the Roman Catholic Church. The prophetic prediction of Daniel 7:25 declares that the little horn should “think to change the times and the law” of the Most High. (A. R. V.) There is evidently more to this expression than some of us have been aware of. Mark well that this power was to think himself able to change the designated “times” of God, as well as His “law.” The change in the law of God involved, of course, primarily the fourth commandment. But these “times” of God are also significant—times determined and appointed beforehand, along with the bounds of man’s habitation.

Many allusions to the various “times” of God appear in the Word. Thus, when the “fullness of time” was come, God sent forth His Son. Then Jesus came preaching that “the time is fulfilled.” Again, the “times of refreshing” are alluded to. And we read further of the “times and the seasons” as being under God’s control. Thus God, in His infinite foreknowledge and power, appointed a specific period during which this apostate Christian power would exercise its special dominion, and at the close of which it would receive a stroke by the sword, which would later be healed. The “times” of Daniel 7 evidently included the 31/2 “times” of verse 25, or the 1260 years of papal dominance, as portrayed in this chapter, which extended from Justinian to the French Revolution.

Thus Rome attempted not only to change the Sabbath of the Most High but to change the delimiting “times” of God’s appointment—the specified 3. 50 times—so as to avoid their application to herself. This was accomplished by the papal counter interpretations, through pushing them on into the future, and compressing them into a tiny 3. 50 literal years at the end of the age, as in Futurism; or, perchance, setting them back into the past, as in Preterism. Both devices alike placed Antichrist’s reign outside God’s stipulated 1260-year span covering the Middle Ages, one before and one after. And this daring attempt to change the prophetic “times” of God’s appointment has been so successful that Protestantism today has largely adopted Rome’s spurious “time” shifts, just as verily as she has adopted her Sunday-Sabbath change.

Steadily Expanding Spread of Prophetic Voices

Consider these developments again from a different angle just as verily different groups of men, in times past, were impelled to proclaim progressively, first the currently present dominance of Rome as the fourth and final prophetic world power. And then others, a little later, were constrained to assert the division of Rome into the predicted ten parts as taking place before their eyes. And following that, the clear identification of the Papacy as the fulfillment of all the diverse symbols of Antichrist was attested by literally hundreds of Reformers in all lands. And finally men like Cressener, Fleming, [56] and others, proclaiming in advance the approaching end of the 1260 years, as dated from Justinian; with others, like Edward Kino, and Richard Valpy, recognizing the precise terminal fulfillment in the captivity of the pope in February, 1798. [57] Such is the amazing setting and framework for the nineteenth-century heralding of the impending judgment hour and the imminent Second Advent.

But in comparison, this heralding of the approaching terminus of the 2300 years had a far wider, more numerous, and noteworthy body of heralding expositors than any previous fulfillment—betokening its far greater importance. The territory over which the cumulative witness to prophetic fulfillment was spread has steadily expanded through the centuries. At first it was limited to the Old World—the scene of the dominance of Rome as the fourth empire, and next of Rome’s division, and then of the major portion of the little horn’s special 1260-year epoch. Finally, with the colonization and later the nationalization of North America, exposition followed over here almost automatically as an integral part of the New World enterprise. Thus the last two centuries of papal domination and the dramatic close of the 1260 years were attested by North American as well as European voices.

But in the great Second Advent awakening of the nineteenth century, Inter-America and South America, as well as distant India, Africa, and Australia, were swung into the orbit of the proclamation, having their individual voices even in these far-flung outposts. Thus the witness grows as time progresses, and intensifies as we near the final phase of the “everlasting gospel” movement. And the approaching

terminus of the 2300 years was consequently the most widespread prophetic message ever heralded to men up to that time. Only the exploits of the final threefold message will surpass it in vigor and extent. So the tempo, spread, and the volume of prophetic exposition increase.

Climactic Point of All Time Prophecy

Again, in every instance of major fulfillment and recognition throughout the centuries, with the coming of the hour, the heralding men have always appeared and given the message due. There is nothing in this old world more powerful than a prophetic truth whose time has come. And I would repeat that this phenomenon was the most widespread, the most numerous, and the most emphatic of all in the nineteenth-century Advent awakening. The emphasis through the years had principally been the expression of individuals. In contrast, in the nineteenth-century Old World awakening, prophetic conferences were held and various prophetic periodicals devoted chiefly to prophetic exposition were published. And there was widespread agitation by hundreds of clergymen-Established and Nonconformist, or Independent. There was, nevertheless, diversity of opinion as to the precise year, as to the specific event to take place, and as to the acceptable line of reasoning and evidence to be employed. Thus the Old World witness soon became scattered and enfeebled.

But in North America a distinct interdenominational movement arose, penetrating all Protestant faiths, which swept multiplied thousands before it. An entire battery of more than thirty periodicals was issued, a whole series of more than a hundred conferences was held, and an amazing succession of 125 camp meetings, with widespread organized evangelism in all forms, drawing literally thousands of public heralds into one of the most remarkable religious developments of all modern times. [58] And the momentous terminus of the 2300 years in 1844 lay at the heart of it all. It was the climactic point of all time prophecy.

That is the historical background, growth, and climax of the year-day principle in Bible time prophecy. Its validity could not be gainsaid either by the most erudite of the opposing clerics or by the most blatant infidels and deists of the time. The hand of God was clearly over it and the power of God manifestly upon it. That is our remarkable spiritual ancestry for the year-day principle, and it is a noble one. It completely matches the outline prophecies climaxing in our day. That is our historical heritage, and it stands without impeachment. That is the factual background of the Advent movement of 1844, the immediate forebear of the great threefold message and movement of today.

Virtually Every Exposition Has Been Anticipated

Furthermore, though the statement may sound strange, it is nevertheless true that practically every exposition of prophecy that we hold today, and which was heralded by the great Advent or Millerite movement of the first half of the nineteenth century, was anticipated and taught by others before us. This was true not only of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12-both the outline prophecies and the time periods, the 1260, 1290, 1335, and the 2300 years, the king of the north, and the like-but of the Revelation as well. And in the Apocalypse, not only were the seven churches, seals, trumpets, and the witnesses all anticipated by some, but the beast symbols as well-including Protestantism (and the United States) for the second symbol of Revelation 13, and the two horns as civil and religious liberty, and the plagues still future. And in the field of signs of the times the Lisbon earthquake of 1775, the darkening of the sun in 1780, and the falling of the stars in 1833 were all recognized as signs by some at the very time of each fulfillment.

Therefore virtually nothing is original with us. Truly, others have labored, and we have entered into their labors. (John 4:38.) The foundations were all laid in former generations. But that very fact makes our witness doubly strong, for it ties us into the established witness of the past. And it removes the stigma of novelty, fantasy, freakishness, and irrational methods from us. It is undeniable that if our interpretations are irrational, inconsistent, and childish, then some of the finest scholars of almost every faith were irrational, illogical, and childish in their expositional utterances. But such will not be conceded. Therefore we are strengthened and sustained by the great and good of the centuries. We are not alone; we stand in good company. These prophetic truths that we stress are not innovations-strange notions, condemned and unshared by others. We stand incontrovertibly in the line of sound transmission. We are the latter-day restorers and continuators of sound exegesis. That is our enviable position today. Of this we need to be conscious, and this we need to set before the world.

Time to Take Our Rightful Place

The psalmist invites us to look upon Zion, to ponder the strength of her walls, her imposing towers, and sturdy abutments, and to consider how beautiful she is for situation the joy of the whole earth.” Walk about Zion,” we are admonished, “and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark you well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following. For this

God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.” Psalm 48:12-14. We shall be wise in following this inspired counsel.

Oh, that we might somehow see the strategic strength of our real position. Would that our horizons might be pushed back a little farther, that we might see more clearly and fully the beauties of our wonderful heritage. Would that our sights might somehow be lifted, that we might envision the key place that God has designed for us to occupy in these latter times. It is time for us now to take our rightful place. We have been too long on the defensive. Without appropriate challenge we have allowed ourselves to be considered an insignificant heretical sect, oddly different, and springing up too late to have any rightful place in true Protestantism.

We are not an heretical sect. We are not merely one of the welter of divergent denominations of the day. We are in the designated line of God’s true church of the centuries. We stand toward the close of His continuing line of witnesses, in the seventh and final phase of His great sevenfold church of the years. This grand line reaches from apostolic times down to remnant days. And we are on the stage of action at a time when all the treasure truths of the Christian Era have become our glorious heritage, and are to be presented to the world again in all their inherent beauty.

It is therefore time to lift our heads. It is high time to rejoice in the place that God has given us in His wondrous scheme of things. We are the continuators and consummation of the arrested Reformation. We are among God’s last prophetic witnesses, once more bearing aloft the torch of truth that has been passed on from the hands of Jewish, of Catholic, and particularly of Protestant spiritual ancestors in the imposing line of prophetic expositors of the ages. I believe with all my heart in such an apostolic succession of truth as the centuries have witnessed. I believe that godly men, of the finest intellect, have passed the torch of truth on from one hand or group to another, riot in so-called apostolic succession but in the succession of prophetic truth, for two thousand years.

The Waldenses, Lollards, and Hussites were once in that line, as were later the early Lutherans, Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and many other groups in their day. Ours is a noble spiritual ancestry. These and others constituted God’s true succession of witnesses, in the remnant section of which we stand today. Our place near the close of that line is as fixed and certain as is the identification of the final figure in the famous Rushmore memorial in South Dakota. Even Edward Gibbon, brilliant infidel historian, was constrained-doubtless unwittingly-to use the very figures and words of the prophecy when he spoke of the “gold,” and the “silver,” and the “brass” giving way before the “iron monarchy of Rome. [59] Prophecy has exerted a far greater influence upon mankind than we have usually recognized.

Provides Master Key for Various Groups

A clear grasp of these historical backgrounds of prophetic interpretation is a master key in the hands of the skilled workman to unlock a hundred avenues to the heart. It will open a way through a diversity of situations. It is adaptable to Jew, Catholic, and Christian alike. In Catholic circles it enables one to become master of the situation, when the origin of the basic Catholic departures and fallacies is fully known as a background. Effective recourse can be had to the true teachings on prophecy that were still retained by some of the highly revered Fathers of the early church, which the first Protestant Reformers and we have simply carried on to consummation. This is a priceless asset. We can then go on from that starting point.

In Jewish contacts there is much advantage in every way, through stressing the teaching of many of their greatest medieval writers on prophecy, with which we are in definite harmony and upon which exposition we can build. The sequence of the four prophetic empires, with Rome as the fourth, the year-day principle for all time periods in Daniel, a “time” meaning a year, and “king” standing for kingdom, are all cases in point. These are historic Jewish interpretations. Even the little horn of Daniel 7 as the Papacy was clearly expounded by Don Isaac Abravanel, noted Jewish rabbi and powerful minister of finance in

medieval Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, and who doubtless had a part in financing the voyage of Columbus, who, incidentally, spoke of his great venture as a fulfillment of prophecy. Abravanel gave a clear exposition of Daniel’s great outline, with which we are in essential accord. Yet Abravanel’s interpretation of Daniel 7 anticipated our day by four and one-half centuries. This agreement we can well stress.

And from these elemental features we can go on to papal persecution during the 1260 years-for the Papacy’s hand was also heavy upon the Jews. And from thence we come to her presumptuous change of God’s original seventh day Sabbath, still revered by the Jew whether observed by him or not. Thus there is an invaluable tie-in, and a tremendous appeal. Respect is engendered for our loyalty and obedience to God. The logic, soundness, the historicity of such exposition, and our oneness in such matters with such revered Jewish teachers become a key to the opening of hearts in this great racial and religious group.

In the approach to Protestants acquaintance with denominational origins and particularly with the prophetic exposition of their own founding fathers-whether Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Anglican, Campbellite, or what not-affords an incomparable opening by which this master key can be used with disarming and telling effect. Tremendous advantage is thus gained by a tie-in with names that are highly revered. And legitimate capital can be made of their own expositors of basic prophetic

interpretation. This may all be unknown to them, but it affords the supporting element for initial confidence in the soundness and sanity of our own fundamental positions on prophecy. Let us use this entering wedge.

Thus we can go from the known to the unknown, and from a particular sector of Protestantism to the essential oneness of all original Protestant interpretation of prophecy. Their key men were expositors. In this way confidence and respect are engendered. When oneness of background in prophetic truth is apparent, we can then lead on from the simple fundamentals to the unfolding story which begins where their spiritual forefathers left off. This technique can be of greatest advantage and importance to us. This is truly raising up the foundations of many generations. And it is likewise a wise, winsome procedure. It gives us a firm foundation. It provides us with a psychological advantage, as we are thus enabled to stand in the place of orthodoxy, and be accounted worthy of the respect that is our rightful due.

Then we can go on to any Protestant group, and show the fundamental Protestantism of our teachings. In this way we can adapt our approach to the background of an individual or a group, or meet the predominant religious complexion of a community. That constitutes a skilled approach. It is using the prophetic key wisely, so as to gain access to different hearts and thus to master difficult situations.

There is one related suggestion. We can build upon specific personal interests, and capitalize upon different callings or professions. There were noted physicians, educators, lawyers, scientists, mathematicians, librarians, college presidents, governors, judges, poets, architects, bankers, and even kings-as well as preachers, rabbis, and priests-among the prophetic expositors of the centuries. When we approach a representative of any of these particular groups, a tactful allusion to past men of prominence in their particular craft or profession creates immediate interest and sympathy, and affords an effective starting point. The same is true with various nationalities-German, French, English, Scottish, Swiss, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Colonial American, Argentinian, Mexican, and others. By starting with a point or person of common interest, we can then lead on into our full, related exposition. Try it, and observe its effectiveness.

Amazing Extent of Preparatory Advent Awakening

As we cross the threshold of the nineteenth century, we enter a manifestly new epoch in the affairs of mankind. It was a time fraught with prophetic significance, and was so recognized by many expositors of the day. Numerous men sensed that they had entered what must be the "time of the end," or the period known as the last days." A widespread interest in prophecy developed on both sides of the Atlantic. And the new focal point of this interest, as already noted, was the approaching terminus of the 2300 years, with its attendant judgment hour and the impending Second Advent. This was deeply significant. Few, however, have been aware of the power and moving character of this really remarkable agitation. Let us therefore look first at this aspect.

The great Second Advent awakening even included certain Roman Catholic heralds. And this was felt in both the Old World and the New-in Italy, Spain, and France, as well as in Mexico and South America. Most conspicuous among these expositors within the pale of Catholicism was the now well-known Manuel Lacunza, whose remarkable treatise, *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, was first circulated around the turn of the century. [60] This was first distributed in manuscript form in two hemispheres, and then from 1812 onward began to be printed in a half-dozen lands in several languages-in Spain, England, Mexico, France, Italy, and possibly in the United States.

This remarkable work had considerable effect upon various Roman Catholic priests. In Europe secret societies of priests formed to study it. And no town of any size between Havana and Cape Horn, here in the Western World, was said to have been without its copy. And Lacunza's book was the means of intensifying interest in the Second Advent even among Protestants, as yet generally lethargic over this growing emphasis. The primary concept of Lacunza, that the second, premillennial, personal return of Christ in transcendent glory would usher in the stone kingdom before the judgment of the world and the smiting of iniquity, was anathema to the Roman Church. And it was inevitable that his treatise should before long be placed on her *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. But there were others, such as Pere Bernard Lambert and judge Pierre Jean Agier, both of France, propounding really astonishing views on prophecy. [61] The beast was identified as Christian Rome, and time was waxing late.

However, the most pronounced development in prophetic study was, of course, among the Protestants. A leading Anglican periodical, *The Christian Observer*, of London, founded in 1802, with a Boston edition as well, became the initial forum for the discussion of Bible prophecy, and a whole procession of colorful interpreters continued for years to troop across its pages. [62] But, as we have seen, there were two widely divergent schools of thought, among these students of prophecy, as concerns coming events. These were the premillennialists and the postmillennialists. The first group looked for a cataclysmic end of the age, which would be tied in with the transcendent scenes of the Second Advent. The other body anticipated a thousand years of world betterment, with an increasingly potent reign of peace and righteousness before the end.

These two fundamentally opposite philosophies of salvation, which, of course, are irreconcilable, met in head on collision under the impact of the Second Advent awakening. Convictions were deep, and the ensuing battle was intense. But the premillennial position came to the fore and seemed to dominate the scene for the time, growing in extent and influence among the various religious groups.

In the Old World, however, it was an emphasis within the churches, not a separating movement, and did not affect denominational relationships.

Division Arises Over 2300-Year Issue

Moreover, among the premillennial Adventists in Britain at this time, there were two groups, sharply divided over whether the key number in Daniel 8:14 is rightly rendered 2300, as in our standard Bibles, or whether it should read 2400 (which was later shown to be derived from an earlier misprint in the edition followed by the common English printings of the Septuagint translation). William Curlinghame, prominent expositor of Lainshaw, Ayrshire, and author of twenty-one books on prophecy and the Advent, was an outstanding defender of the 2300-year position, whereas James H. Frere was the champion of the number 2400. [63] This conflict began about 1813. But, curiously enough, both groups ended their periods of conflicting length at essentially the same time—about 1843, 1844, or 1847.

The chief difference was that the 2300-year adherents customarily began their chronological timing with the seventh of Artaxerxes, in 457 BC, whereas the proponents of the 2400 years began back a century earlier, when they understood the vision was given. Thus the two dates were ended essentially together, though on a totally different basis. Hence the combined emphasis of the two groups resulted in a virtual identity of exposition as to the end year of this long prophecy.

Furthermore, the 2300-year group began the calculation of the longer period synchronously with the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24, taking this newly discovered relationship as the master key to unlock the mystery of the timing, and therefore disclosing the terminus of the longer period. This was universally true in the North American movement soon to follow. On the contrary, the 2400-year men, of Britain, made no connection between these two periods, and in time inevitable friction developed between the two groups over the involvement of their calculations.

There was common belief in both camps that the special 1260-year period of the Papacy's spiritual supremacy ended around the time of the French Revolution. And the 391 years of the sixth or Turkish trumpet—the hour, day, month, and year prophecy of Revelation 9:15—were constantly discussed and frequently calculated, some placing this period from 1453 to 1844. [64] Such expositors ended it at nearly the same time as the 2300 years.

The two witnesses were frequently looked upon as the two Testaments, and the three and one-half years of their slaying as connected with the French Revolution. [65] There was widespread belief that the days, both of the Papacy and of the Turk, were soon to end. And the pouring out of the fifth vial upon the “seat of the beast,” or Rome, was recognized generally as accomplished. And the sixth vial, to dry up the Euphrates, regarded as the Turkish territory, was generally believed to be part of the current prophetic fulfillment. [66] Prophetic exposition was at high pitch, and moved in accelerated tempo. The interest was widespread among the laity, and the writing and the preaching of the public heralds were vivid and intense.

Character and Characteristics of Old World Awakening

The intellectual caliber of the participants in the Old World Advent awakening is noteworthy. They were men of trained minds and conspicuous attainment. There were teachers, lawyers, physicians, historians, and linguists. Others were librarians, statesmen, architects, and military men. They embraced laymen as well as clergymen. And they were a cosmopolitan group, several hundred of the British expositors being Anglican churchmen and more than a thousand being Nonconformist or Independent ministers. Such were the spokesmen and leaders. No attempt has been made to calculate the number of adherents, but the figures would run high.

Various organizations were formed to herald the Second Advent message. The Society to Promote Christianity Among the Jews was the first, founded by Lewis Way, under whose auspices Wolff did most of his far-flung traveling, heralding the Advent and emphasizing the prophecies. [67] Branch organizations were established all over Europe, and even in America. Conspicuous men were affiliated with it, and various periodicals were established to publicize its work. The Continental Society, to revive true Protestantism on the Continent, was launched by Henry Drummond, London banker and member of Parliament. [68] It likewise had many branches, stated meetings, and printed reports.

There was also the Society for the Investigation of Prophecy, with periodic meetings for the joint study and exposition of prophecy, and remarkable papers vigorously interpreting prophecy. [69] And the Reformation Society was established by Way and Frere. The Protestant Association was yet another organization, with its chief burden to call men “out of Babylon.” [70] And in these groups the 2300 years, as ending in 1843, 1844, or 1847, was often singled out for special emphasis. The judgment-hour message of Revelation 14:6, 7, was similarly stressed. And the flying angel of Revelation 14:6,7 was considered as already under flight, representing the work of these societies, and of the missionary and Bible Societies as well—with further developments soon to come. [71]

And besides these more formal organizations, there were special study and lecture groups, with meetings in London, Edinburgh, Paris, and other places. In addition there were specific conferences on the prophecies and the Advent, as at Albury Park, beginning in 1826,

in Edinburgh, and at Powerscourt House. [72] Partly from these latter meetings the Plymouth Brethren developed under the leadership of John Nelson Darby. And from this group Protestant Futurism in time has spread widely in fundamentalist circles.

And in addition to the numerous books, pamphlets, and tractates devoted to prophecy, there were various periodicals issued, the leading ones being *The Jewish Expositor* (London), *The Christian Herald* (Dublin), *The Prophetic Herald*, *The Investigator on Prophecy*, *The Morning Watch*, and *The Watchman* (Paris). [73] These all stressed the climax of prophecy and the approaching Second Advent, and often included emphasis on the 2300 (or 2400) years, as ending around 1843, 1844, or 1847. There were also women prophetic writers' like Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna. [74]

This great British awakening was matched by a somewhat similar emphasis on the Continent-in Germany by Johann Heinrich Richter, secretary of the Rhenish Missionary Society, with his *Erklrte Haus-bibel* (*The Family Bible Explained*), and Leonhard Kelber, author of *Das Ende kommt* (*The End Is Coming*), both stressing the 1843 or 1847 terminus of the 2300 years. And in Holland there was Heinrich Heintzperter; in Switzerland, Alphonse M. F. Nicole, doctor of jurisprudence and deputy; and Bishop Daniel Wilson in India, likewise emphasizing the end of the 2300 years about 1847. [75] Then there were two other Swiss expositors of note Professor Louis Gausson and Bishop Samuel Gobat. In addition, the more general declarations of the child preachers in southern Sweden were impressive. [76]

As to the extent of this witness, the independent testimony of William Thorp, Mourant Brock, and James Leslie indicates that there were many hundreds of public heralds -well over a thousand-proclaiming the judgment hour and the imminent Advent. [77] And this, be it remembered, antedated the main Millerite movement in America. There was truly a tremendous stir, with powerful preaching and immense audiences, many gatherings being held in the open air. That was the extent and the vigor of this great Old World awakening. It was a formidable affair.

Glimpses of Sanctuary and Sanctuary Truths

Phases of the sanctuary truth were stressed by such men as John Tudor and Frederick Nolan, who believed that the typical Mosaic feasts of the Old Testament had been superimposed, in their antitypical reality, upon the Christian Era. They believed that mankind had now entered, or was entering upon, the great day of atonement, when the temple was opened in heaven and there was seen the ark of His testament in the most holy place. [78] This is significant because it antedated the clearer and stronger emphasis appearing a little later in North America. But we do not always remember this British angle.

At this time the seventh-day Sabbath was also revived by such men as the noted patriot Francisco Ramos Mexia of Argentina, in 1820 and 1821, and the approaching Second Advent was aggressively heralded. [79] And the publisher James Begg of Glasgow, Scotland, in the early thirties sought to introduce its consideration among the Millerites in North America, and the Advent heralds in Britain, though without success. But the hour had come to begin to emphasize these neglected truths, soon to come sharply to the forefront, and these were advance notes of what were ere long to be points of major emphasis in the American movement.

Futurism Introduced Among Protestants

It was in the midst of this widespread Advent awakening in Britain that the Futurism of Ribera's Jesuit counter interpretation was introduced among Protestants. Samuel R. Maitland, revolting against the swelling prophetic emphasis on the approaching Advent, repudiated the year-day principle for the 1260 years as applying to the period of papal dominance during the Middle Ages. This dissenting note was taken up, in turn, by James H. Todd of England and William Burgh of Ireland. A future Antichrist, to dominate for three and one-half years at the end of the age, was substituted. More or less confusion inevitably resulted. [80]

This same development likewise profoundly influenced John Henry Newman of the High Church Anglican group. It removed the stumbling block in his search for certainty in the authoritarianism of Rome, when Rome was thus cleared, to his satisfaction, of the stigma of being the Antichrist of prophecy. Thus it was that he felt clear in slipping into the arms of the "mother church." This was all part of the contemporary Oxford Tractarian Movement. [81] Times were tense, and the issues increasingly complex. Crosscurrents and counter movements developed, and soon disintegration of the Advent witness began to take place. But before long a number of able men sprang into the breach, rallying to the defense of the year-day principle-men like Alexander Keith, Thomas R. Birks, William Cuningliame, Joshua W. Brooks, and Edward B. Elliott. Even the writings of astronomer Jean de Cheseaux, of Switzerland, were also invoked. [82] But it was too late. The fatal disintegration was under way, and nothing seemed able to stop it. The Old World Advent awakening collapsed.

Causes of Old World Awakening Breakdown

This Old World Advent awakening breakdown really came over the issue of the return of the Jews, and the anticipated restoration of spiritual gifts, looked for by the powerful Presbyterian preacher, Edward Irving of London, and others.

But Irving was tragically deceived by the “utterances” that broke out in his own congregation, which in the end brought him to disillusionment, expulsion, ostracism, and ruin, so that he died of a broken heart. [83] It was not long until some of the editors gave up publication of the periodicals that had been devoted to the discussion of prophecy.

“Double dating” likewise came in-like the 1260 years from 533 to 1793, but more plausibly from 606 to 1866, with growing emphasis on the later dates. This “continuationism” pushed the dates of expectancy on beyond the 1843, 1844, and 1847 anticipation over to 1866 or 1867. This became so pronounced and so general that, when the crucial mid-forties came, most eyes had already become fixed upon the future 1860’s. [84] Thus this great Advent awakening in Britain passed without a climax.

But at the very time that the fateful “utterances” broke out in Irving’s Regent Square church in London, and odium was thus brought upon the whole Second Advent emphasis as a tragic result, William Miller began his first public presentations in North America. And the emphasis and leadership shifted, shortly thereafter, to the New World, which soon became the center of an actual Advent movement, in contrast to a mere awakening, soon far surpassing the earlier agitation in Britain and on the Continent. That constitutes the larger background. And the pioneering emphasis, which had such a remarkable spread and force in the Old World, needs to be borne in mind in any evaluation of the impact of the doctrine of the Second Advent upon the consciousness of Christendom in the first four decades of the nineteenth century.

Revival of Interpretation at Turn of Century

In North America the turn of the nineteenth century likewise marked the beginning of a new impetus in prophetic study. In fact, an unprecedented investigation of the prophecies concerning the last things seemed to begin in the very year 1798. In this land the conviction came upon many that mankind had entered a new epoch in the prophetic outline of the centuries, frequently denominated “the time of the end,” “the latter days,” or the last days. [85] Consciously or unconsciously they also came to use these very expressions of Holy Writ in their writings, as descriptive of this new day. The French tilt with the Papacy during and following the French Revolution, along with the tidal wave of infidelity that had swept over Europe, and had left its telltale marks even upon America, stimulated the study of prophecy as nothing else had done for decades. The captivity of the pope, early in 1798, was similarly recognized by a sizable group of scholarly men as a fulfillment of prophecy-the close of the fateful 1260 years. What world-shaking events were next to come was the question in many minds.

May 9, 1798, was set aside by the President of the United States as a nationwide day of special fasting and prayer, and scores of sermons were preached in churches and missionary societies, based on the prophecies that they believed were in process of fulfillment. These were delivered in the pulpits of various denominations. And in the new century, books, pamphlets, and periodical articles, bearing on prophecy, began to issue forth. Many of these were most explicit and convincing. And their writers were spread over all denominations-Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Lutheran, Episcopalian.

Moreover, these men were scattered all the way from New York and the New England States, out to the Western frontiers and down South. Illustrious names, such as President Timothy Dwight, of Yale, and the Honorable Elias Boudinot, former president of the Continental Congress and then director of the mint, were in the forefront of this early prophetic interpretation. [86] Periodicals like the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and the American edition of the Christian Observer became the mediums for the new discussion. A marked revival of prophetic interpretation was on.

The stream of exposition widened, and the signs of the times were stressed. There was a rising tide of literature on the time prophecies-the 1260, 1290, 1335, and especially the 2300 years. The best of the previous British Advent awakening writings were reprinted in North America, [87] and an able, indigenous literature on prophecy soon developed in this land.

But the supreme point of interest and discussion in it all, as we have seen, was now the terminal point of the 2300 years. There soon developed a distinctive dual shift of interest and emphasis: In the Old Testament interest shifted from Daniel 7 over to Daniel 8, with the outline of chapter 7 and its time period regarded as largely fulfilled, and its interpretation now considered established and axiomatic. The paralleling shift in the New Testament was from Revelation 13 over to Revelation 14-from the recognized wounding of the papal “beast” in 1798, on to the flying angels of Revelation 14. That was the setting, for the great Second Advent movement in America.

Pre-Millerite Expositors Lay Sturdy Foundations

The American pioneer in the widespread heralding, over here, of the approaching end of the 2300 years in 1843-1847, was William C. Davis of South Carolina, a Presbyterian minister of note. His impressive path finding treatise on the millennium passed through a series of editions in America, between 1811 and 1817, with one reprint in Great Britain in 1818. [88] It therefore became rather widely known. It was unquestionably Davis who set the basic interpretative pattern in America, followed by numerous other expounders-that the tie-in of the seventy weeks with the 2300 years, as its first segment, constitutes the key

that unlocks the timing of the 2300 years. The two periods begin together, he held, and are checked and certified by the cross, as set by prophecy in the seventieth week. Thus the end year of the 2300 and the beginning of the millennium was set for 1847.

Joshua L. Wilson, Presbyterian moderator and teacher of prominence, of Ohio, in 1828 preached a remarkable sermon out on the Western frontier, concerning the approaching cleansing of the sanctuary (the church) in 1847. [89] This created so much favorable discussion that, after Wilson had presented the sermon in Cincinnati, he was requested to repeat it in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, then in Wheeling, West Virginia, and finally in Louisville, Kentucky-four times in four widely separated States. His position was practically the same, and increased interest and further inquiry resulted.

Then came Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ, sometimes called by his name, who in a locally famous debate with the deist Robert Owen, in 1829, made a brilliant defense of the deity of Christ. In this lie uses the same argument and dating for the seventy weeks and the 2300 days, contending that the longer span was nearing its close. Samuel M. McCorkle of Tennessee, of the Disciples of Christ, wrote in similar vein in 1829. There was little difference in reasoning or evidence employed, and lie ended the major period at the same time, although he, unlike the other three, was a pre millennial [90].

And then followed a succession of proclaimers of essentially the same date-David McGregor, of Maine, 1843; and President Charles Wheeler, of Rector College, West Virginia, 1843 or 1844. Then there were A. J. Krupp, of Philadelphia, John Robinson, of Cincinnati, and others, all presenting about the same evidence and concurring in about the same time. In 1834 the highly trained Baptist clergyman, Robert Scott, in New York State, expounded similarly, fixing upon 1843-1844 for the end of the 2300 years. Also Jose de Rozas, of Mexico, in 1834 and Adam H. Borwell, of Canada, in 1835, similarly arrived at 1847. It should be particularly observed that all of these and still others in North America had made their declarations before the publication of William Miller's first book in 1836. He was, therefore, definitely not the originator of this prophetic exposition. He was but one of many.

But these men on both sides of the Atlantic all formed part of that far-flung advance guard that preceded the Millerite movement, and were not connected therewith. They were the first to affirm the principle that the seventy weeks comprise the initial segment of the 2300 years. Their position was essentially the same as that taken by scores, if not hundreds, in the Advent awakening in Europe, although there was some variation in dating. This was now the accepted procedure in such exposition-to begin the two periods together, which provided a clear and logical basis for calculating the end year of the longer period, which they understood would terminate in the cleansing of the sanctuary whatever that might be and whatever it would involve.

There was difference of view on this latter point. Some thought of this momentous coming event as the cleansing of the church from all pollution and apostasy, or the restoration of the Holy Land. Others believed that it meant the cleansing of the earth by fire, for the removal of all sin and corruption. Almost all these scholars thought that the Second Advent was somehow connected inseparably therewith, and that it probably involved the millennium in some way. But they all held the grand terminal date of the 2300 years to be at more or less the same time, whatever the event. And the question was not so much the time as the event. So this large group of scholarly men, some threescore strong, scattered over the Old World and the New, and even resident in the Orient, were all persuaded that a great and critical hour for mankind was just in the offing. Such was the setting when Miller first began the public declaration of his own belief in the ending of the 2300 years "about the year 1843," on essentially the same line of reasoning and evidence.

Position of Cross Determines Terminal Year

Here in America the Old World issue over the 2400-year contention had no part or place in the discussion. Over here all were united on the soundness and certainty of the number 2300 as signifying that many years. The slight variation in dating them grew out of the difference in locating the year of the birth of Christ and the true place of the cross in the last or seventieth week in the seventy weeks of years. At first nearly all in both the Old World and the New held to AD 33 as the crucifixion year. Some put this commonly accepted AD 33 cross at the end of the seventieth week. Consequently, the 1810 remaining years of the 2300, beyond AD 33, would then lead to the year 1843.

Others, placing the same AD 33 cross in the midst of the seventieth week, thereby ended the seventieth week in AD 37. This consequently extended the 1810 remaining years to 1847. Both groups, however, had exactly the same intent. This minor divergence in the placing of the cross in that last "week"

and a slight inaccuracy in the true date of the cross, which came to be discovered, fully account for the variation between 1843, 1844, and 1847, as the end year of Daniel's major prophetic period. But in reality the difference was slight, and the essential unity on the timing was most impressive. Widespread expectancy was the result. And this was all before the Millerite movement, or at least outside the Millerite orbit.

This large group who pioneered in this particular interpretation, many of them able and learned men, of various denominational affiliations, had put down strong footings and laid sturdy foundations upon which the succeeding Millerite movement built its

imposing structure of interpretation. The names we have noted were the men they quoted in their publications in justification of their own positions—pressing hard on the soundness of the calculation argument used, as well as emphasizing the dependable scholarship of the various men who had sponsored and supported this thesis.

Such were the broad and substantial foundations upon which the Millerites built. They were not at all alone in their position. And they were by no means the first to interpret the 2300 years in this fashion. They did not derive support for their contentions from ignorant sources, or rest upon questionable precedents. This interpretive formula did not stem simply from one religious group or sect, but was derived from representatives of all the leading religious bodies. It did not come from one obscure section of the land or even from one single country. Instead, it sprang into being simultaneously in various lands and nationalities and languages, in both hemispheres. It had a brilliant ancestry. The Millerites built upon the foundations of their predecessors and contemporaries. Few, if any, previous advances in prophetic interpretation had ever had such an extensive and solid groundwork.

Eight Progressive Stages in American Movement

The American Second Advent movement passed through a series of distinct stages or developments. There was a steadily progressive growth. Like a tiny rivulet comma from a single spring, it was in time joined by other rivulets. And these grew larger in combined volume and swifter in current, as stream after stream and river upon river merged to form a mighty waterway. This not only turned many modest mill wheels along the banks, but sent huge turbines spinning as well, producing power and light, and even up bearing the ships of sea upon its bosom. Such is the epitomized story of the Millerite movement. Its distinct expansions or accelerations, eight in number, may for convenience be listed as follows:

1. The period of the solitary public labors of William Miller, beginning in 1831. His was at first a solitary voice, crying in the wilderness of the small towns and rural sections, “Behold, Christ comes soon, the second trine; prepare to meet Him.” This voice was augmented only by a few of his own periodical articles, a pamphlet, and his initial work in book form, in 1836. This period extended to 1838.

2. The time of early growth endeavor, as Fitch, Litch, Bates, and a growing number of other able Voices and facile pens joined Miller, augmented by an increasing number of periodical articles, pamphlets, and books from others, and with better methods added and greater facilities employed, adapted to city labor. This covers 1838 and 1839.

3. The era of the Second Advent conferences—first the sixteen general conferences, composed of preacher-delegates from all faiths, who had now joined the Advent movement. These groups assembled in order to come to united views, and to formulate joint statements for the press concerning the prophecies and the Advent, thus to publicize them to the world. During this time Joshua V. Himes became the great publicist and organizer of the movement. First, the Signs of the Times was launched, and then The Midnight Cry, followed by some thirty other periodicals. This utilization of the power of the press included a Millerite daily, a quarterly journal in more of a literary style, and even a paper for women edited by a woman. Millerite periodicals covered the eastern half of the States.

And the conferences were brought to their climax by the authorization of a standard “1843 chart” for their preachers, and the launching of a succession of camp meetings to reach the populace at large. The first conference was in 1840; the second conference taught a “trial judgment,” and gave major emphasis to the pre-millennial character of Christ’s Second Advent. Some 2,000 copies of a 176-page printed report were sent to the clergy of America, and to missionaries in most other lands, with separate reprints of the component addresses. Along with these general conferences were 120 paralleling local conferences, designed to bring the Second Advent faith to large popular assemblages and many communities.

4. The era of the camp meetings—thirty in four months time, and 124 in the two years 1843 and 1844. These ranged in size from sometimes 4,000 to 10,000, and utilized the largest canvas pavilion in America, with a seating capacity of about 5,000. These camps generally closed with their impressive “parting” ceremony. A farewell song was sung, and all present, clasping their neighbors’ hands, formed two moving concentric circles, so that each could bid a solemn good-by to every other pilgrim on the way to the heavenly city. This was in 1843-44.

And to the giant camp meetings were added large temporary tabernacles (the one in Boston seating over 3,000). There were also theater, hall, tent, grove, and great open-air meetings. Matters moved forward on a large scale. There were daring plans and exploits, and an amazing coverage of the populace of North America, for in 1840 there were only 17,000,000 inhabitants—New York City having less than 400,000, Philadelphia and Boston 90,000 each, and Washington, D. C., then but 23,000. The Millerite movement was, in America, the most widely discussed religious phenomena of the time.

5. Miller’s crucial “year 1843,” ending in the spring of 1844, witnessed a great influx of adherents, with an increased tempo in heralding the approaching end of the 2300 years, and the correction of the earlier calculation from March over to April.

6. The augmenting emphasis of the second angel's message in 1843-44, when great religious bodies rejected the message of the Second Advent by expelling from their communions many believers in the Advent, both laity and clergy. Then a loyal core of some 50,000 (possibly up to 100,000) withdrew from the churches to form the distinctive Second Advent movement (one newspaper estimated a million general adherents). This too was in the latter part of 1843 and in 1844.

7. The tarrying or slumber time, from April 19 to late summer, 1844, during the early part of the Jewish year "1844," when it seemed that the Bridegroom tarried, as all the virgins "slumbered and slept," while the Advent company waited for the heavenly Bridegroom's return, as portrayed in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.

8. The seventh-month movement, which brought the great Advent movement to a dramatic climax on October 22, 1844, thus ending the distinctive Millerite phase-this, in turn, to be followed by the unfolding recognition and proclamation of the third angel's message as it began to take wing. That is a breakdown of the Millerite movement into its component phases.

Miller Stresses Full Gospel in Prophetic Setting

Every great movement is made up of its individual participants, each bearing his allotted message and making his special contribution. Take Miller himself, for instance, that mighty messenger of God for his time, who moved multitudes in his day. His first written declaration of prophetic faith was penned in 1822, and his first sermon preached in 1831. Compare and contrast it with the first sermon of John Knox, Scottish Reformer, preached in the castle of old Saint Andrews in 1547. Knox gave a remarkably full and sound exposition of the prophetic line of Daniel 7, with emphasis on the papal little horn's still heavy dominance, to be brought to an end by divine intervention at the appointed time. [91] Scenes of judgment would form the climax.

But Miller's first sermon, taking Daniel 7 with its 1260 years as a background and setting, now largely fulfilled, passed on to Daniel 8 with the end of 2300 years as the climactic close of all time prophecy. [92] And this shift over to Daniel 8 was indicative of the fundamental advance over Reformation emphasis, and became the new focal point of emphasis in the entire Advent movement. Daniel 7 was now taken as largely fulfilled, and its interpretation as axiomatic. It was treated as established, standard exegesis, with the message of Daniel 8 as the new present truth due the world. This was a decided advance over and beyond the burden of Reformation days. And this concept carried with it mighty revival power.

But the throbbing heart of Miller's message was more and more the "everlasting gospel. --- He was no mere lecturer on bare prophecy. He was preeminently a heart-warming gospel preacher, with special emphasis centered on latter-day events and expectations of prophecy. And his fundamental emphasis was twofold. Positively, it was the full saving gospel of Christ, now in its imminent Second Advent setting, with redemption solely through His grace as its very heart. This was always in the forefront. Miller's message was not merely an intellectual theory, or theological doctrine concerning latter-day events. It was not simply a body of prophetic beliefs, used with heavy accent and telling force, though that was included as an integral part of the whole. His well-rounded 1822 statement of faith reveals it all most clearly, and presents it in beautiful balance. It was, first of all, a proclamation of Christ's wondrous saving power, placed in the inevitable Judgment-hour setting. That is why there were mighty revivals under Miller's personal, dynamic

preaching, and great numbers accepted the Second Advent faith. There was an irresistible appeal coupled with an inexorable logic that arrested the attention and won the hearts of men.

And the prophecies, which lie so effectively stressed, found their rightful place as the divinely designated setting for the triumphant climax of this saving power of Christ, about to be accomplished. So powerful was Miller's gospel appeal that hundreds of rank infidels were soundly converted. The prophecies, therefore, became the medium for making the maximum appeal. This we have not always sensed. But emphasis upon the 2300-year prophecy, with its climax in 1843-44, was only part of a balanced preaching of all the prophecies. Miller was never an extremist. He was not lopsided or top heavy in his presentations. As his sermon outlines attest, Miller was truly a herald of the everlasting gospel, with special emphasis on the hour of God's judgment, and appropriate stress upon the preparation imperative to meet our Savior and ministering, Priest, now so soon to come in all His kingly power and glory to complete the redemption of men. His earnestness was compelling." Text Books," as

A painstaking examination of Miller's his diary was called, giving the texts for all his sermons during his full-time ministry, from 1834 onward to 1844-as well as access to considerably more than a hundred of his sermon outlines, preserved on small sheets or slips of paper, along with many manuscript sermons [93] at first puzzled me. The emphasis was quite different from what I had anticipated, for his book of lectures is chiefly of addresses on doctrine and prophecy. But rarely ever did Miller begin a series of sermons with a message on the Judgment hour of Revelation 14:6, 7. The prophecies were only part of his burden. They provided the time setting. They formed the climax of his many-sided appeal. They afforded urgency for decision, and brought the immediacy of prophetic fulfillment to bear upon the strong gospel presentation he had already made.

Rarely did he preach from Daniel 8:14 until he had laid down a solid gospel foundation. It was but the climax of the full-rounded message that he preached. This is a vital principle of preaching procedure for us to grasp. We can learn much from him in preaching

techniques. Miller was a sound and powerful preacher of the gospel in its full latter-day, present-truth setting. That was the secret of his unusual power, and the obvious reason for his great success as a soul winner. There were six thousand conversions of which there is record.

On the other hand, negatively, Miller's message was a stalwart denial of, and a ringing challenge to, the Whitbyan postmillennial theory of a thousand years of world betterment and -world conversion before the Advent. It was a complete rejection of the roseate concept, so popular at the time, of the establishment of the kingdom of God and everlasting peace by dint of human endeavor, without an antecedent Second Advent to bring it to pass.

This false concept of world betterment seriously complicated the latter-day heralding of the message of the second, personal, premillennial Advent of Christ, creating strong opposition to its reception. Two diametrically opposite philosophies were thus joined in inevitable conflict. So the heralding of the message of Christ's imminent return was opposed and confused by these false views struggling for a foothold and battling the true position.

That was really the basic issue of Millerism-the truth of pre millennialism versus the falsity of postmillennialism. It was not primarily the terminus of the 2300 years in 1843 or 1844. Scores of noted clerics agreed to that dating. But two irreconcilable philosophies concerning redemption were brought into mortal combat under the impulse of the Millerite movement. And many ministerial stalwarts, like Henry Dana Ward, Henry Jones, and Nathan Whiting, though not concurring wholly as to the precise year set by most of the Millerites for the Lord's return, took their stand staunchly by Miller's side as militant premillennialists. Premillennialism, with final redemption at the Advent, was the rallying battle cry. In fact, these men aided materially in the revision of the earlier erroneous year 1843 to the corrected year 1844, stressed in the seventh-month movement.

And what was true of Miller's fundamental concept of his gospel mission could be said of scores, yes, hundreds of his able associates. Charles Fitch was a conspicuous example. There was a ringing gospel emphasis in his preaching that was most pronounced and tremendously effective, for it was God's designated emphasis for the hour-the "everlasting gospel."

All prophecy, these men held, clusters around the two contrasting Advents of Christ. They are the inseparable focal points of all prophecy. The divine transactions of the first Advent laid the foundation for the ineffable glories of the Second Advent. And the Second Advent is based upon and brings to completion the redemptive acts and mission of Christ's first coming. Again, the first Advent provided the atoning sacrifice imperative for the salvation of mankind, and inaugurated His indispensable priestly mediation, based upon and applying that infinite provision. The Second Advent terminates this twofold ministry of Christ and brings the plan of redemption to its triumphant close.

How Miller Calculated the Jewish Year 1843

There were two distinct phases or major epochs in the Millerite movement-the original "1843" phase and the later "1844," or seventh-month phase. The earlier "1843" phase, as launched by Miller, looked to the "Jewish year 1843" as the climactic year, within which the coming of the Lord was expected-with the attendant resurrection of the righteous dead, the translation of the righteous living, and the destruction of the earth by fire, which would at last compass the destruction of sin and sinners.

So the first, or "1843," phase was really but a preliminary, preparatory alarm, like the ancient blowing of the trumpets; and the second, or "1844," phase was the actual giving of the judgment-hour message. The first was merely the heralding of the Advent truth in general, stressing the imminent coming of the Lord, with the earth or the church generally regarded as the sanctuary. In the second phase, in contrast, the heavenly sanctuary began to be understood with the consciousness of the antitypical day of atonement at hand.

The eyes of men were lifted to a High Priest, ministering in the heaven of heavens, who, they believed, would emerge from the heavenly sanctuary on the specific twenty-four-hour day of October 22. Thus the earlier message swelled into a loud cry for that time. Like many noted interpreters before him, on both sides of the Atlantic, Miller based his calculation of "1843" on an AD 33 cross, which he placed at the end of the seventieth week of years. This, as we have already seen, was identical with the position of many others prior to him. And this AD 33 cross, plus the remaining 1810 years of the 2300, gave him, he reasoned, "1843" as the end year of the great 2300-year span. The formula therefore became $33+1810=1843$. But Miller himself had always qualified his expectation by saying 11 about the year 1843." He recognized the possibility of a slight error in the records of history as well as in human chronology and in calculation. It was his associates who, as the movement got well tunder way, became increasingly positive and assertive about the year 1843. Some became quite dogmatic and abandoned the early caution of Miller, stressing "1843" without any reservations.

The year 457 BC, as the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the date of the royal command to rebuild and restore Jerusalem, was so commonly accepted by practically all Bible scholars of the day, that Miller and his associates took that date unquestioningly for the joint beginning of the seventy weeks and the 2300 years, regarding it as established and virtually unchallenged. Regarding it as axiomatic, they centered their study on the end events of the seventy weeks, the date of the cross in relation to the seventieth week, and the end events of the interrelated 2300 years, which they believed would fall in 1843 or 1844. Only later was the 457 BC date

challenged by critics. But now that has been re-established through the scholarly contribution of our own Doctors Lynn Wood and Siegfried Horn, of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

When Miller was pressed to define, or delimit, his year 1843, he suggested "March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844," roughly, as its general limits. He knew the Jewish sacred year ran from spring to spring, rather than from January to January, as with our common civil years. And Miller knew that the Jewish Passover (on the fourteenth day of the first month) was tied to the full moon, which was commonly understood as being the first full moon after the vernal equinox. So he simply took the equinox as the approximate beginning of the Jewish year, and gave it as his opinion that the Jewish year "1844" would extend from March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844. But that, in reality, was but an equinoctial year, not a Jewish year at all-for no Jewish year has 365 days. Nor does the Jewish year begin with the equinox.

The Jewish year is a lunar solar year. The months, which are governed by the moon, run from one new moon day to the next new moon day. Since the moon's period is approximately 29.50 days, on this lunar basis the Jewish months commonly alternated in length, with 30, 29, 30, 29 days in sequence through the first seven months of the annual feast period, or from the Passover on through the Feast of Tabernacles with occasional minor adjustments in the closing months of the year. Twelve of these lunar months totaled 354 days, the length of the common Jewish year, which was eleven days shorter than the solar year. This shortage must, of course, be rectified. So the year was brought into step with the sun by the simple device of adding, or intercalating, an extra month at the end of every second or third year.

This was done seven times in every nineteen-year cycle by a fixed sequence, at the close of which the sun and moon returned to the same starting place, and the next nineteen year cycle was then begun. These embolismic years, with the leap month added, ordinarily total 384 days. Under this simple provision the total number of days in each nineteen year cycle equaled, approximately, the total days in the same number of regular solar years. So we should remember that there were just as many lunar solar years-no more and no less-in the Jewish calendation as there were solar years in the common calendation. It is a prophetic year, not a Jewish year, that has 360 days. That is derived from the 31.5- times as equaling 49 months and also 19-60 days in the prophetic calculation.

Miller's Associates Restudy the Jewish Calendation

As the Advent movement grew, studious and well informed men joined its ranks. Moreover, Miller's periodic illnesses prevented his participation in many of their larger conferences and other meetings. So the leadership gradually shifted to other shoulders. Some of these men soon became anxious about the basis of Miller's formula - 457 BC + 490 years - AD 33, and AD 33 - 1810 years = 1843. First of all, the cross was, according to the prophecy, to be in the "midst" of the seventieth week, not at its extreme end. That was undebatable, they felt, under the specifications of the inspired prediction. But would that "midst" of the week be in AD 30 or 31? They soon found that William Hales, the noted chronologist, whose volume was widely circulated at this time, placed the cross in AD 31. That was point number one.

Then there was the law of the "full years." Miller's formula (457 BC + 2300 years = AD 1843) necessitated all the year 457 BC and all the year AD. 1843, in order to make up the full 2300 years. But since the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem did not go into effect until the autumn of 457 BC, 2300 full years would of necessity reach over beyond "1843" to the corresponding autumn of the Jewish year "1844." This all drove the Millerite leaders to an intensive restudy of the entire question of Jewish calendation, particularly to find the reason for the divergence in the popular dates for the crucifixion.

Millerite scholars like Bliss, Whiting, and Apollon Hale combed the libraries of the Eastern cities and sought to master the intricate problem. Nearly two years were spent in this great search for the facts and the truth. They soon found that the AD 33 cross was based on the common rabbinical calendation, which was in well-nigh universal use among the modern Jews, but which was not the calendation in vogue in the first century, at the time of Christ's death.

The Mosaic calendar stipulations, which had dated from the Exodus, were inseparably tied to the three harvest seasons of Palestine. The Passover, and its attendant "wave sheaf" of newly ripened barley, must always come in the time of the barley harvest, which tallied largely with April. And the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, must similarly come when the next harvest, that of the wheat, was ripe. And the remaining harvest, of the vineyards and olive yards, must be out of the way before the journey to Jerusalem was undertaken for the great Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles that followed.

And these Millerite investigators found, further, that after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and the consequent dispersion of the Jews over the empire, they had begun to get out of step in the observance of their solemn days in the various parts of the world, sometimes celebrating them on different days in different sections. There was no longer a common center, as at Jerusalem of old, from which word could go out to ensure unison on the day of celebration. And so, as a matter of convenience, and to bring about uniformity in the timing of their festive days, as well as under Roman duress, the beginning of the sacred year was shifted, and its Passover moon tied to the easily ascertained vernal equinox.

This device brought uniformity in celebration, but at the same time violated the express stipulations of the Mosaic law of the feasts. It did not touch the sequence of the days of the week. But it generally threw the whole series of typical feasts back one moon, or month, early, so that the Passover was frequently celebrated in March, the very time of the latter rain in Palestine, and therefore before the barley was ripe. And in consequence Pentecost similarly came before the new wheat had ripened, and the Day of Atonement likewise came in the very midst of the harvest of the vineyards and olive yards. However, there were no longer any annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and the Mosaic feast system had long before lost its former significance.

Protesting Karaites Restore Original Calendation

This change in the beginning of the Jewish year had been brought about by the rabbis, with headquarters in Sura, Babylonia. And this began to take place about the same time that the change of the Sabbath was accomplished by the apostatizing Christian church-traditionally in the latter part of the fourth century of the Christian Era. So this calendar change would have to be recognized and corrected, in the calculation of the true time of the antitypical day of atonement, or last-day judgment hour of the first angel's message, just as verily as the change of the Sabbath would have to be recognized and God's true rest day restored in the final phase of the threefold message, that is, the third message, which the remnant church must proclaim. Both must alike be restored.

By the eighth century certain of the Jews, centered at Jerusalem, began to protest the various traditions and unauthorized changes that had come largely to supersede the Mosaic law. And they specifically protested this change by the rabbis from the Mosaic calendation that involved definite violation of the clear mandate given to Israel.

These protesters became known, in time, as Karaites (or Caraites). They were much like the early Protestants of the Protestant Reformation, protesting the unauthorized departures from the earlier Christian faith. These Karaites returned to the Mosaic barley harvest tuning of the sacred feasts, again celebrating them frequently one moon later than the rabbinical Jews and thus restoring, in their practice, the approximate calendation followed by the Jews in Old Testament times. This once more placed their Passovers normally in April, and their Days of Atonement usually in October. And by the Middle Ages some 40 per cent of the Jews were Karaites, including many of the great scholars of Jewry.

So the Millerites found that by the Middle Ages there were these two rival Jewish calendations. The rabbinical Jews used the popular revised calendation, which had been largely adopted through expediency. The Karaite minority attempted to restore the original Mosaic calendation. These were frequently one moon, or month, apart. Moreover, they found that the AD 33 cross was based on this later rabbinical calendation, which had not yet come into vogue in the first century AD, when Christ was crucified. And they found, further, that a Friday Passover could have occurred in AD 31, according to the Karaites' calendation. This was highly significant.

And they reasoned that as the seventy weeks of years began in 457 BC, under the operation of the older calendation; and as Christ died in the midst of this seventieth week of years - still under this same type of calendation in the first century of the new dispensation-therefore the calendation to be followed in determining the end of the 2300 years (which they had now come to believe would occur on the tenth day of the seventh month of the sacred Jewish year 1844) must be calculated under the same principles.

They also found that the Karaites' "Jewish year 1843" actually ended at sunset of April 18, 1844. April 19 would therefore be the civil equivalent of the first day of the "Jewish year 1844" beginning the sunset before. They therefore deliberately corrected the ending of the year "1843" from Miller's original March 21, or the day of the equinox, over to April 18, 1844. This latter date consequently became the last day of "1843," within which Jewish year they had first looked for their Lord to come.

Meantime, this study of Jewish calendation had led them into the study of the Mosaic types-the Passover, the wave sheaf, Pentecost, the Day of Atonement, et cetera, which were fulfilled in the antitypical realities of the Christian Era. And not only were they profoundly impressed that Christ did die in the year (AD 31) specified by the great outline time prophecy, in the "midst" of that seventieth week of years. But they were convinced that He died, as our Passover, on the very day of the month demanded by the Mosaic type (the fourteenth day of the first month), and that He arose on the very day of the wave sheaf (the sixteenth), as the first fruits of the dead. And the Holy Spirit had fallen when Pentecost, the specified fiftieth day, had "fully come." (Acts 2:1) These early types had all, therefore, meticulously met their anti-typical realities in the events clustered about the first Advent. The Millerites consequently came logically to believe that the Day of Atonement, with its attendant Feast of Tabernacles and jubilee release, would similarly be fulfilled in connection with the approaching Second Advent.

And as the Day of Atonement was clearly appointed for the tenth day of the seventh month, it became a comparatively simple matter to calculate, by means of adding the standard 177 days from the first (lay) of the true first Jewish month of the year "1844," or April 19, to the first day of the seventh month, or October 13, 1844. The notable "tenth day," or great day of atonement, would therefore fall on October 22, 1844. That would surely be the great day of atonement and cleansing of the sanctuary.

Thus the Millerites deliberately, and after extensive and thorough study, rejected the revised rabbinical calendation, with its September 23 day of atonement for 1844, as one moon too early. And they intelligently and unreservedly espoused the Karaite reconstruction of

the original Mosaic calendation, and so awaited the great day of atonement one moon later, on October 22. It was this reasoning that led logically and Biblically into the great seventh-month phase, or movement, centered in the seventh month of "1844," instead of the Jewish year "1843." Thus it was that their eyes and hopes were now fixed on October 22. The spring disappointment was somewhat minor, for their eyes were soon fixed upon the seventh-month expectancy and the seemingly inexorable conclusions involved. But the passing of that final day, without the fruition of their hopes, was bitter indeed.

Seventh-Month Movement a Transition Step

This study of the Mosaic types and of the priestly ministry of the sanctuary service committed to ancient Israel, and fulfilled in the antitypical realities of the Christian dispensation, led the Millerites toward an entirely new concept of the sanctuary and its cleansing. Miller originally regarded the church, or probably the earth, as the sanctuary, which was to be cleansed by fire. But in the seventh-month movement the emphasis began to be turned from earth to heaven as the sanctuary. The one thing, however, that seemed to impress them about the day of atonement was that, when the High Priest had finished His ministry in the heavenly most holy place, He would come out to bless His people on that great day of separation, of judgment, and of cleansing the sanctuary.

As yet they only saw that Christ, after dying as our atoning sacrifice on the cross in AD 31, in exact fulfillment of the specification of the seventy-week prophecy, ascended on high to minister as our great high priest in the heaven of heavens, or holy of holies, as they then looked upon it. And to those who wait for Him He would soon appear the second time without sin unto salvation. [94]

They therefore awaited the emergence of Christ our High Priest from the heaven of heavens on the stipulated day of atonement (October 22, 1844), to bless His waiting people. And that would, they thought, be His Second Coming. That was as far as their study at that time carried them. The seventh-month movement was therefore a transition step, or stage, between Miller's earlier concept of the earth as the sanctuary to be cleansed by fire, and the perfected understanding of the two apartments of the antitypical heavenly sanctuary, and the corresponding two phases of Christ's heavenly ministry, perceived only after the disappointment by a small group who were to become the Seventh-day Adventists.

And so that seventh-month concept of our great High Priest emerging from the heavenly holy of holies, on the specific day called for in the type, in the end year of the great 2300-year prophecy, was their basis of justification for fixing upon a specific day for their Lord's return. It was primarily the fulfillment of a prophetic type, on a specific day, just as definitely as Christ died on the day of the Passover type, and rose on that day of the wave sheaf type. Not until after the great disappointment, followed by weeks of intense restudy of the sanctuary truth, the types, and related themes, was it all clarified.

Light Dawns on the Third Message

As all are aware, on the morning after October 22, the day of the great disappointment, Hiram Edson and a companion were crossing Edson's field in New York State, meditating and pondering on the why of their disappointment, and the failure of Christ to appear at the time expected. Edson and his Millerite companions had just spent long hours in prayer, most earnestly pleading with God to send light to make clear the nature of their mistake. And now it flashed into his mind that, instead of coming out of the most holy place, Christ, our great High Priest, had for the first time entered into the most holy place, and had a work to perform therein before coming to this earth.

Edson and his companion sought out a third friend, likewise a student and a searcher for truth. The trio then began an intensive joint study of the entire system of typical Mosaic offerings, the sanctuary and its services, and their antitype in the book of Hebrews. They came to the clear and united conviction that there were two phases to Christ's ministry, not simply one-as previously they had conjectured. They saw that their mistake lay not in the chronology, or dating, of the period, but in the event at its close-a misunderstanding of the nature and length of the day of atonement. The second phase of Christ's ministry had assuredly begun. But it was not to be completed in a twenty four hour day at all, but obviously covered a period, lasting perhaps for years. And so it was that clarification came, and understanding of the larger aspects of the sanctuary service grew clearer and clearer.

Key Positions All Spring From Bible

Four beams of added light, one joining the other, began to shine upon and focus on the "little flock"-that faithful little group of Adventist adherents clinging to the leading hand of God in the seventh-month movement, and now beginning to draw together in renewed fellowship after the disappointment of 1844. These four luminous truths were (1) the sanctuary light, (2) the Sabbath truth, (3) the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, and (4) an increased understanding of the final segments of the great outline prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Further advances were made, particularly the specifications of the third angel's message-the mark of the beast, the two-horned beast, the image of the beast, the name and number of the beast, the time of the plagues, and the like.

In the seventh-month movement, although some of the Adventists had seen Jesus Christ as a ministering high priest in the heaven of heavens, they did not as yet perceive the two phases of that heavenly ministry. They simply saw that after He had finished His priestly

work in heaven above, or the holy of holies, as they called it, He was to come out on that antitypical day of atonement to bless His waiting people which would also be His Second Advent. The seventh-month movement was consequently a transition step, or stage, between the earlier position of Miller on the sanctuary, and the later, fuller, and more accurate understanding of the sanctuary truth.

But the percept on of the sanctuary, Sabbath, and kindred truths of the third message all began before the Spirit of prophecy appeared in the remnant church. This timing is significant. The Spirit of prophecy was not manifested in Maine until about two months after Hiram Edson and his associates, with their open Bibles, had begun the study of the Old Testament prophetic types in conjunction with Hebrews 8 and 9 and related scriptures.

Therefore we are truly Protestant in our sanctuary teachings, in that they were derived from the Bible, and the Bible only, as our rule of faith and practice. And it should be added that no major prophetic or doctrinal truth was ever initially brought to this people through the Spirit of prophecy. Rather, our positions were first derived from Scripture, and then were confirmed and sometimes amplified by the Spirit of prophecy, just as details already existent, but which might not otherwise be seen by the human eye unaided, may be brought out by a magnifying glass.

Next note the Sabbath, which has now, in a unique sense, been committed to us for enunciation to the world. But back in the years 1843 and 1844 the Seventh Day Baptists were having days of prayer and fasting that God would raise up other friends in behalf of His downtrodden seventh-day Sabbath. Incidentally, Sabbath observance had been brought over to this country in 1664 by Samuel Mumford, a Seventh Day Baptist, out of a remarkable background of seventeenth century Sabbath revival in the Old World, which cannot be covered here except for two brief backward glimpses.

In the year 1682 Dr. Peter Chamberlen, noted court physician to three British kings, James 1, Charles 1, and Charles 11, wrote a treatise addressed to the Jews who had been allowed to return to England after their exile. He described himself as “having been the First that endeavored to rescue that commandment from the Triple-crowned-little Horn’s Change of Times, and Laws, as was foretold by your Prophet Daniel.” [95] Then he proceeds with his treatise. He had the facts concerning the change.

And just a few years later, in 1735, from the German Seventh Day Baptist Ephrata Cloister, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a band of twelve made a trek over to Philadelphia, and stood on the steps of the courthouse and proclaimed the seventh day as the Sabbath. On one occasion one of their leaders discoursed on the “power of the beast.” [96] Two of their writings charged the change upon the little horn of Daniel 7:25 or the Antichrist.

With us, the restoration of the Sabbath truth developed independent of, and apart from, the sanctuary light, which was discerned in New York State. Sabbath observance, on the other hand, made its appearance in Massachusetts and Maine, and other places, as the result of a tract by Thomas M. Preble, who, in the summer of 1844, had in turn probably received the Sabbath truth from Rachel Oakes (later Preston), Seventh Day Baptist and then Adventist, of Washington, New Hampshire.

The Spirit of prophecy, on the other hand, was manifested up in Maine in December, 1844. Thus its appearance was providentially timed, for it came at an hour when men were studying desperately, and wondering seriously whether God had really been leading in the great seventh-month movement. Christ had not come as expected. The righteous dead had not been raised. The Advent believers were still in this same old world, which had now been made bitterly hostile by the episode of the disappointment. The new sanctuary concept-with its understanding concerning the High Priest entering into instead of coming out of the most holy, and now ministering in the second and final phase for the faithful-had not yet spread beyond New York State. And Sabbath observance was still confined to two or three Adventist preachers as a personal practice. And with it all there was general uncertainty.

It was just at this time that Ellen Harmon (later White) was given her first and what was perhaps the most remarkable vision of her whole career as a special messenger for God that of December, 1844. She then saw the pilgrim pathway stretching clear through to the city of God, with the light of that “true midnight cry,” shining like the penetrating beam of a giant searchlight, reaching clear through to the celestial city. She saw the marching saints. She saw the perplexity of some and the weariness of others. The city proved to be a long way off-much, much farther than any had anticipated. The journey was such a long one. And some, in discouragement, took their eyes off the city and the lighted way and stumbled off into the dark and wicked world below. [97]

The view did not explain the nature of their mistake. It simply gave assurance that the hand of God was definitely in that seventh-month movement. This particular concept, it should also be added, was contrary to her own personal views, as well as to those of most of the Adventists. But it held them steady while they studied from their Bibles the nature of the disappointment and found their way through to full understanding. And later, when the emerging Sabbatarian group had reached their conclusions from the Bible, the Spirit of prophecy spoke out to confirm and sustain their sound positions. It is not only impressive but awesome to see how God has timed these sequences, and the way they all came to be fitted together under His guiding grace. We are truly Protestant in our relation to the Bible as the source of our faith.

And now, to these three new truths-the sanctuary, Sabbath, and Spirit of prophecy-were added those clear Adventist teachings carried over from the seventh-month movement. These were (1) the imminent, premillennial Second Advent, (2) the great outline prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, with their integrated time periods, (3) the first and second messages, of the judgment hour and Babylon's fall, and (4) the immortality only through Christ. To these, other related truths began to be studied and added, particularly the implications of the third message.

Third Message New Focal Point of Study

After this period of individual or small-group study came the initial series of Sabbath Conferences of 1848, in which unity was achieved concerning the component features of the third angel's message, the foundations of the Adventist Church were strongly and firmly laid, and the fundamentals of our faith were clearly defined and established. These conferences were blessed occasions. Their sessions were marked by the spirit of importunate prayer. Entire nights were spent in earnest intercession before God. The participants reviewed and reasserted their faith in the major outline and time prophecies and reaffirmed adherence to the basic principles of the gospel and the evangelical faith.

But the area of prophetic study centered in the stipulations of the third angel's message. The identity of the beast was unquestioned. But what was his "mark," his "name," his "number"? And what were this second beast and the "image"? (Miller had thought the two beasts were perhaps two symbols of Rome-civil and ecclesiastical, or pagan and papal.) Was this two-horned beast Protestantism perhaps involving another power, in the Western world, as some had before suggested? And what about the timing of the plagues? Were they poured out during the period of the French Revolution? Was the fifth plague visited upon the seat of the beast when Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner in 1798? Or were all the plagues yet future. And what about Revelation 17 to 19: the woman on the scarlet beast, with its seven heads and ten horns. The fall of mystic Babylon and her final overthrow, in plagues and judgments of God? These were the questions yet to be answered.

These were the features that now became new focal points of prophetic study. As the great spotlight of interest and investigation had slowly shifted forward, along through the centuries, and rested first on the first angel's message and then on the second, as they came into being, so it was now focused on the third message. Thus the message concerning the beast and his mark-and his name and number and the image of the beast, and all the other involvement began slowly to unfold and clarify until the essential structure of the Advent faith, in the form of the threefold message as we know it today, was progressively brought into being.

Everlasting Gospel Adapted to Every Age

In the grand prophetic outline there has always been a present truth for every age-a special emphasis for every time or epoch as it comes to pass. There was a present truth in Peter's day-Rome's dominance was the setting, as the fourth and final world power in the prophetic series of four, with the breakup to follow. And when Rome's division was under way, that became the next area of present truth. After that the dread Antichrist was to come, that disastrous "falling away," which was to be identified and exposed. That too, when it became an actuality, was present truth during the Middle Ages. And finally, the events of the last days, and of the imminent Second Advent, were to be stressed as the last present truth for man. Thus the spotlight of emphasis has gradually shifted forward along the master outline, from point to point and place to place, as history has fulfilled prophecy. So each major period has always had an immediate present-truth emphasis.

There is, consequently, a distinctive present truth for this present hour. In the great prophecy of Matthew 24, enunciated by Jesus Christ, the supreme Prophet of all time, He makes announcement that when "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14. Be it never forgotten, therefore, that ours is fundamentally a gospel message. It is the same everlasting, saving gospel of all ages, only now with special emphasis on the approaching establishment of that prophesied kingdom of God for which the saints of old have most earnestly longed and prayed and labored. Nevertheless, it is to be a genuine gospel, in and for these latter times.

Our divine charter, our inspired mandate for today, is amplified under the terms of the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-10, with its emphasis on the tremendous events of these last times. But these, in turn, are simply the unfolding of the final phase, and the accompanying closing events of that same everlasting gospel. Timeless, unchanged and unchangeable, undeviating and undiminished, the everlasting gospel is wondrously adapted and applied to every major epoch of man, and climaxes with the great judgment-hour message and its ensuing expansion into the threefold message. There is but one gospel for all time. But it attains a fullness and completeness, and is to receive in these last days an emphasis never before known. The times and the events in the climax of the plan of redemption are to be faithfully declared. But never is the essence of the glorious gospel heart to be overshadowed-the transforming power of God unto salvation in every age.

It is a complete gospel we are to herald. First, it saves from the past, through justification, caring completely for the guilt and the penalty of all past sins through the substitutionary, atoning death of our Savior. Second, it saves from the present power, dominion, and mastery of sin, through sanctification, by the indwelling of Christ in the soul through the Holy Spirit, who comes to the redeemed

child of God as the “personal presence of Christ to the soul,” [98] as Mrs. White so aptly phrased it. And third, it will save completely and finally from the future presence and possibility of sin, through glorification, when Christ comes the second time in power and great glory. Brethren in the ministry, that is the gospel for which the world is waiting, for which it is longing, for which it is dying. And that is the glorious gospel we are commissioned to give to the world.

It cannot be overemphasized that prophecy is primarily the depiction of the great redemptive acts and provisions of God down through the ages, unfolding the relationship of part to part and development to development. Ponder the grand outline and the progression of events that carry us down through the ages. It takes in the chronology of the plan of redemption, the divine plan of the ages in outline, the great controversy between Christ and Satan in sequence, and particularly the glorious outcome. That is where, in the latter times, the present-truth threefold message enters the picture. Its setting is, of course, in Revelation 12 to 14.

Observe the logical sequence. In the first eleven verses of Revelation 13 we find the depiction of the great apostasy, and learn that the dragon of Revelation 12, symbolizing pagan Rome, gave his seat, his power, and great authority to this beast power. The seat was given over by Constantine, and power and great authority were legally confirmed by Justinian. And then, finally, the special 1260-year dominance of the Papacy was to end with the deadly wound by the sword, which occurred in 1798. But just as that was taking place the prophet saw another gentler, more youthful power emerging from the earth, the Western world, which would do a special Work. That is presented in verses 11-18. Then we are carried into the unfolding outline of the threefold message due the world at that time, which is so familiar to all of us—the heralding of the hour of God’s judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the warning against the beast and his identifying mark.

Nevertheless, all this was to be but the unfolding of the “everlasting gospel,” with due application and emphasis upon the time and warning features, as the negative side, while at the same time heralding the positive saving gospel for this time. Thus: “The whole of the gospel is embraced in the third angel’s message, and in all our work the truth is to be presented as it is in Jesus.” [99] The two are to be inseparable.

It is this combined gospel invitation and warning, keyed to the hour, that result in a people keeping “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” as seen in Revelation 14:12. And this sublime prophecy comes to its climax in the Second Coming of the Son of man in power and great glory. That is the harvest time, when the obedient “wheat” of earth is gathered into the eternal garner of God, and the grapes of disobedience are cast into the wine press of His wrath. That is the inspired, infallible picture of the everlasting gospel, operating in its present and final setting.

Prophecy Basically the Portrayal of Redemption

We have just observed that prophecy is not merely the inspired outline of the course of empire, and of the vicissitudes of the church, though these form an integral part of it. That it is not merely a divine depiction of the great controversy between good and evil, though that is likewise a vital, component factor. Instead, prophecy is fundamentally the portrayal of the tremendous redemptive activity of God, centering around and exhibited in the first and Second Advents of Christ, with all that lies between these transcendent events, and all that follows thereafter.

These embrace the heart not only of the gospel but of the great seventy-weeks-of-years prophecy of Daniel 9, and the inseparable 2300-year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, tied in therewith. The first of these prophecies reaches its focal point in the cutting off of Jesus Christ as our atoning sacrifice in the midst of the epochal seventieth week of the series, followed by His resurrection and ascension to the Father.

The second, and related or interlocked, prophecy compasses the first phase of Christ’s priestly ministry in heaven above after the sacrifice of Himself on earth. And its climax is reached with His entry upon the second and final phase of His heavenly ministry—the judgment phase, which is to end in the close of probation, the transcendent scenes of Christ’s Second Advent, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the translation of the righteous living, the cutting off of the wicked, the binding of Satan, and the great millennial period. And from thence it leads on to the final destruction of all evil and the restoration of all righteousness, with the new heaven and earth forevermore.

That is the essence of all prophecy, with Christ as the central figure, who should ever be kept foremost in all our study and exposition of prophecy. The sequence of nations, the persecution of the church, the ascendancy of ecclesiastical apostasy, the time of its dominance, and numerous other related features are simply way marks along the grand highway of redemption.

And so the great truths of prophecy, unfolding like the dawn, have steadily advanced. And they will become more and more brilliant as this movement approaches its destined climax. And the reason for it all is specifically given by the Spirit of prophecy: “Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole.” [100]

The outshining radiance of Christ, our righteousness, will be brought as never before into the final phase of the preaching of the third angel's message. That is applied righteousness by faith, which will become increasingly the center and throbbing heart of the threefold message, without the diminution of one iota of our distinctive warning message for the world. It is this that will illuminate our final witness.

Prophecy's Place in the Final Scenes

We are assured that the intensive, reverent, and loyal study of prophecy will bring tremendous rewards and imperative advances. We are told that it will bring most tangible results. Observe these vital statements on the relation of prophecy to the welfare of the church:

"Let not the solemn scenes, that prophecy has revealed are soon to take place, be left untouched. If our people were awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed by John, such a reformation would be made in our churches that many more would believe our message. Advance new principles, and crowd in clear-cut truth." [101]

That is clearly a reformation resulting in increased soul winning. Note again:

"There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. When we as a people understand what this book [the Revelation] means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival." [102]

We are all aware of the genuine revival and reformation insistently called for in the Spirit of prophecy writings. Consecrated study-a deeper and more spiritual delving into the prophecies-will help to bring about just such a revival. Again we read, "When the books of Daniel and the Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. [103]

Does not the solemn importance of the matters that we are considering become increasingly clear?

Note once more:

"Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God will bring from the books of Daniel and Revelation truth that is inspired by the Holy Spirit. They will start into action forces that cannot be repressed. The lips of children will be opened to proclaim the mysteries that have been hidden from the minds of men." [104] (Italics supplied.)

Study the prophecies anew, we are solemnly admonished, and use them wisely to the maximum of their power. God speed the day! We need to take these entreaties most seriously to heart. Fellow workers, this is the day of the listening ear, the day of the inquiring lip, the day of the receptive heart. This is the day that calls for new approaches commensurate with the hour, for new techniques adequate for the time, for new skills and labors adapted to these challenging opportunities, and for new approaches and appeals. This calls for a new candor concerning the heart of the Adventist mission and message. It involves a new approach to mankind, with emphasis on Christ as the radiant center of all, and righteousness by faith as the glowing heart of the third angel's message the "third angel's message in verity." And best of all, it involves new results.

All this calls for a material strengthening of our presentations. We have been too apologetic, too timid, too cringing. We have too often hidden our name and our witness. But the spirit of inquiry is abroad in the land. Distraught men want to know what Seventh-day Adventists have to say concerning this dark hour and the troubled future. Brethren, we should be ready with the answer whenever the opportunity presents itself. Yea, more; we should wisely create opportunities. We should be tactfully aggressive. We must not fall God in these tremendous times.

Differentiate Between Fundamentals and The Inconsequential

We are to put prophetic things first, and keep secondaries in their subordinate place. There is a commonly recognized - as well as a Spirit-of-prophecy-designated group of primaries, fundamentals, essentials, or centralities that constitutes the essence of Adventism. If we believe in and adhere to these fundamentals, we are truly Adventist. If we do not so believe, we are not truly Adventist-no matter what we may believe about secondary items. And upon these primaries we are, and will continue to be, united.

But there are, on the periphery, many secondaries or nonessentials over which there have ever been, and will doubtless continue to be, honest and legitimate differences of opinion. But we are to be judged by our loyalty and adherence to the fundamentals, not inconsequential. We have no right to judge one's fundamental allegiance to this message by his view on some secondary matters.

On essentials there must be unity. On nonessentials, and upon many details, there should ever be charity and liberty. It was thus with our pioneers. Our difficulties today arise when we confuse these two categories, and place a secondary in a primary place, agitate concerning it, cause division over it, and judge our brethren by a self-chosen, arbitrary measuring rod of orthodoxy on such minor

items. Let us concentrate on the great fundamentals of prophecy. We shall then be so fully engaged with primary matters that we shall have scant time for the minor minutiae that have little effect upon our happiness, and still less upon our salvation. Let its preserve a wholesome balance and maintain a Clear differentiation. Let its confirm and emphasize the verities of the Advent faith, and not speculate and debate upon the moot points, or press upon dubious areas.

“We are not to permit our minds to be diverted by minutiae that practically amount to nothing. If our brethren would consider the important matters pertaining to eternal life and eternal death, many of the smaller matters that they desire so much to adjust, would adjust them selves.” [105]

The Fundamentals Clearly Defined

Prophecy, in its larger aspects, should have an increasingly greater place in our colleges, our Seminary, our preaching, our teaching, and above all in our personal study. But in it all we are to emphasize the Christ-centered fundamentals. Around the fringe, in these many inconsequentials, let its avoid making issues of minor matters, or dogmatizing upon such items as have often times brought division or acrimony into the church. Let its never forget that the real landmarks, the actual fundamentals, are relatively simple and few in number-but basic. And these are clearly pictured for its in Counsels To Writers And Editors:

“The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and liming decided relation to God’s people upon the earth; [also] the first and second angels’ messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, ‘The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.’ One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God seen by His truth loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God’s law. The non immortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks.” [106]

And this inspired counsel, it might be added, was given when men in a former Bible Conference had been greatly agitated as to whether the Huns or the Alamanni constituted one of the ten horns of Rome’s division. And the protagonists of the two positions were so worked up over this minor issue that when one would meet another on the street, he might ask, “Are you a Hun or an Alamanni?” Mrs. White rebuked “this slight difference of ideas” that was allowed “to unsettle the faith, to cause apostasy, to break up unity, to sow discord.” That is wise counsel that should ever be heeded.

Designated Place in Transmission Line

We have seen how that portion of the book of Daniel pertaining to and sealed until the last days [107] was largely reserved for understanding until the early nineteenth century. The problem of its interpretation involved the precise relationship of the seventy weeks to the 2300 years, in order that the exact beginning and ending of the 2300, and, consequently, the transcendent events to take place at their close, might be calculated. But the background for this calculation has been a gradual, progressive build-up of sound interpretative principles covering the past two thousand years. The history of prophetic exposition is really the tracing of the reverent outreach of man after sound and accurate interpretation, and the right application of true prophetic principles. It was limited and faulty at first, but progressive and corrective in development, and has led on to the fuller light of today.

Our position at this time may be described as the logical and inevitable consummation of this progressive unfolding of prophetic interpretation, perceived as fast and as far as history has clearly fulfilled prophecy. We are thus tied inextricably into, and are dependent upon, the true interpretation of the stalwarts of the centuries past. We consequently find ourselves to be their legitimate inheritors and virtually the only expositors, at this time, of this majestic line of prophetic exposition covering the entire Christian Era.

The greatest and most reverent students of prophecy of the past-Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant - are therefore our spiritual ancestors or forefathers in this unique line of unfolding exposition. Ours is the consummation of the prophetic faith of these illustrious spiritual forerunners, recovered and retained, perfected and completed, and fitted to meet the needs and expectations of time’s last hour. These are the “foundations of many generations,” as we have seen, which we, as restorers of the Sabbath, have been commissioned to raise up in these latter times.

That is our relationship to the past. And it is a position of strength, yes, of invulnerability. Men cannot scoff at our positions without scoffing, perforce, at the greatest and most godly scholarship of all past time in this field. They cannot repudiate these prophetic truths without repudiating the teachings of their own founding fathers. This they are beginning to see. And that undercuts the entire platform of valid criticism. This very situation stops the sneers of those inclined to ridicule and make sport of so-called new and strange positions invented by modern upstarts.

May I press the point that this places us in a highly favorable position, where disdain is steadily changing to wholesome respect. This acknowledgment may be reluctant with some, but with others it is confessed with admiration. Such a readjustment of the situation

changes our whole relationship to the modern religious world. Men are forced to acknowledge that we are respectable Christians, not a freakish cult or sect, and that in prophetic interpretation we, rather than they, are the really orthodox.

More and more we are coming to be rightfully recognized as a bona fide Christian body or denomination, not an erratic, illiterate offshoot. This has recast our position with many. Our status is being steadily changed, as thoughtful, fair minded men have come to understand our unique position in the Christian world today. It is we, not they, who have picked up the fallen torch of prophetic interpretation from the hands of the preoccupied post-Reformation leaders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is we, not they, who are now carrying on.

We should be keenly conscious of our rightful place. God designs that His people today, like Israel of old, shall be “the head, and not the tail.” (Deuteronomy 28:13) in the heralding of prophetic truth.

We should be recognized as standing out in front, at the head of the line, sharing light and understanding with others, and changing the darkened pathway of history into the luminous highway of prophecy.

Following the Blueprint Brings Results

The gathering up of the gems of prophetic truth that have lain scattered through the accumulated rubbish of error over the centuries, and the resetting of them in the framework of the “everlasting gospel,” so they will meet “the wants of the minds and hearts of fallen men who could not be reached by any other agency,” is already being richly rewarded. And it is only beginning. This work, I believe with all my heart, has been done in the timing and providence of God, so there might come into our hands a special means of appeal and evidence that would reach men who could be touched only by that approach.

As to the results of following such a Spirit-of-prophecy designated course, the publication of these substantial findings on the real ancestry of our prophetic interpretation is already having its effect on scholars in the religious and educational fields. They are changing from disdain and deprecation to respect for Seventh-day Adventist positions. Various letters tell of what these findings are coming to mean to them, and express their indebtedness to Seventh-day Adventists.

Such have come to believe that we have a rightful place in the Christian church, instead of belonging in the category of the cults and strange sects, to which we have usually been assigned. A new day has assuredly dawned when religious leaders come to recognize that Seventh-day Adventists are not a narrow, peculiar little sect in the rising religions tide of these latter times, but have a rightful place in God’s great line of Christian churches. A number of these men have gone on record to the effect that Seventh-day Adventists have made a contribution to the Christian church at large that no one else has ever attempted, and all Christendom is indebted to them.

A profound change is taking place in the minds of various prominent editors, writers, and teachers. Remarkable book reviews have appeared not only in the United States and Canada but in Britain. Many of these reviewers are changing from the erstwhile antagonism to wholesome appreciation. This is quite natural and understandable. For if they challenge the fundamental positions that we hold on prophecy, they are thereby challenging and repudiating the positions of their own founding fathers. Ours is a heritage springing alike from Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant sources. And that very fact gives us a many-sided advantage, for we can call upon each group to witness to the historical soundness and supporting testimony of this past scholarship.

Note a few tangible results. A year ago a prominent educator, head of a department in an Ohio college, wrote that he was producing a new book, to be called *The American Church*. It would deal with the solid, substantial, evangelical bodies in America, with each denominational sketch prepared by a representative of the respective denomination. He had already brought out a previous volume dealing with the Pentecostals, Latter Day Saints, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Salvation Army, and the like. But now he wanted to present the substantial group—the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Reformed, Episcopalians, et cetera. And he asked that a chapter of some twenty pages be written with documentation and bibliography that would set forth the beliefs, history, church polity, and present activities of Seventh-day Adventists. This was prepared and accepted, and is coming out this winter. And the volume, mark you, is confined to the strong, leading, respected churches—with Seventh-day Adventists assigned their rightful place therein.

Again, through the reading of these volumes on prophetic interpretation several editors of major encyclopedias, religious and secular, have come to accept articles on the history, beliefs, and work of Seventh-day Adventists that give a true picture. In other instances, misleading and distorted statements concerning Adventists, appearing in previous editions have been rectified. Surely the Lord is working in behalf of His church in this way.

I am persuaded that ten years ago such things would have been unthinkable. I do not believe they could have happened at that time. Back before the first world war the modernist preachers were complacent and set in their belief that the world was on the verge of the millennium, with the dawn of eternal peace just ahead. Then came World War I, the shock of which rocked them back on their heels. But they found their way out of the dilemma with the plausible explanation that it had been “the war to end all wars.” We now stand at

the dawn of perpetual peace, they confidently asserted. But World War II broke forth. And again their complacency was tremendously shaken and their confidence in their own theories fatally undermined. Man after man began to say, "We have been mistaken." Now some of these men are beginning to inquire,

"What do you Adventists have to say about these troubled times? And what of the future? What do you understand Bible prophecy to indicate?"

It is sobering but inspiring to get letters like one from the president of a Baptist seminary in Canada—a man who had been so prejudiced that he would not appear on the same platform with an Adventist in a temperance rally a few years ago, and yet is now giving three full pages in his journal to commending and publicizing these Adventist volumes on prophecy, and also writing editorials on the Antichrist, molded by the evidence presented.

Another letter, from the head of the department of history of a great university, bears a handwritten "T. S." at the close, stating that he has "channels" through which he can be of help to us. And he has been. Still another, from one of the leading Bible teachers of America, tells of learning that a leading religious journal was planning to bring out an anti-Adventist number. He wrote me that, upon learning about it, he wrote to the editor and said, "Keep your hands off the Seventh-day Adventists. They are Christians. Don't touch them." And the proposed issue did not appear.

Such incidents could be continued at length, but time and space forbid. Some of these men, my fellow workers, are proving to be friends indeed, and behind the scenes they are lifting their voices in our behalf. I firmly believe that some such men, as we are assured in those penetrating Spirit of prophecy statements, will yet take their stand by our side in the crisis hour of earth's last movements. And this better approach on prophetic interpretation is doing its allotted part, just as predicted. We never make a mistake when we follow the blueprint.

To Reach the Neglected Upper Classes

In pondering these matters I am led to think of the challenges brought before us by the Spirit of prophecy concerning certain neglected upper classes—groups who have heretofore not had adequate opportunity to hear God's message for today or to know what we really believe. In our opening study we noted how we are destined to come out of obscurity into the spotlight of scrutiny and investigation, where the world's great men will search us through and through. And we are warned that if we are not confirmed and established, if we are not thorough Bible students, "the wisdom of the world's great men will be too much for us. [108] A paralleling statement is that "the wisdom of the world's great men will lead us astray." [109] We are admonished that our ministry should be far in advance of the position that is occupied today, and that now, when the time has come for men to spring into action, "they have the preparation to make." [110] How tragic!

We need to sense God's solicitous concern over these neglected "higher ranks of society." We are told that He "will add to the ranks of His people men of ability and influence who are to act their part in the warning of the world." [111] We are not to be content merely to bear our warning witness to them. Some of these men are yet to respond and link arms with us in the march to the kingdom, and join in the final heralding of the message. We must not forget the Protestant ministry, the professional men, and others of prominence. Hear this:

"We have a work to do for the ministers of other churches. God wants them to be saved. We must labor for them earnestly. The call to be given 'in the highways,' is to be proclaimed to all who have an active part in the world's work, to the teachers and leaders of the people." [112]

And catch this further elucidation: "Those who bear heavy responsibilities in public life—physicians and teachers, lawyers and judges, public officers and businessmen—should be given a clear, distinct message." [113]

This is a clear mandate. Here is an inescapable commission in our preaching blueprint. We have neglected this partly because we have not known how to labor for these classes. We are also to bear this in mind: Leaders are to be sought out with tender affection and brotherly regard."

"Men in business life, in high positions of trust, men with large inventive faculties and scientific insight, men of genius, teachers of the gospel whose minds have not been called to the special truths for this time, these should be the first to hear the call. To them the invitation must be given." [114]

Too often we have reversed matters and made an unfortunate approach to a community. We have all too frequently pitched our tent or established our church on the wrong side of the railroad track. We have pulled against the tide, and labored under the handicap of prejudice, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation. These mistakes should not be perpetuated. We should go out into the highways,

Mrs. White urges, as well as into the byways and the hedges.” [115] Even some of the rulers, we are told, will respond, and will stand with us in the hour of crisis. The picture that is brought before us by the Spirit of prophecy is truly amazing.

Some of the “rulers,” the same counsels tell its, whom Satan now “controls” - for “God has His agents, even among the rulers” will yet be converted to the truth. At the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble.” [116] Think of it! Rulers, among others of prominence and some of these former enemies, Joining the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists. Yes, even former persecutors. Do we dare believe it? Brethren, I am just simple hearted enough to believe that when the Lord’s messenger to the Advent people has thus spoken, we shall see these very things fulfilled. God help its to rise to His expectation for such an hour. And here is essential counsel on the method of approach:

“Here are some who are specially fitted to work for the higher classes. Let those who work for the higher classes bear themselves with true dignity. We must become exponents of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, by which our own sins have been forgiven. Only then can we reach the higher classes.” [117] (Italics supplied.)

That has been our weakness and our lack. The fundamental emphasis indicated in this blessed counsel is that Christ is to be made foremost in our every approach-Christ exalted in every sermon, every song, every prayer, in clear, winsome, present-truth setting and urgency. This is the priceless secret of access to the hearts of these neglected classes, some of whom have been tunder the impression that we are not even Christians, but just some legalistic sect. And all too often, in our anxiety for immediate decision on the law and the Sabbath, we have occasioned these misunderstandings and created our own difficulties. But observe:

“The greatest men of earth are not beyond the power of a wonderworking God. God will convert men who occupy responsible places, men of intellect and influence. Time and money will be consecrated to God, means will be brought into His treasury, talent and influence will be converted to the truth, and new efficiency and power will be added to the church.” [118]

“Some who were once enemies will become valuable helpers, advancing the work with their means and their influence.” [119] “Sometimes hearts of the persecutors are susceptible of divine impressions, just as was the heart of the apostle Paul.” [120]

Thank God for these marvelous assurances. This movement is not going to close in obscurity in a corner, but in the open in a blaze of glory. It is my profound conviction that the majority of God’s children are still in the churches of Babylon, mother and daughters. But under the power of the loud cry thousands in a day will heed the call and will come out, and there will be one fold and one Shepherd. That is our hope and our goal. Every consecrated effort should be bent to that end. And prophecy is to play its vital part.

The Time and the Call to Advance

A little more than a century has now passed since 1848, and we are again in a Bible Conference-some 450 of us in 1952. The time has fully come for a definite advance’ a forward move, a mighty expansion, with corresponding spiritual power to possess and accompany us. Here is God’s message to this people for this hour, as recorded in Isaiah 54:

“Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shall break forth on the right hand and on the left. Fear not; for thou shall not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded. For thy Maker is your husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.” “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, said the Lord that has mercy on thee.” “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.” Verses 2-5, 10, 17.

It is wonderfully comforting to have the consciousness of the distinct guidance of God behind us and the assurance of His leading providence going on before us. We now need greatly to enlarge our vision and definitely strengthen our stakes. God wants us to be the pre-eminent preachers and teachers of Christ in all the World. He wants us to be the foremost exponents of true and full righteousness by faith anywhere on this globe. He desires us to be the foremost expositors of Christ-centered prophecy to be found anywhere among men. And in and through it all He wishes us to be the pre-eminent preachers of the everlasting gospel among all heralds of the gospel.

Men should turn instinctively to us to find Christ and His message for men in this final crisis hour of human history. We must not fail the expectation of our God, or of the world, in this time of tremendous opportunity and responsibility. In all things He desires us to be the head and not the tail, to be in the front of the battle, and not in the rear. And the sure word of prophecy is to be kept in the forefront as never before, as the foundation and authorization of our faith:

“Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which takes

away the sin of the world. ' Let our ministers and teachers explain these prophecies. Let them leave out of their discourses matters of minor consequence, and present the truths that will decide the destiny of souls.' [121]

Never should the saving gospel be separated from the majestic prophecies of the Word.

Rising to the Challenge of God's Expectation

Now is the time for us to spring into action. Now is the time for us to "arise, shine," and to enter increasingly into our rightful place of vantage. This is the time to lengthen our cords, to strengthen our stakes, and to break out on the right hand and on the left. This is the time to let this old world know that there is a movement on earth that represents the voice of God in these latter times. Ours is not a strange wild cry, but a guiding voice in the wilderness of these modern times of despair, that is carrying forward God's message of the centuries. Through its, men are to hear the faithful witness of the past. Ours are the hands that must raise up the foundations of many generations, that must revive the apostolic teachings and restore the Protestant Reformation positions. Yea, more, through us they are carried on to consummation.

I call upon this Bible Conference to rise to the challenge of God, to new standards brought before its, to new heights of ministry, to new heights of fidelity to the Lord, and to a new emphasis upon the great centralities of our faith. Let us be done with minor and moot questions that sometimes obsess the minds of men for months and years on end and become their great disconcerting burden. Mrs. White counsels us to put those divisive things away and concentrate on the great centralities. Then our time, our minds, and our hearts will be so filled with the greater things of the kingdom of God and the consummation of the great controversy that we shall have no time or interest in the lesser matters.

As we have seen, in the mind and plan of God the clear principles and applications of prophetic interpretation that have been built up through the centuries are to come to their peak of consummation in these latter days. But in connection with such emphasis we are as never before to uplift the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. We are to dwell upon His spotless righteousness, which will clothe its completely, covering the sins of the past and imparting to us the very righteousness of Christ for triumphant daily living, and which will carry us through the coming time of trouble when we must stand without a mediator during the final hour of test.

We Must Not Fail God in Time's Last Hour

In closing I would submit that there is but one valid reason and satisfying explanation for our existence today-that the hour for the proclamation of a great prophetic truth had come. And with the coming of the hour the requisite heralds appeared, in accordance with God's uniform pattern of operation throughout the centuries. This it was that a movement was born; and the hand of God was manifestly in its establishment, its up building, and its direction. It is wonderfully comforting to know that when the hour comes for a vital message to be given, God sends forth His Spirit and lays His hand, as it were, upon the shoulders of men widely scattered throughout the various countries of Christendom-and they respond and declare His message.

The background for our witness to the world has been logical and progressive, and is inescapable. Ours is the inevitable climax of two thousand years of unfolding prophecy and steadily increasing perception of its trite intent. Remember that each major feature in the great outline prophecies was perceived as it came to pass. And each vital time period was recognized when men were living therein, or as its time of terminus was approaching. And each step has been logically progressive and unassailable.

The case for this final phase of prophecy, buttressed by two thousand years of background and build-up, therefore becomes unanswerable and unassailable when studied in the light of evidence and of reason. It is the product of "many generations" of the conspicuous scholarship of the centuries. It sweeps in every loyal religious group in its illustrious background. It is not the invention of some modern upstart sect. Instead, it is the outgrowth of the Christian church as a whole, and is the product of the reverent scholarship of the entire Christian Era. If others now refuse to accept the message due, they thereby repudiate the fundamental principles of sound, historical, prophetic interpretation, handed down through the centuries-the year-day principle, for example, first enunciated by Jewish and early Christian scholars, then carried forward by medieval Jews and Renaissance and pre Reformation leaders, and finally restored to prominence by all Reformation and post-Reformation groups, and transmitted to the New World as well.

But men turned aside from all this to adopt a specious postmillennialism, and belatedly laid hold of a Jesuit-spawned Futurism and Preterism that have deflected the exposition of the two major wings of Protestantism. But when the witness of Protestantism at large fails, God must perforce call out a people from the various Protestant churches and form a special remnant church of His own, having the full faith of Jesus and keeping all the commandments of God. And that, comrades in service, is precisely why we are here. That, I reaffirm, is the reason for our existence. We are here in direct response to the call and commission of God. That is the source of authority and of our authorizing credentials. Such is our heavenly mandate and mission.

If we stand alone, if we seem odd and different, it is because others have turned away from the founding platform of their forefathers. If we seem isolated, it is because they have repudiated the true prophetic principles of the church and the sound prophetic platform built up over the centuries. It is clearly because such organizations now refuse to hear the summons of God to give the trumpet the certain sound that He designs for this hour, that we have been called into being. His message must be given, and His call should ever be vividly in our consciousness.

So' irrespective of others, here we stand, God helping us. We cannot do otherwise. If others refuse to speak forth the message of God, we cannot and will not fail Him in this tremendous hour. That is the soundness, the orthodoxy, the logic, and the glory of our position. And in thus walking in the light, we are the most favored people in all the world today.

15. The Imminence Of Christ's Second Coming

Arthur S. Maxwell

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has great recompense of reward. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:35-37.

Introduction

In the three periods allotted to the study of this highly important theme we shall consider it under the following headings:

1. Adventists and the Advent
2. Ten Great Signs of Christ's Soon Coming
3. The Final Frontiers of Prophecy

Under (1) we shall deal with the opinions and attitudes of Adventists past and present toward the imminence of Christ's return. Under (2) we plan to present, as the title suggests, the current evidences of the nearness of this event; and under (3) we shall consider those parts of the prophetic word that still require fulfillment before our Lord can come.

Definition

To avoid misunderstanding as to what we mean by “The Imminence of Christ's Second Coming,- we define the terms as follows:

By Christ we mean the Son of God, who in the ever mysterious and ever-wonderful incarnation, came from heaven as a babe to Bethlehem; who lived in this evil world without sin, revealing the perfect character and infinite love of God throughout His earthly sojourn. Who died on Calvary for man's redemption, rose from the tomb to demonstrate His lordship over death, and ascended to the right hand of the Eternal Father to be the mediator of His people.

By Second Coming we mean the literal, personal, visible, audible, and incomparably glorious return of “this same Jesus.” That the Christ of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Gethsemane, Golgotha, and Olivet will be seen by human eyes descending from heaven with a retinue of holy angels, amid splendor and pageantry befitting His triumphant reappearance as King of kings and Lord of lords.

By imminent we mean near, close at hand, or, as Webster defines the word, “Threatening to occur immediately; near at hand; overhanging; impending, as in an ‘impending storm.’ ” “ We use it because it suggests both indefiniteness and urgency. It enables us to avoid the charge of time setting and yet declare with conviction that “he is near, even at the doors.”

Importance

The importance of the Second Advent doctrine to Seventh day Adventists cannot be overemphasized. It is in very truth a life-or-death matter to our movement.

Seventh-day Adventists are irrevocably committed to belief in, and proclamation of, the imminent Second Coming of Christ. Should we for any reason whatever repudiate this truth, or cease to proclaim it with sincerity, we would destroy ourselves. Openly or secretly to deny the nearness of our Lord's return would be to invite the disintegration of our cause.

The great Second Advent movement was founded upon the conviction, resolutely and uncompromisingly held by our pioneers, that the long-anticipated return of Christ was near at hand. Without this conviction there would have been no Seventh-day Adventists or any Seventh-day Adventist movement.

In other words, we were Adventists before we had any organization. We were Adventists before we owned any property. We were Adventists before we adopted the tithing system. We were Adventists before we had anything to do with food reform, or dress reform, or any other reform.

Belief in the imminent second coming of Christ is the reason for, and basis of, our existence; our raison as our French brethren would say. If we do not believe that Christ's Second Coming is nigh at hand, we do not belong to the Advent movement. Furthermore, if we no longer hold this belief we have no business here today.

It was a deep-rooted, unshakable conviction that Christ was soon coming that inspired our pioneers to embark on their incredible global program, sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, sacrificing their substance to build mission stations, hospitals, dispensaries, sanitariums, schools, academies, colleges, publishing houses, administrative buildings. An amazing array of institutions on all the continents and islands of the world.

True, love for the lost was a mighty factor in the accomplishment of this colossal undertaking. So was sympathy for the poor and needy; so was a yearning to help the helpless, raise the fallen, and bring light to those in darkness and the shadow of death. But belief in the imminence of Christ's Second Coming was the spark that fired the engine of this vast missionary enterprise. In every heart dwelt the conviction that there was but a short time for the work to be done; that it must be accomplished here and now, in fulfillment of prophecy, before time should run out.

This fundamental link between what we have and what our pioneers believed should never be forgotten. Every building we own, though bearing no visible name, is stamped with the invisible inscription, "This was built by men who believed in the soon coming of Jesus." Every student in our colleges, every employee in our publishing houses, every nurse in our sanitariums, should realize that the buildings in which they labor and learn are a product of the Advent movement, an outgrowth of the Advent faith. Without that faith these institutions would not exist and, mark it well, without it they cannot be sustained.

Urgency of Restudy

What is our attitude toward this fundamental doctrine today, one hundred and eight years after our founding? Do we believe it as sincerely as did our fathers? Most of us do, no doubt. Are we as zealous in its propagation as were they? Most of us are, I trust. However, more and more frequently the statement is heard that, while officially we stand where we stood, privately some have strayed far from our original position.

It was after profound study of the Scriptures that our pioneers were convinced that the coming of Jesus could not be much longer delayed. Even the disappointment of 1844 seemed to be only an added spur to their faith.

To them the Lord's return was their dearest desire, as it had been the blessed hope of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles down the ages. They stood with Job and said: "For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job 19:25.

They stood with David and cried: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." Psalm 50:3, 4.

They stood with Paul and declared: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

They stood with Peter and said: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.

They stood with John and declared: "Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Revelation 1:7.

They believed in the soon return of the Lord with a deep, abiding fervency. Listen to the hymns they sang!

"The Coming King Is at the Door" was composed by F. E. Belden in 1886. What eager anticipation is revealed in its chorus: "At the door, at the door, At the door, yes, even at the door; He is coming again, He is coming again, He is even at the door."

Then there was Belden's hymn, "We know not the hour of the Master's appearing; yet signs all foretell that the moment is nearing." And Annie R. Smith's haunting song, "Long Upon the Mountains," of which the last stanza runs:

"Soon He comes! with clouds descending;

All His saints, entombed, arise;

The redeemed, in anthems blending,

Shout their victory through the skies.

O, we long for Your appearing;

Come, O Savior, quickly come!

Blessed hope! Our spirits cheering

Take Thy ransomed children home."

And how can we forget her lovely hymn, "How Far From Home?" of which the last stanza runs:

"Not far from home! O blessed thought!

The traveler's lonely heart to cheer,

Which oft a healing balm has brought,

And dried the mourner's tear."

What Our Pioneers Believed

That there may be no doubt as to what these founders of the great Second Advent movement taught regarding the imminence of Christ's Second Coming, we quote the following statements from denominational publications:

From the Review and Herald

In an article by James White:

"While some view the race improving, and rising almost to perfection, it is in fact sinking in darkness and becoming corrupt, ripening for the sickle of Him that is soon to put on the garments of vengeance, and ride forth upon the white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth." [1]

In the same article Elder White declared:

"Reader, this is our true position; Christ is at the door. Are you prepared to welcome Him? If you are not, delay not one hour. Make haste and get ready!" [2]

In an article on "The Day of the Lord," by G. W. Holt:

"The gospel day is almost over. The 6,000 years are nearly past. The great day of the Lord's wrath is near and hastens greatly. The glorious jubilee will soon begin. Reader, prepare to meet thy God." [3] In a short editorial on "Modern Phenomena of the Heavens," James White wrote:

"We may know that our Lord is coming, that He is near, and more, that He is 'even at the doors.' The judgment is upon you. Christ is coming; He is at the door. O, get ready to welcome the dear Savior." [4]

In an article on "Signs of the Times," G. W. Holt wrote:

"The pilgrims are about to leave this dreary wilderness, where they have so long journeyed, for a far better and a more healthful clime. Sell your poor farms in this barren waste, and buy one that is incorruptible and undefiled in the New Earth." [5]

In an article on "Peace and Safety," M. B. Smith wrote:

"Dear brethren, let us observe the many way-marks that God is giving us, to show us where we are in the world's history and may He help us all to be sober, and watch unto prayer, inasmuch as the end of all things is at hand." [6]

In an article entitled, "Truth," R. F. Cottrell wrote:

"The present truth is that God is now moving out a message, Revelation 14:9-12, by which to restore His down-trodden truth to all the remnant of His little flock, in order to prepare them for translation into His everlasting kingdom at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is near, even at the door." [7]

In an article on "Thoughts on the Second Advent of Christ," J. A. Smith wrote:

"That blessed day is near at hand. God's people are now waiting for the Lord." [8]

From the Signs of the Times

D. M. Canright wrote:

"The whole world seems to be ripe for some great revolution and all are looking for it with fear and dread. The Lord foretold this as a sign of the end. The winds are now only being held a little while till God's message may be given to the world." [9]

In an article on "Our Present Position," James White wrote:

"The great prophetic times of Daniel and John have served their purpose in bringing us to this position at this time. But they have terminated. The signs of the end, in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, have appeared. A world is to be warned of swiftly approaching destruction, when a vast work is to be accomplished in a very short period." [10]

James White wrote regarding the day of Christ's return:

"Most dreadful day! And is it near? Yes; it hastens It hastens greatly!" [11]

From the Writings of Ellen G. White

"I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over." [12]

"My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, 'Get ready! Get ready! Get ready! For the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come.'" [13]

"The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master's return. There remains but a little period of watching now. The coming of the morning is right upon us." [14]

"The day of God is hastening on." [15]

"Our ministers are not doing their whole duty. The attention of the people should be called to the momentous event which is so near at hand. Time is drawing to a close. Eternity is near." [16]

"The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor." [17]

"We are near the close of time. I have been shown that the retributive judgments of God are already in the land." [18]

"The day of God's vengeance is just upon us." [19]

"All heaven is astir. The judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority." [20]

"Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted." [21]

“The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are now taking place before our eyes.” [22]

“The return of Christ to our world will not be long delayed. Let this be the keynote of every message.”

“The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven.

“It cannot now be said by the Lord’s servants, as it was by the prophet Daniel: ‘The time appointed was long.’ Daniel 10:1. It is now but a short time till the witnesses for God will have done their work in preparing the way of the Lord.”

“Our time is precious. We have but few, very few days of probation in which to make ready for the future, immortal life.”

“The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed [by men of science] to any other than the true cause.” [23]

“We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.” [24]

“Go to your rest at night with every sin confessed. Thus we did when in 1844 we expected to meet our Lord. And now this great event is nearer than when we first believed.” [25]

“Let every human intelligence who professes the name of Christ testify: ‘The end of all things is at hand: prepare to meet thy God.’ The Lord is coming very soon.” [26]

“The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly.” [27]

“Soon there is to be trouble all over the world. We have no time to delay. With earnestness and fervor the message must be given.” [28]

An Overpowering Conviction

Space forbids the quoting of all the innumerable similar statements to be found throughout the writings of the founders of the great Second Advent movement. I have quoted sufficient to reveal the fact that belief in the imminence of Christ’s Second Coming was an overpowering conviction among them. What they wrote is on public record. We dare not repudiate it. To suggest that they did not mean what they said, or that they changed their minds, or that they were wrong in their estimate of the significance of the prophecies, would be to place our whole cause in jeopardy. If we should now begin trying to explain away these definite, forthright, unequivocal declarations, we would destroy ourselves and become the laughingstock of the world.

These men and women were great Bible students’ mighty in the Scriptures, as anyone who takes the trouble to read their writings will readily admit; and it was from a diligent study of the Word, and in particular of the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, that they drew their deep certainty that the coming of the Lord was at hand.

Well might some of us today turn back the pages of our denominational literature and examine the powerful presentation of the Second Advent message in sermon and Bible study by the now-sleeping leaders of our cause. They knew what they believed, and why. They had a solid foundation under their faith. Invincible in debate, they produced chapter and verse to support every position they took.

Anchored to Prophecy

The Second Advent movement that we represent today is not just another temporary upsurge of interest in Christ’s Second Coming, like others that have occurred from time to time throughout the centuries of the Christian Era. It is true that there have been several Advent movements in times past. But never one like that which began in 1844 and has lasted till today. And the difference? This last and greatest of all the Advent movements is anchored to a time prophecy the beginning and end of which are known.

The great Second Advent movement of our time is founded not only upon all the great prophecies referring to our Lord’s return, but in particular upon the prophecy of the 2300 days in the eighth and ninth chapters of the book of Daniel. Unless we have been lamentably misled, that prophetic period most certainly ended in the year 1844, with the divine pronouncement, “The hour of his judgment is come.

This, I repeat, is the sheet anchor of our cause. It is this that precludes any possibility that we may represent just another Advent movement which, given time enough, will melt away and be forgotten. How vital this prophecy is to our entire denominational structure may be seen from these words of James White:

“If the vision did not speak in the autumn of 1844, then it never spoke, and never can speak. It was then as clear as the noon-day sun, that all the evidence that was brought to prove that the 2300 days would end in 1843, proved that they would end in the fall of 1844. We believe that the appointed time did not tarry, that the vision did speak in 1844, and that the time for cleansing the Sanctuary then came.” [29]

From the clear conviction of our pioneers, that this great prophecy met its fulfillment in 1844, sprang every other teaching that we have, every dollar of our resources, every building that we own. Today this same prophecy should give us full confidence that our pioneers were not misled, but ere long will be gloriously vindicated before all the world.

Tied to an Event

This being so, we are driven to the conclusion that our Lord’s return cannot be much longer delayed. It must now be apparent to all that our Lord Jesus Christ must come, and come soon. As no other Christian body in the world we are tied to an event. Therefore, if there is one people above another that should now be praying with unexampled earnestness, “Even so, Lord Jesus,” it is ourselves. Of all people we must not, dare not, permit ourselves to become careless or indifferent toward this sublime event that is now of such supreme importance to us and to the world. And of all people we should be making the most thorough spiritual preparation to meet Him face to face.

And may we not have confidence that our Lord will honor the faithful witness of His Advent people? They have espoused His cause, obeyed His will, expounded His prophecies, proclaimed His message. He cannot, He must not. He will not, let them down.

Ten Great Signs of His Coming

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, you see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise you, when you see these things come to pass, know you that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Luke 21:25-31.

I rejoice in the certainty of our Lord’s assurance. We are not to be left in doubt. We are to Know. And may a new certainty come into our hearts as we pursue our study this afternoon.

Introduction

In the first of these three studies on the imminence of Christ’s Second Coming we considered the vital importance of this doctrine to Seventh-day Adventists. It was the inspiration of the pioneers of the great Second Advent movement and should be the prime concern of all who claim to be promoting and supporting this cause today. We found that these Advent pioneers were moved by an overpowering conviction that the coming of Jesus was near, even at the doors. Their belief was based, not only upon the expiration of certain time prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation, but also upon the appearance in the world about them of conditions that seemed to fulfill various other Bible predictions describing the last days.

Before proceeding to consider the signs that confront us now, in the midst of the twentieth century, we should perhaps glance a little more particularly at the evidence available to our fathers in the faith a hundred years ago, or less. What sort of events impressed them as being signs of the times? The answer is most illuminating. We have space for but a few illustrations from the hundreds available.

Signs Our Fathers Saw

Listing many signs of Christ’s coming, James White referred to the “Lightning Train,” just introduced on the Rochester-New York run. This tram, he said, covered the 400 miles in eleven hours, and occasionally reached a speed of a mile a minute.” Mails move rapidly by the power of steam,” he wrote, “so that publications may be sent thousands of miles in a few days. The way, then, is prepared, and the prophecy is being fulfilled.” The prophecy he had in mind was Nahum 2:3,4.

In the same article Elder White quoted from the book of Job, “Can thou send lightning?” and went on to say, “The Magnetic Telegraph is here referred to, by which news is communicated hundreds of miles in a few seconds. These things are foretold signs of the coming of the Son of man, plainly fulfilled before their eyes.” [30]

In an article on current events in the light of prophecy, M. E. Cornell quoted 2 Timothy 3:4,5, pointing as fulfillment to “corruption and villainy” in high places, religious lotteries, gambling in fashionable churches, and, in particular, to a certain theatrical show in the San Jose, California, music hall. [31]

“At the Telegraph Office, Washington, on December 11, 1873, an experiment was carried out in the presence of Mr. Creswell, the Postmaster-General of the United States. On that occasion the President’s last annual message of 11,500 words was transmitted from Washington to New York, a distance of 290 miles, over a single wire, in 22. 50 minutes, the speed obtained being over 2,500 letters per minute. This is but one item out of thousands showing the wonderful increase of knowledge in this fast age.” [32]

In an article entitled ‘Increasing Foretokens of the End,’ reference was made to Matthew 24:14 and, by way of fulfillment, to the fact that the circulation of the Bible had reached 160,000,000 copies in 200 languages.

In the same article, dealing with “distress of nations,” there appeared the following comment:

“Every nation is revising its navy, its army, its weapons of offense and defense, expecting war paying the largest rewards to the men that will invent the most powerful and most destructive engines of war. There is not a king in Europe at this moment that has not his hand upon his sword-hilt.”

Farther on, this author wrote: “When war next comes, Trafalgar, Alexandria, the Nile, the Peninsula, Waterloo itself-nay, the Crimean war, will be but the battles of pygmies in comparison of the battles of Titans likely soon to be.” [33]

Similar quotations could be multiplied almost without number, from which the tremendous fact emerges that the pioneers of the great Second Advent movement built their globe-conquering, world-embracing plans upon what must seem to all of us today to have been very slender evidence. Yet it was not slender to them. Each happening, each event, was, in their estimation, a clear fulfillment of prophecy, a certain indication that the end of the world was approaching.

Were they mistaken? They were not. What they beheld were the first phases of an unfolding revelation; the first streaks of light before the dawn. The first muted notes before the grand orchestral music; the first scent of hay before the full, rich odor of the harvest field. They saw the bud, and we the flower. They heard the faint cry of far-off warning voices, and we the raucous shout of multitudes close at hand. They saw the gleam of distant beacons, and we the full glow at the harbor mouth.

An engineer crossing the western plains of North America sees but an occasional signal turning from red to green as he rolls along the vast, empty landscape. But as he draws near Chicago the lights increase. And the very multiplication of warning signals, if nothing else, tells him that his long journey is almost over.

So it is with the great Second Advent movement. Its pioneers from time to time saw evidences-meager enough, to be sure-that convinced them that the prophecies heralding the return of Jesus were being fulfilled. They knew that they were on the right track, and were moving in the right direction. But today, as signs thicken about us, more numerous, more brilliant, more startling than ever before, we who have our hands upon the throttle of the Advent engine cannot but know for a certainty that the task is almost finished and home is but a little way ahead.

If our pioneers could rise from their dusty beds today and see what we see-the global, earth-shaking developments that have grown out of the small, embryonic events they thought were signs of Christ’s coming seventy, eighty, one hundred years ago, they would beyond question move up and down these aisles seeking to shake us, individually, out of our lethargy, our indifference, our secret doubts and criticisms, crying, THIS IS IT! This is what we dreamed of! This is what we expected! The coming of Christ must now be almost here!

What are the great signs of our day? In what terms is God speaking to us? By what evidence would He convince His people now after the lapse of a hundred years that the end is approaching? The number of indications of the Second Coming of our Lord will vary from one individual to another. But we offer here ten indisputable signs which we believe should not only satisfy our own hearts as to the solemnity of the time in which we live, but also appeal to all men of good will as sound, unmistakable evidence that Christ’s Second Coming is at hand.

Signs of Our Times

These ten great signs we would classify under four main headings:

1. Material Preparations for the End: the Wild, Swift Pace of Modern Life.
2. Political Preparations for the End: the Confusion and Fear Among the Nations.

3. Social Preparations for the End: the Corruption and Decay of Humanity.

4. Religious Preparations for the End: the Final Conflict for the Soul of Man. We have listed these signs as “Preparations for the End” because, in our opinion, that is exactly what true signs always are. Each condition, or event, not only is indicative of the approach of the end, but plays some part in preparing mankind for the final consummation. Every true sign is also global, not necessarily in extent, but in that its meaning can be understood and appreciated by people of every nation under heaven.

Material Preparations for the End

Says prophecy: “Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4.

In the early days of the Advent movement our pioneers believed that this prediction was intended only to foreshadow the increasing understanding of the book of Daniel in the last days. But as years went by and they found themselves in the midst of an amazing increase of scientific knowledge and a host of dazzling, inventions, they began to see a new and wider meaning in this remarkable prophecy.

And what shall we say today as we behold all the marvelous developments of this twentieth century-atomic submarines, supersonic planes, and stratospheric rockets? What shall we say when confronted with the truly staggering advances in all methods of communication and transportation, all the marvelous discoveries in medicine, astronomy, and every other phase of human activity? Suddenly, after thousands of quiescent years, the floodgates of knowledge have been opened, and a tide of ideas, plans, and ambitions has poured into the human mind.

Faster and faster moves the pace of life; speed and still more speed is the demand of the hour. The fantasy of the magic carpet of the Arabian Nights has become a reality. Radio and television now bring the world to our door in a moment of time, and jet-propelled sky masters carry us to the remotest parts of the globe in a matter of hours.

On August 15, 1951, test pilot Bill Bridgeman attained a speed of 1,238 miles an hour in a U. S. Navy Skyrocket, the same plane which a week earlier had broken the altitude record at 79,494 feet-nearly sixteen miles high!

Recently Princess Margaret and her mother left England at 12:25 PM in a BOAC Comet jet Airliner, flew 1,850 miles over the Swiss Alps, Italy, and southern France, at a height of eight miles, and arrived back in England at 4:20 PM the same afternoon. Imagine the princess’ great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, taking such a trip!

One morning in August, 1952, three British airmen left Ireland after breakfast, flew to Newfoundland in a Canberra jet bomber and back to Ireland in time for supper.

In a truly remarkable way the world has shrunk to a fraction of its former size. Far-distant places have been drawn close together as though compressed by mysterious, omnipotent hands. All nations have become neighbors in reality, if not in spirit. Boundaries have been made ridiculous by the triumphs of radar, supersonic flight, and other discoveries in the realm of electrodynamics and aerodynamics.

Moving pictures made in California are seen around the world. Broadcasts originating in Moscow are heard simultaneously in London, Washington, and Calcutta. Atomic blasts in Siberia are registered immediately in a dozen listening posts thousands of miles away.

By means of the latest radio microphones one man can now speak to fifty million. By means of the latest printing presses he can speak to millions more. By means of television he may soon be both seen and

heard around the world.

Surely the hand of God has been in all these amazing material developments of our time. He has made it possible for His last message of mercy to be given with great swiftness to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

The material preparations for the end are well-nigh complete. More inventions may come, and will come: but more are not necessary to the speedy completion of God’s purposes.

Political Preparations for the End

Said Jesus: “There will be signs in sun, moon, and stars; and on earth anguish among the nations in their bewilderment. Men’s hearts are fainting for fear, and for anxious expectation of what is coming on the world.” Luke 21:25, 26, Weymouth.

Never at any time in history have these words fitted world conditions so exactly as they do today. Never before were all nations so filled with dismay and bewilderment.

Our pioneers thought in terms of the Napoleonic Wars, the Peninsular War, the Crimean War. But we have lived through two global wars which, in their cost, destruction, and human suffering, have exceeded all previous wars since man first lived upon the earth. We have seen great nations desolated and decimated, their cities, towns, and villages left in piles of rubble. We have seen thousands of ships-whole navies-sent to the bottom of the sea. We have seen unnumbered multitudes made destitute through the collapse of their currency, and multitudes more reduced to slavery by tyrannous conquerors.

As if this were not enough, we have witnessed the discovery of atomic power, the atomic bomb, and the hydrogen bomb. And by what has happened at Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Bikini, and Frenchman Flat, we know that man now has the power not only to destroy his civilization but also to wipe himself off this planet.

The race for armaments, which used to be a race for better bows and arrows, better rifles, longer-ranged naval guns, or bigger dreadnoughts, has become a race for atomic weapons, with nations stockpiling them at feverish speed.

One wonders what more evidence is needed to convince us that this prophecy of Jesus applies to our time and that the end of all things is at hand. Do we have to wait until the bombs fall, and the destruction comes upon us, before we shall be convinced?

It is of great significance that, while some Adventists are becoming more and more complacent about current trends, men of the world-statesmen, scientists, news commentators, and others-are expressing increasing concern about them.

When the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was first published in 1945, a clock appeared on its cover with the minute hand at eight minutes to midnight. In 1948, when it was learned that Russia possessed the atomic bomb, the minute hand was moved up to three minutes to midnight. The other day I wrote the editor, asking if there had been any change in his estimate of the gravity of the world situation.” None whatever,” he replied, in substance.” On the clock of time it is still three minutes to midnight.”

In recent weeks I have been in correspondence with many leading men in the United States on this subject and have been surprised at their willingness to express their personal opinion concerning the solemnity of the times.

Dr. Robert Gordon Sproul, president of the University of California, wrote me on April 23, 1952, as follows: “I still believe there isn’t much more time. In fact, there is four years and ten months less time now than when I spoke to Rotary [on this subject] in 1947.”

Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, associate director of the Ford Foundation, in a letter dated April 21, 1952, said, “I believe the world can explode at any minute and that the more powerful the governments of the world become the more the explosion is. Anything can happen anywhere at any time.”

One of the best-known and most reliable of news commentators, now working for the Voice of America, who requests to remain anonymous, wrote to say, ‘We still have only a short time to create a supranational organization to enforce total disarmament, if we are to avoid atomic war. And any war on a world scale will be atomic. And any atomic war will be lost by both sides.’”

On March 31, 1948, Henry Wallace said, “Time has run out; that is all there is to it.” The other day I wrote to ask him if he still believed as he did then. He replied by quoting an address he gave in Boston on April 27, 1952, in which he said, “The whole world is undergoing the most violent birth pangs as it strains, in this time of very great need, to bring forth the era of the General Welfare which was conceived by the prophets and religious leaders of old. It has been a long period of gestation but finally ‘time and space devouring’ science heralds the approach of the appointed time. If this child of the future is stillborn . . . we may expect rivers of blood running through mountains of misery as this century moves to its tragic close.”

Writing in The Christian Century of May 14, 1952, the editor of that journal said:

“Toynbee calls this a time of troubles. It is also a time of horror. And the depth of the horror is revealed by the fact that we are not horrified by what we are doing. We are learning to live complacently with our own adversary; that is the damnation which is overtaking us.” [34]

Thus the voices of doom are ringing out their warning concerning the lateness of the hour. These men of the world do not have the light of prophecy to guide them as Adventists claim to have, but one and all they have become deeply impressed that some tremendous catastrophe is approaching, and cannot be long delayed.

It is of no small interest to note that the Greek word *aporia* in Luke 21:25, translated “Perplexity” in the King James Version and “bewilderment” by Weymouth, has the suggestion of total frustration, as though the Lord said, There shall be distress of nations, with no way out.” Without a passage out” is the rendering in Young’s Analytical Concordance. No solution to problems. No relief for fears. No end to worries. Significantly, this is the only place in the New Testament where this particular word is to be found, and it is used by our Lord to depict the state of world affairs just before His return. Do we see such conditions today? We have but to think of the failure of the League of Nations and the similar fate hanging over the United Nations. Men striving their utmost to prevent oncoming disaster, and finding none. Men at the end of their tether, as H. G. Wells put it in the last book he wrote before he died. Men struggling to avoid the fate that is rushing upon them, but unable to do so. How true it is that today, in all the world, there is distress of nations, with no way out!

And in all this we see the political preparations for the end. Not only in the lining up of the nations for Armageddon, but in the revelation of man’s total incompetence to direct and govern himself. Again and again he has tried to bring in Utopia, but always in vain. Today he needs no further opportunity to demonstrate his utter ineptness, his total failure, and his desperate need for a divine Deliverer.

Social Preparations for the End

Said Jesus, “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” Luke 17:26. The days of Noah were evil days. The earth was “filled with violence.” Genesis 6:11. It was filled with cruelty and lust.” They took them wives of all which they chose.” Verse 2. Indeed, so wicked did men become that at last “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Verse 5.

Have we arrived at a similar period in world history? Are social conditions today comparable to those existing before the Flood? Let the facts speak for themselves.

Consider the violence of our time, as revealed in the global tragedies of World Wars I and II and the threatened terrors of World War III. Recall the barbarities perpetrated, not only upon the battlefield, but behind the lines, upon countless millions of civilians. Remember the massacres of Katyn and Lidice, the pogroms of Warsaw, Rovno, and Dubno, and countless others. Remember the revolting cruelties of Belsen and Buchenwald and the other concentration camps which dotted Europe for years and still defile it today.

Remember that there are more people living in slavery today than at any other time in history. Remember the terror inspired by secret police in all countries behind the iron and bamboo curtains. Remember the mass deportations and executions still going on. Then ask yourself whether the earth is “filled with violence” again.

Consider the mounting crime statistics-not in uncivilized lands, but where Christianity has been known and taught for decades and centuries. Think of the crowded prisons in America, filled largely with youth under twenty five years of age. Think of the recent revelation of lawlessness in high places, the graft, bribery, and corruption among men who should have been models of integrity and honor. Think of the spreading delinquency among children and their shocking acts of vandalism. Think of the enormous quantities of liquor being consumed and the consequent drunkenness and crime. Think of the craze for opium, heroin, and marijuana among youth and the fearful results upon their minds and bodies. Then ask yourself whether pre-Flood conditions are not now staring us in the face.

Consider the growing laxity on all moral issues, especially the increase of divorce, both in the world and in the church. To have a sequence of wives, described as consecutive polygamy, has become such routine procedure as to be commonplace. Notices of marriage now regularly include the number of previous experiences in matrimony both bride and bridegroom have had. How like is this to the course of those antediluvians who “took them wives of all which they chose”!

Consider also the most serious trend of all-the universal dissemination of ideas that lead to lawlessness. Incessantly, by the most potent avenues of education ever devised, there is being poured into the minds of youth and children a floodtide of evil thoughts. By radio, television, comic magazines, and smutty books and papers, there is being created a tolerance not only for liquor and tobacco, which would be bad enough, but for cruelty, lust, murder, and crime of every sort and description. With reckless unconcern the dispensers of all this wickedness are making certain that in the not-far distant future every imagination of the thoughts of men’s hearts shall be “only evil continually.”

What further evidence do we need that the words of Jesus are being fulfilled, and that the last days are upon us? History is repeating itself. The days of Noah have returned. Preparations for the end in the social life of the world are almost complete. Widespread decay and corruption demand the swift and final judgments of God.

Religious Preparations for the End

Significant as are the harbingers of Christ's soon coming in the material, political, and social phases of modern life, those in the realm of religion are even more important. Of the many that might be mentioned we have chosen seven.

1. The Wrath of the Dragon

Says prophecy: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time." "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:12, 17.

The archenemy of Christ has manifested himself in several disguises down the ages, notably as the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These prophetic terms are used to describe his malicious activities under paganism, Catholicism, and false Protestantism.

As the end approaches we should expect to see the wrath of the devil manifested through these same three agencies in a notably exacerbated form. The dragon spirit, always violently opposed to the cause and the people of God, was revealed in the pagan empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. But what shall be said of its reappearance in our day? Before our eyes there has formed, like some ghastly ghoulish nightmare, the most fearful and virulent form of paganism the world has ever seen.

As Whittaker Chambers has said in his book *The Witness*, this astonishing phenomenon is nothing but a new religion "or an old religion in a new form" which is being driven forward by the vision of man without God. The very deification of materialism, it is posing "the most revolutionary question in history: God or man?"

Spreading like the Black Death, this anti-God, anti-Christian movement has already seized upon and ensnared more than a third of the inhabitants of the globe. Using the most modern methods of propaganda, it seeks to undermine, and cause the disintegration of, every government that has not yet yielded to its wiles. And wherever its power is established there the light of truth, freedom, and every Christian teaching is stamped out.

Its triumph means the death of Christian missions, Christian schools, Christian hospitals; indeed, the followers of the faith must even denounce their Christian friends or suffer martyrdom.

If this is not an evidence of the wrath of the dragon, foretold to be seen and felt in these last days, what else is it?

2. The Rise of Papal Power in America

Says prophecy: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth. And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Revelation 13:11, 12.

It is not necessary to produce proof that the "beast," or nation, mentioned here is the United States, or that the "first beast," whose deadly wound was healed, has reference to the Papacy. These facts are generally acknowledged. What we need to remember is that the United States could never fulfill this prophecy unless there were to occur an important change in the balance of its religious life. Obviously an overwhelmingly Protestant America would never require anyone to pay special respect to the papal power. Only an America which had come in large measure under the control of the Catholic section of its population could act in this fashion.

Fifty years ago anyone suggesting that such an eventuality might occur would have been deemed mentally unsound or seriously disloyal. But what shall be said today, with more than one fifth of the population Catholic, and the hierarchy in virtual control of the press, the movies, the radio, and reaching for a strangle hold even on American education itself?

If anyone doubts the present power of Catholicism in America, let him read Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*.

"There is no doubt," says this author, "that the American Catholic hierarchy has entered the political arena, and that it is becoming more and more aggressive in extending the frontiers of Catholic authority into the fields of medicine, education and foreign policy. It tells Catholic doctors, nurses, judges, teachers and legislators what they can and cannot do in many of the controversial phases of their professional conduct. It uses the political power of some twenty-six million official American Catholics to bring American foreign policy into line with Vatican temporal interests." [35]

We are all acquainted with the efforts of the hierarchy to persuade the President of the United States to appoint an official ambassador to the Vatican. If this should ever happen, and if such an appointment should ever be approved by the Senate, it would be one of the most disastrous events in American history. It would mean that this country, for the first time, would have a preferred church in its midst, with access to the President, the State Department, and Government secrets denied to all other religious bodies. It would mean that a papal nuncio would be the dean of all ambassadors in Washington, working incessantly to bring United States politics,

education, finance, and religion into line with the policies of the Vatican. The very possibility that such a thing might happen presents the greatest threat to religious liberty ever to appear on the horizon of this freedom-loving land, and affords clear proof that the final events that shall fulfill this dramatic prophecy cannot be far distant.

3. Reunion of Protestantism

Says prophecy, "And deceives them that dwell on the earth saying to them that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Revelation 13:14.

It was the opinion of our pioneers that this passage had reference to a federation of the leading Protestant churches, which, when clothed with power by the state, would behave in a manner similar to that of the Papacy, and thus form an "image" to the "beast." They saw some slight indications that a reunion of the long-separated Protestant denominations might take place, but at most it was a highly problematical development when Uriah Smith wrote his Daniel and the Revelation. But what would these pioneers say today if they could see what we see? A National Council of Churches and a World Council of Churches. True, these bodies wield no special authority as yet. They would, at the moment, vehemently deny any aspirations to power, or any desire to persecute. Their leaders are for the most part men of vision and high principle, who seek only the good of Christendom. But these men will not always be in the positions of leadership. The organizations which they have so diligently formed could easily fall into less honorable hands. Someday, according to the prophecy, these organizations will link up with the "beast" in the final persecution of the true children of God.

Thus the reunion of the churches has become another of the great signs of our times, affording still further evidence that the long-predicted events of the last days are right upon us.

4. The Rise of Spiritualism

Says prophecy, "Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4: 1.

We are all aware of the enormous growth of spiritualism since the Rochester rapping of 1848, when the strange experiences of the Fox sisters set off the modern revival of this very ancient cult. Fostered by the terrible toll of death in two world wars and the understandable yearning of the bereaved to communicate with their departed loved ones, it has spread with incredible rapidity throughout the world. It boasts many "churches" as well as a "church" literature, and the number of its mediums purporting to link the living with the dead is legion.

What is new in this case is the fact that so many influential people have accepted the basic teachings of spiritualism as true. Early this year the long-kept secret of Mackenzie King's advocacy of spiritualism found its way into the press, together with the report that this famous prime minister of Canada actually consulted the spirits on matters of state. As the story unfolded it was revealed that many of his friends, holding responsible positions in England and the United States, were also practicing spiritualists. Startling as this information is, it is only what we might have expected in fulfillment of the words of this prophecy concerning the activities of "seducing spirits" in the "latter times."

In this connection mention should be made of the wide publicity now being given to supposedly supernatural occurrences. With increasing frequency we are told of the appearance of "balls of fire" in the heavens, of the sun turning blue or "dancing in the sky," and of mysterious appearances of the Virgin. It could well be that the mind of man is being conditioned for some great deception. Multitudes of unthinking people, ever ready to believe the miraculous, would be easy prey for some startling, spectacular hoax such as, for instance, the appearance of Satan himself as an angel of light, perhaps even impersonating Christ in one last bold and reckless attempt to lead the human race into rebellion against its Maker.

So late is the hour, and so great the danger from seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils,- we would all do well to make sure our faith is founded, not upon miracles, but solidly and foursquare upon the word of the living God.

5. The Proclamation of the Gospel

Said Jesus: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

Although it is true that the gospel was given to the Roman world in Paul's day, and to most of Europe in Luther's day, it is only in comparatively recent times that there has been a large-scale, concerted effort to bring about the fulfillment of this prophecy on a global scale.

With the expiration of the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and the beginning of “the time of the end,” there came upon history’s stage the modern missionary movement Christians of all denominations suddenly became imbued with unexampled zeal to carry the gospel to earth’s remotest bounds. Unnumbered heroes of the cross left their homelands to tell the heathen about Jesus. In process of time the Advent people joined in the great crusade, stirred with the conviction that they must carry to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of His soon return.

Never in all history has the name of Christ and the message of Christ been made so widely known throughout the world. And never were so many facilities available for God to make a short work upon the earth.

The printing press has made it possible for the Bible to be produced in vast quantities in more than eleven hundred languages. It has multiplied the Word through tracts, periodicals, and books beyond all reckoning. Much of the world has been covered with Christian literature as by the leaves of autumn.

Radio has made it possible for men of God to speak the message of salvation to vast audiences of millions upon millions of people. As the power of broadcasting stations increases, the message is carried ever farther and farther afield, even into the last dark hinterlands of humanity.

Television has made it possible for the living preacher to step, as it were, right into the homes of the people with God’s final call of mercy; and as this amazing new channel of communication becomes more and more popular, in more and more countries-as is bound to happen in the immediate future-it will present the church with perhaps the most potent means of finishing its task.

From time to time the question is raised as to whether the work of giving the gospel to the world can ever be finished. Some point to the not entered, or partially entered, fields; others, to the large birth rate in certain non-Christian lands, and the unceasing onward march of new generations. But are not these facts known to God? Was not Jesus aware that these conditions would prevail in the latter days when He uttered His great prophecy? And have we not been told that God has a thousand ways of making known His truth of which we have no knowledge?

We are not among those who believe that the world must be converted before Jesus can return. Nor do we consider it necessary to the fulfillment of His prediction of the universal promulgation of the gospel that churches must be established in every city and village around the globe. All that is called for is the preaching of the gospel “for a witness unto all nations.” The name of Jesus must be made known to all people. His offer of salvation must be proclaimed everywhere. And then shall the end come.

With all the marvelous means of communication now available-placed by God in the hands of His church with such wonderful timing-this seemingly insuperable task may well be accomplished sooner than we think.

6. Closing Doors of Opportunity

Says prophecy, “In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.” Revelation 10:7.

Some day the preaching of the gospel-the ever-blessed mystery of God’s love for lost mankind-will be finished. And it will be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, which many believe began to sound in 1844. Whether it will be finished suddenly, everywhere, or in one place after another, in swift succession, will be revealed in due time. But we venture to suggest that the closing doors in mission fields are an indication that the time of the church’s opportunity is fast running out.

7. All Men in Expectation

Luke writes: “And the people were in expectation, and all men mused [“debated,” margin] in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not.” Luke 3:15.

One of the signs of Christ’s first advent was the general expectation of His coming. Simeon and many others were “waiting for the consolation of Israel.” Luke 2:25. Today one of the most spectacular signs of His Second Advent is the amazing revival of interest in His return.

Perhaps it has come about as a result of the crushing tragedies and disappointments of the past few decades and the shattering of the hopes of the humanists. Perhaps it has sprung from a restudy of the Word of God, or the floodtide of Advent literature which has poured from our publishing houses in recent years: but whatever the cause, the fact remains that more people than ever before are now concerned about the coming of the Lord.

On November 10, 1951, General Albert Orsborn, head of the Salvation Army, wrote an editorial in the War Cry entitled "The Midnight Cry," in which he said: "It is my conviction that the world's clock is nearly at midnight. We must sound an alarm in God's holy mountain, 'Awake! Awake! The King is at hand.' Nevertheless we believe profoundly and we look with earnest expectation to the coming of the Lord and to the reign of peace and righteousness. The night is real, the midnight dark and menacing, but the morning comes!"

But most notable of the many evidences of this trend is the choice of "The Christian Hope" as the theme of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Evanston, Illinois, in 1954.

A committee of twenty-three theologians, requested to develop this theme for the benefit of the Assembly, brought in a report so ardently in favor of a literal, personal return of Jesus that it might have been prepared by our own General Conference Committee.

"There is no hope except in the crucified, risen, and coming Lord," said these World Council Adventists." And having this hope we are to be as men who watch for their Lord, with loins girt and lamps lit, active in the Master's service and constant in prayer, knowing our labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Naturally this report aroused a storm of protest from the modernist elements in the Council. The editors of The Christian Century termed it a "council of despair" and "waves of poison gas." But the intensity of the controversy has made it inevitable that the whole question of Christ's Second Coming will be debated in all the member churches of the World Council around the globe. Already the Baptists have prepared an official statement on the subject. And it is being widely discussed in the religious press.

Nothing could have happened better calculated to stir up worldwide interest in the coming of the Lord. As a result of this amazing development in the World Council of Churches millions will be stirred to think of the Second Advent who otherwise might never have concerned themselves about it.

Thus by leaps and bounds the great expectation is spreading, from heart to heart, from church to church, and from nation to nation. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

The Challenge of the Facts

In the brief time at my disposal I have presented ten great signs betokening the imminent return of Jesus. Many others might be mentioned. But this array of evidence should be sufficient to convince us all anew that His coming is indeed near, even at the doors.

Surely if it is enough to stir the world to inquiry, it should be enough to stir the church to action. It should set the Seventh-day Adventist Church afire with a new devotion to the cause it professes to advocate.

Furthermore, if our pioneers could preach of the imminence of Christ's Second Advent with vigor and forthrightness, despite the limited evidence they had upon which to build their faith, with what zeal and fervor should we proclaim the selfsame message, surrounded as we are by these tremendous, heart-stirring harbingers of the approaching end?

May God in His mercy awaken us from our complacency, our half warmness, our indifference, and send us forth from this Bible Conference to proclaim with blazing conviction, "The coming of the Lord draws nigh"!

The Final Frontiers of Prophecy

"Behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he sees is for many days to come, and he prophesies of the times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus said the Lord God. There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, said the Lord God." Ezekiel 12:27, 28.

Introduction

In the first of these three studies on the imminence of Christ's Second Coming the subject of the "Adventists and the Advent- has been dealt with. It was pointed out how essential is this doctrine to the whole program of the great Second Advent movement. In the second study "Ten Great Signs of His Coming" were Offered, marshaling the current evidence to prove that our Lord's return cannot be much longer delayed. In this concluding study there will be considered "The Final Frontiers of Prophecy," those areas of prophetic revelation which await fulfillment before Christ can come again. And here it will be our purpose to show that, of all predicted events, by far the greater proportion have already occurred, leaving but a small fraction to come to pass in the time that remains.

Under the pressures of two global wars great new highways have been built across all the five continents, making it possible for man to reach the last geographical frontiers of the world. As Jules Verne once wrote, "There are no more impassable deserts, no more

unfathomable seas, no more inaccessible mountains.” The explorer’s task is done. Similarly, in the prophetic realm, we find ourselves today almost at the end of those great highways of prophecy which, beginning in ancient times, wend their way down the centuries to the last days of history and the borders of the eternal world.

Just as the men and women of American pioneer days, moving westward in their covered wagons, came at last to the High Sierras and beheld the sunny slopes and plains of California, so we today stand upon the final frontiers of prophecy, looking expectantly for the concluding scenes in the drama of the ages.

Seven Highways of Prophecy

Let us consider the seven great highways of prophecy and note how they stream like ribbons of light across the highlands and lowlands of history, and converge with unerring accuracy upon our own day:

1. The Highway of the Nations. (The Prophecy of Daniel 2)
2. The Highway of Religious Tyranny. (The Prophecy of Daniel 7)
3. The Highway of Divine Visitation. (The Prophecy of Daniel 8-12)
4. The Highway of the Son of Man. (The Prophecy of Matthew 24)
5. The Highway of the Churches. (The Prophecy of Revelation 2 and 3)
6. The Highway of Apostasy. (The Prophecy of Revelation 5-8.)
7. The Highway of the Conquerors. (The Prophecy of Revelation 7-11)

Time forbids any attempt to consider these great prophecies in detail. We shall confine ourselves to a brief survey that will bring into sharp focus their unfulfilled portions.

1. The Highway of the Nations

The great prophetic highway outlined in the second chapter of the book of Daniel is perhaps the most familiar of all. Under the symbolism of a great metallic image, it begins in the city of Babylon and runs through the chief capitals of the ancient world. It is the main street, as it were, not only of

Nebuchadnezzar’s golden metropolis but also of the capitals of the Medo-Persian Empire, Grecia, and Rome. Side roads branch off to London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, and Lisbon, relics of the old divisions of the Roman Empire, but the main highway rolls on through a thousand battlefields straight into the kingdom of God.

This prediction, like a mighty beacon, shines across the centuries, illuminating the greatest events of time with the light of heaven. Glittering on the gold of Babylon, shimmering on the silver of Medo-Persia, glinting on the brass of Greece, shining on the iron of Rome, lighting up the struggles and conflicts of the modern world, it glows at last upon the face of the King of kings as He comes back to the earth in His glory. For He is the stone that strikes the image and breaks in pieces “the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold.” His is the kingdom that “shall consume all these kingdoms, and shall stand for ever.”

Where are we on this prophetic highway? Certainly not in Babylon. Nor in Medo-Persia. Nor in Greece. Nor in Rome. Are we, then, “in the days of these kings” or kingdoms of divided Rome? We are. And we have been in them for 1,476 years. Futile efforts to weld together the broken elements of the iron monarchy have been made again and again, as the prophecy foretold. We have seen such efforts in our own day. All have ended in failure. What more is to happen? What are we waiting for? Only the setting up of Christ’s everlasting kingdom at His coming in glory.

2. The Highway of Religious Tyranny

The great prediction found in the seventh chapter of Daniel parallels, for some considerable distance, the highway outlined in the second chapter. It passes through the same four capitals of the ancient empires, but then, diverging slightly, traverses the dreary millennium of papal dominance and persecution, terminating at last in the judgment and the final triumph of the children of God.

This is the prophecy of the four beasts, the ten horns, and the little horn which had “eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” Its application is well known to all. But where do we stand today in relation to its fulfillment? Certainly not in the

kingdom represented by the lion with eagle's wings. Not in the kingdom of the leopard with four wings of a fowl. Not in the kingdom of the dreadful and terrible beast that was "strong exceedingly." All these have had their day and passed away.

What, then, of the little horn" power, symbol of that great medieval religious tyranny erected upon the ruins of pagan Rome? Are we living under its domination? Not according to this prophecy, for the power of the little horn" was limited to "a time and times and the dividing of time," or 1260 years. This period, as we know, terminated in 1798. We are living 154 years beyond that date. Where are we, then? Is there any indication in the prophecy itself? There is. It is found in Daniel 7:26: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."

"The judgment was set, and the books were opened" (verse 10) in 1844, as we learn from the prophecy of Daniel 8:14. That was 108 years ago. During this period we have seen an astonishing paring down of the papal power and possessions. One has but to reflect upon what has happened in Poland, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Germany, even Italy itself, to realize that right before our eyes the judgment is taking away the dominion of the Antichrist, consuming it and destroying it unto the end. Indeed, as foreshadowed in the prophecy of Revelation 13, were it not for the revival of the papal power in the United States, and the enormous sums of money flowing from this country into the Vatican coffers, its consumption and destruction might already have been accomplished.

How far, then, down the highway of time does this prophecy bring us! We stand today between the beginning of the judgment and the final victory of righteousness, when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High." Daniel 7:27.

3. The Highway of Divine Visitation

In the last five chapters of the book of Daniel we find ourselves upon the greatest prophetic highway of all, which, beginning back in the same ancient empires, runs through old Jerusalem, past Gethsemane and Golgotha, and on down the ages to the same judgment scene mentioned in Daniel 7 and the final time of trouble "such as never was" that is immediately to precede the return of Christ in glory. This prophecy deserves to be called the "Highway of Divine Visitation- because it links the two Advents of our Lord the first in humiliation, suffering, and death, the second in triumphant majesty as King of kings and Lord of lords.

This is the prophecy of the ram with two horns and the he-goat with a little horn that "waxed great, even to the host of heaven." Of the time period of seventy weeks, reaching to "Messiah the Prince"

and the longer period of 2300 days reaching to the cleansing of the sanctuary. Of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the centuries-long controversy between the king of the north and the king of the south, climaxed by the capture by a certain power of "the glorious holy mountain" and the standing up of "Michael the Prince."

This highway, in general outline, is clear and plain. That there are a few shadows of uncertainty about its final plunge into eternity we are well aware, and we have no intention at this time of entering this controversial twilight zone. Nor do we need to do so, for our sole purpose here is to point out where we stand today in relation to the fulfillment of the entire prophecy. And where is that?

The ram and the lie-goat, typifying the Medo-Persian Empire and Greece, have long since played their part and faded away. The little horn power, representing first pagan, then papal, Rome, has acted exactly as predicted. The time period of seventy weeks, or 490 years, beginning in 457 BC with the command "to restore and to build Jerusalem," and extending to "Messiah the Prince," has been fulfilled to the letter in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Likewise the longer period of 2300 days, beginning at the same time, and of which the shorter period was an integral part, terminated in 1844 with the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven and the announcement of the judgment hour on earth. Furthermore, most, if not all, of the conflicts between the king of the north and the king of the south can be pin pointed upon the pages of history down to comparatively recent times.

Where, then, do we stand on this highway? Obviously somewhere between 1844 and the standing up of Michael the Prince, by which we understand the completion of Christ's work in the sanctuary and His preparation to return in glory. In other words, we are living between the first pronouncement of the judgment-hour message 108 years ago, and the beginning of the time of trouble that is to occur just before Jesus comes to raise the dead. (Daniel 12:2)

While it would be most desirable to know with fullness of certainty-and unanimity-just which power is to take possession of the glorious holy mountain and come, helpless, to its end, such information is not of the highest importance. More information would be welcome, but it is not essential. Looking at this great prophecy as a whole, glancing down the full length of this grand Highway of Divine Visitation from start to finish, it is unmistakably clear that by far the greater length of it passes through territory of fulfilled prophecy. What remains is but a short stretch through history's closing scenes to the glorious return of Jesus.

4. The Highway of the Son of Man

Next among the great highways of prophecy is the one outlined by our Lord Himself, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke in the Synoptic Gospels. It was given in answer to the direct question of His disciples, "Tell us what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3.

In response to this question Jesus told of the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem, to be followed by "great tribulation" for His followers." In those days" but "after that tribulation" the sun would be darkened, the moon appear as blood, and the stars would fall from heaven. (Mark 13: 24, 25; Revelation 6:12, 13)

Following these signs there would come upon the earth He said, "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:25-27.

The sequence is most familiar to us all. We know it by heart. It stands upon the pages of Holy Writ as an everlasting testimony against those who claim that there is no way of knowing when Christ will come.

Where are we on this Highway of the Son of Man? Certainly not in the days of old Jerusalem, sacked and burned by the Romans in AD 70. Not in the days of the great tribulation, which, after staining the Dark Ages with blood, terminated in the latter half of the eighteenth century. All this is history. So are the darkening of the sun and the appearance of the moon as blood. As for the falling of the stars, are we not convinced that this last great celestial sign occurred in 1833? And if so, are we not living between this spectacular phenomenon and the shaking of the powers of heaven? Clear proof that we are is afforded by the distress and perplexity of the nations, the roaring of the multitudes for freedom and vengeance, and by the terror in the hearts of men as they look into the future "after those things which are coming on the earth."

At the very time when some are saying, as Israel said to Ezekiel, "The vision that he sees is for many days to come," Jesus says, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh." Luke 21:28.

5. The Highway of the Churches

Turning now to the book of Revelation, we find a highway which runs from Pentecost to the Second Coming of Christ. It parallels the highways outlined in the book of Daniel and the one traced across the centuries by the Master Himself, but has particular reference to seven stages in the religious experience of the followers of Christ from the day He ascended till the day He returns.

As we are all aware, the message to the church at Ephesus was a message to the pure and zealous church of the first century, whereas the message to the church at Smyrna was directed to the Christians who suffered dire persecution under the Roman emperors in the second and third centuries; and so on down the ages to the Philadelphia experience and, finally, to Laodicea.

Do we need to ask where we are on this highway? Full well we know that we are not in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, or even Philadelphia. Laodicea is the word that fits the present condition of the church. It is rich and increased with goods. Its members are becoming more and more prosperous, rivaling their non-Christian neighbors in the luxury of their homes, while the spirit of the world is seeping into their hearts and sapping their spiritual vitality. They prefer preachers who preach smooth things to those who challenge them to action. They want more psychology and less eschatology, and set greater value on a university degree than on a mission experience. They have become lukewarm not only to service but to sin, so that the line of demarcation between right and wrong has become dim and fuzzy among them; church rolls are cluttered with the names of people who no longer uphold its principles, and who long since have lost their first love.

Beyond all question we stand today in the final phase of the church's experience, just before the shaking time and the coming of Jesus to take His faithful remnant home.

6. The Highway of Apostasy

In the sixth chapter of the book of Revelation we have the beginning of the prophecy of the seven seals, a highway which also starts at Pentecost and runs down the centuries to the Second Advent. Galloping along its first few miles is a white horse, ridden by one with a bow, a crown, and a conquering spirit-typifying the apostolic church in its zeal to win the world for its Lord.

Then, as the white horse vanishes, a red horse takes its place, its rider bearing a sword, symbolizing the strife that came into the church as it departed from the teachings of its Lord.

Next upon this highway appears a black horse, its rider carrying a pair of balances, dispensing food at exorbitant prices, fitting picture of that apostate organization which, posing as the church of Christ, sold the free gifts of God for money and built its cathedrals with ill-gotten gains.

Then comes a pale or greenish-colored horse, signifying decay and decomposition, with the figure of Death upon its back, and Hell following behind, grim symbols of a church so utterly unlike the divine pattern that it actually persecutes the true children of God.

On and on winds this Highway of Apostasy, down through the dark, bleak years of papal supremacy, past the slaughter of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Huguenots, and many others. At last, leaving behind the bones and ashes of a million martyrs, it passes the monuments to these heroic dead as the Reformation revalues their sacrifice.

Suddenly, at the opening of the sixth seal, there is a great earthquake, the sun becomes black as sackcloth, the moon becomes as blood, and the stars of heaven fall to the earth “even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.”

Thus this great highway passes through the city of Lisbon, to behold the mighty earthquake of 1755, leaps the Atlantic to New England to see the Dark Day of May 19, 1780, and the star shower of November 13, 1833, then vanishes into eternity as heaven departs as a scroll, Christ appears in His majesty, and all humanity cries out, “The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

Where are we upon this highway? Do we see the rider on the white horse going forth conquering and to conquer? Do we see the red horse, the black horse, the pale green horse? We do not. All have galloped away into the mist covered wastes of history.

Where are we, then? We are far beyond the Lisbon earthquake, far beyond the Dark Day, and far beyond the falling of the stars. The next event on this highway of prophecy is the departing of the heaven as a scroll and the return of our Lord in glory. Indeed, if these awesome phenomena of nature were intended to be signs of the approach of the final consummation of the controversy between the church of Christ and the powers of darkness, how absurd to suggest that hundreds of years may yet elapse before the Lord shall appear! Prolonged delay would make them meaningless.

7. The Highway of the Conquerors

Yet another highway to the kingdom is provided in the prophecy of the seven trumpets. This begins farther down the centuries than the others, but terminates in the same glorious event. It parallels the other highways, but deals with political rather than religious events, tracing the story of the conquerors of the Roman Empire.

As each trumpet sounds, a conqueror leaps upon history’s stage to play his appointed part in bringing about the disintegration of that mighty power which, in the words of Daniel, was “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly.” First comes Alaric with his Goths, then Genseric with his Vandals, Attila with his Huns, and Odoacer with his Heruli, followed later by the Saracens and Turks.

This sequence of struggle, conflict, battle, and death continues down the centuries, but not forever. As the sound of the sixth trumpet fades away, a mighty angel cries aloud, “as when a lion roars,” “In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.” Revelation 10:7.

This suggests termination, not indefinite prolongation. And when the seventh angel sounds, voices in heaven are heard saying, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15. At the same time, on earth, the nations are angry, “and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou should give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great. And should destroy them which destroy the earth.” Verse 18.

Thus this highway brings us down the years past all the conquerors of Rome to the supreme Conqueror of the universe, Jesus Christ Himself, riding down the skies to victory over all His enemies.

Where do we stand upon this highway? In the days of Alaric, or Genseric, or Attila, or Odoacer? Do we live in the days of the Saracens, or the Turks? Of course not. All the events foreshadowed by the first six trumpets are in the past. And the sixth trumpet ceased to sound more than a hundred years ago.

Where, then, are we? Look around. Are the nations angry -more angry than ever? Have they destroyed one another as never before? Do they now possess the power to bring the whole earth to ruin? We know these things are so. Consequently, we are driven to the conclusion that the return of the conquering Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords, cannot be far in the future.

Glancing now at all seven of the great highways of prophecy, we note that they not only converge upon our day and generation but, without exception, they are at least ninety-five per cent behind us. Looking back along their gleaming trails we see century after century of fulfilled prophecy; looking forward we observe that there is but little left to be fulfilled, only the last climactic scenes before Jesus comes again. It would seem obvious that we have arrived at history's final hour; that we are standing upon the crumbling crags of Time in sight of the eternal deep.

Areas of Unfulfilled Prophecy

What else is to happen before the end? We shall mention three significant areas of unfulfilled prophecy which deserve close attention. All are signs for which we should be watching in these momentous times.

1. Developments in the United States

Turning to the prophecy found in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, concerning the leopard beast with seven heads and ten horns, followed by a second beast with two horns like a lamb, we note that here again almost all the salient features are matters of history.

The Papacy, after receiving its power, its seat, and great authority from the dragon, or pagan Rome, enjoyed full sway over the nations for "forty and two months," or 1260 years, ending in 1798. Then it received a deadly wound, which has largely been healed. Meanwhile the second power mentioned has come upon the stage of history bearing a lamb like, inoffensive appearance and posing as the champion of civil and religious liberty for all mankind.

All these events have taken place, just as the prophecy demanded. Those still to occur are as follows. (a) The lamb like nation is to speak as a dragon; that is, with all the authority and forcefulness of the dragon-inspired pagan empires of the past. (b) It is to show favor to the "first beast," or Papacy, and sponsor a replica of this authoritarian religious organization within its borders; and (c) it is finally to condone the persecution of minorities that oppose its plans.

How long will it take for such lamentable developments to come to pass? Not as long as some may think. Paul Blanshard has already alerted us all to the peril to American freedom latent in the enormous growth of Catholic power throughout this country. It is no longer a secret that the set purpose of the Roman hierarchy is to gain control of the United States. And this determination, coupled with the languid tolerance of most Protestants, and their incredible ignorance of the facts of history, is paving the way for the very transformation of American life which this prophecy foreshadows. Recalling the present strong trend toward government by bureaucracy, also the multiplicity of regulations, affecting all phases of life, emanating from Washington, anyone can see how easily and swiftly we might be projected into a situation in which no one could buy or sell without some mark or sign demanded by the powers that be.

In this connection we quote the following important prediction by Ellen G. White:

"To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error.

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the Papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation [meaning the United States] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." [36]

2. Developments in Palestine

The recent dramatic restoration of the nation of Israel has focused the attention of mankind once more upon Palestine. Many Christians have mistakenly permitted themselves to believe that the return of thousands of unconverted Jews to their native land is in fulfillment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not realizing that, since the death of the Son of God on Calvary, there is no salvation, nor any eternal homeland, except for those who believe in Him and accept His sacrifice.

However, there is one prophecy concerning Palestine that we should all be watching with special care. Said Jesus, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21:24.

For nineteen centuries Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles. It is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Despite the amazing prowess of the Israeli troops, the ancient city of Jerusalem is still in Arab hands. A Mohammedan mosque still stands upon the site of Solomon's Temple. Victorious as were the forces of Israel in every other part of Palestine, they failed to take the most dazzling

objective of all. Mysteriously they were held back from achieving this most cherished goal, this culminating triumph, as by an unseen hand.

What could be the reason? Only that the times of the Gentiles are not yet fulfilled. Centuries ago Israel was not permitted to enter Palestine for a certain time because “the iniquity of the Amorites” was “not yet full” (Genesis 15:16); that is, not until the probationary time allotted to the Amorites had run out. It may well be that the same principle applies today, on a wider scale. If so, then Jerusalem is to remain trodden down by Gentiles till the probationary time of all Gentiles has run out. If this be correct, how much hinges upon the fate of this ancient city and the power that occupies it!

3. The Seven Last Plagues

We mention these awful visitations upon humanity because they are among the events to happen between now and the coming of Christ. For if Christ’s coming is near, the plagues are near also.

Exactly how they will happen, or how widespread they will be, or how much symbolism there is in the prophetic description of them, it is not our purpose to discuss in this connection. We wish only to emphasize that when news of the first plague-the noisome and grievous sore-is broadcast by radio and television (as no doubt it will be), and is published in the newspapers, we shall all know that probation has closed and the end is right upon us.

That, dear friends, is something to watch for. None of the other plagues, however terrible they may be, will make upon our minds anything like the impact that is made by that first shocking evidence that mankind has passed “the point of no return,” that all missionary work is henceforth worthless, and that the time for the outpouring of the wrath of God has arrived. Later news that the seas and rivers have been

turned to blood, or that scorching heat has caused much suffering to large numbers of people, or that great darkness has fallen upon the city of Rome, or that the symbolic Euphrates has vanished, to prepare the way for the kings of the east, will never make the same tremendous impression. These subsequent plagues, following in swift sequence, as anticipated, will serve but to add certainty to certainty that the day is at hand when the voice of Christ will be heard saying, “It is done,” and He will return in glory as Victor of Armageddon.

Some of these judgments may come suddenly, without previous warning; others may involve time for preparation and development before they actually occur. Under the sixth plague, for instance, “the spirits of devils, working miracles, go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” There is a strong suggestion here of propaganda - of inflammatory falsehoods broadcast to the ends of the earth by the three predominant powers of the latter days. And who is so blind that he cannot see the agents of these powers already at work behind their microphones today? And who is so deaf he cannot hear the lying words they are pouring forth, designed to do the devil’s work, spreading hatred, stirring up strife, and preparing humanity for the final holocaust?

Preparation for the End

Thus we find ourselves upon the final frontiers of prophecy. Of all that was predicted by the mighty seers of old, but little remains to be fulfilled. The great highways of prophecy, which have circled the mountains and crossed the valleys of history for more than two millenniums, are about to plunge from Time into Eternity. The last things are about to happen. The last days are upon us.

Never were the words of Zephaniah so true: “The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hastens greatly.” Zephaniah 1:14.” The Eternal God’s great day is near, near, speeding apace! The Eternal God’s bitter day is near, rushing on like a warrior!” is Dr. Moffatt’s rendering.

And what is the Lord’s counsel to us at such a time? It is found in the exhortation of the selfsame prophet: “Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord’s anger come upon you. Seek you the Lord, all you meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zephaniah 2:2, 3.

“Time is very short,” He says to us through Ellen G. White, “and all that is to be done must be done quickly. The angels are holding the four winds, and Satan is taking advantage of everyone who is not fully established in the truth. Every soul is to be tested. Every defect in the character, unless it is overcome by the help of God’s Spirit, will become a sure means of destruction.” [37]

As in the Lord’s parable of the ten virgins, when the midnight cry caught them all by surprise, revealing that five were wise and five foolish, so now, to quote Mrs. White again - “ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth’s history. All claim to be Christians.

All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall." [38]

How is it with us? We know we are in the waiting time, the tarrying time, the watching time, but what are we doing with these precious moments of opportunity? Are we preparing for the stupendous events about to break upon the world? Are we building up our moral resources for the tests and trials of the time of trouble? Are we proclaiming the imminence of Christ's Second Coming with unexampled zeal? Or are we becoming indifferent, careless, self-satisfied, worldly, and so familiar with the discussion of prophecy that it has lost its meaning for us, and the very mention of signs of the times acts as a soporific upon our souls?

"It was not the will of God, says Mrs. White, "that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief. ' Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God.

As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning, and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out." [39]

Well may we take these words to our own hearts, as also that remarkable declaration in Christ's Object Lessons: "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." [40]

Perhaps we are responsible for the seeming delay in Christ's return. Perhaps He is waiting for something that we should do, some surrender we should make, some perfecting of character that must yet be accomplished in us.

But He will not wait forever. Those who take the foregoing statement in Christ's Object Lessons to mean that hundreds of years may yet elapse before Christ returns, because it will take a very long time before His character is "perfectly reproduced" in Seventh-day Adventists, are of all men most mistaken. God loved the people who lived before the Flood just as much as He loves mankind today; He warned them just as dramatically, and pleaded with them just as earnestly; but the time came at last when He said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man." Genesis 6:3. There is a limit to divine forbearance. He will not restrain His anger forever.

That the character of Christ will be "perfectly reproduced" in His people before He comes there is no doubt. But this does not necessarily include all those whose names are on the church rolls. Many of these will drop out by the way. Only those who are "His people" by their own desire and purpose, who yearn for absolute identity with their Lord and Master, whose supreme ambition is to have His name written upon their foreheads, will enjoy this blessed experience. And when some—the faithful remnant out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people—have by prayer, study, self-sacrifice, and utter dedication, become living facsimiles of Christ on earth, then He will come "to claim them as His own."

Shall we be among that company? Standing as we do upon the final frontiers of prophecy, expecting the last scenes of history to burst upon its at any moment, gazing as it were through the pearly gates into the kingdom of God, let us highly resolve and earnestly pray that this experience may be ours.

And may our voices join with those of God's true people in all the earth, as they send up their urgent and incessant petition, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

16. The Great Controversy

W. E. READ

The Outline

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5. THE OUTCOME OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

The expression, "the great controversy between Christ and Satan," is a familiar one to Seventh-day Adventists all over the world. Although the term "great controversy" is not a Biblical one, the idea is given considerable prominence in the Word of God. The phrase has become part of our language in the Advent cause; whenever and wherever we use it, it is understood by our workers and believers around the world field.

This great controversy, or great conflict, is called a warfare. We read of the weapons to be used (2 Corinthians 10:4), that we are to fight a good warfare (1 Timothy 1:18), and are assured that the warfare will ultimately be accomplished (Isaiah 40:2). The controversy

began in heaven, and is now being carried forward on earth. (Revelation 12) The war is between Christ and His angels on the one hand and the devil and his angels on the other. In the contest all are to be marshaled. It is our privilege to enlist under the banner of Prince Emmanuel and become soldiers of the cross, or to remain among the vast legions of the enemy of souls. If we join with Prince Emmanuel, we shall be provided with the necessary armor, and can go forward in the strength of our mighty Commander, fighting the good fight of faith. When the victory is gained, we shall reign with Christ and enjoy the fruits of His blessed triumph over the hosts of darkness throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

In the Spirit of prophecy frequent mention is made of this great struggle between the forces of evil and the forces of righteousness.

“The warfare which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time.” [1]

“The great controversy between truth and error, between Christ and Satan, is to increase in intensity to the close of this world’s history.” [2]

“The whole universe is watching with inexpressible interest the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil.” [3]

This theme has been a matter of earnest study and contemplation all through our history. It has even entered into the titles of some of the volumes of the Ellen G. White library. Think of the five books in the Conflict of the Ages Series and note the titles they bear:

Patriarchs and Prophets reveals the conflict of the ages in the lives of holy men of old.

Prophets and Kings portrays the conflict in the lives of prophets and kings.

The Desire of Ages unfolds the conflict in the days of Jesus.

The Acts of the Apostles emphasizes the conflict in the apostolic age.

The Great Controversy delineates the course of the conflict and the issues involved from the time it began.

The specific theme of our meditation is the closing scenes of this great controversy. However, in order to understand these closing events, and particularly their sequence and significance, it will be well to give thought to the over-all picture of the great controversy as it has unfolded throughout the ages.

In pursuing this, let us observe:

A. The Period of the Great Controversy

1. Its Beginning

The period of the great controversy is from the inception of sin to the time when it will be finally eliminated from the universe of God. The Scriptures reveal clearly that iniquity was conceived in the heart of Lucifer. He was perfect in all his ways until iniquity was found in him. (Ezekiel 28:15) He is the father of lies. (John 8:44) He was a murderer from the beginning. (John 8:44) With him began the great controversy, and “the warfare against God’s law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time.” [4]

At the opening of this period many things were not clear to the heavenly hosts or to the inhabitants of other worlds. On this the Spirit of prophecy remarks:

“At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this [the issues of the controversy]. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God’s goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences.”

2. Its Duration

This titanic struggle begun in heaven and continued on earth will last through the centuries until, in the plan of God, Satan and the hosts of evil will be completely destroyed in the fires of the last days.

Ever since sin contaminated the hearts of men, we see the same struggle, the same conflicts, the same malignant obsession of the enemy to disrupt the work of Jehovah, the same grim determination to destroy God’s people, the same bitter purpose to make void the

law of the Eternal. This has obtained, whichever period we study, whether the antediluvian, the patriarchal, or the Levitical age. It was true in the days of Jesus our Lord, also in the apostolic age, and again during the medieval centuries. It is just as true today, and will be increasingly so during the closing scenes of the great controversy.

All through the years, however, God has had faithful witnesses calling the attention of the people to the issues involved, and also encouraging them with the thought that soon the warfare will be over and sin and its author destroyed forever.

This concept was strikingly foreshadowed in the sanctuary service of ancient days. In reference to the ritual of the Day of Atonement we read:

“Once each year [in the sanctuary] their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners.” [6]

3. Its Termination

Thank God, the time is coming when evil will have an end; it will not rise up a second time. The messenger of the Lord has well expressed this:

“A doubt of God’s goodness would have remained in their [angels’] minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sill has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sill will vindicate God’s love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.

“Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Savior’s cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew that the destruction of sill and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully, comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, It is finished.” [7]

Then, concerning the time when all is peace and harmony throughout God’s great creation, we read:

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, ill their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.” [8]

B. The Location

The opening stages of the great controversy were enacted in heaven, but the time came when Satan and his hosts were cast out from that abode of bliss. They then found entrance into this little world of ours. We read:

“Though he [Satan] was cast out of heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth.” [9]

“The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his.” [10]

“Soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.” [11]

Furthermore, this world, in the purpose of God, is to be the theme of study by the intelligences of heaven. It is here that the principles of the great usurper are worked out: it is here that the wonderful lessons of redeeming grace are to be seen. The dwellers in the great universe of God are deeply interested in the outworking of the great contest between the forces of light and the legions of darkness.

“The universe is looking upon the controversy that is going on upon the earth.” [12]

“The holy inhabitants of other worlds were watching with the deepest interest the events taking place on the earth.” [13]

The intelligences of heaven, whether the angelic hosts or the inhabitants of unfallen worlds, will know not only of the progress but also of the climactic termination of the great controversy. The apostle Paul wrote of God’s revelation in Christ Jesus, “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Ephesians 3: 10, 11.

Commenting on Deuteronomy 4:5-8, Ellen G. White says:

“Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God’s purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.” [14]

Mrs. White has further assured its: “The field of the controversy between Christ and Satan,-the field on which the plan of redemption is wrought out, is the lesson-book of the universe.” [15]

“BY the facts unfolded in the progress of the great controversy, God will demonstrate the principles of His rules of government, which have been falsified by Satan and by all whom he has deceived. His justice will finally be acknowledged by the whole world, though the acknowledgment will be made too late to save the rebellious. God carries with Him the sympathy and the approval of the whole universe as step by step His great plan advances to its complete fulfillment. He will carry it with Him in the final eradication of rebellion. It will be seen that all who have forsaken the divine precepts have placed themselves on the side of Satan, in warfare against Christ. When the prince of this world shall be judged, and all who have united with him shall share his fate, the whole universe as witnesses to the sentence will declare, Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” [16]

C. The Basis

The basis of the great controversy between Christ and Satan might be considered twofold: first, the enmity of the evil one against the law of God; and second, his hatred of the Son of God. These considerations are vital, for they reveal the main issues involved in the age long contest.

The great controversy in heaven began over the law of Jehovah and the jealousy conceived in the heart of Lucifer against the Son of the Highest. Let its observe these two phases of study:

1. Satan’s Enmity Against the Law of God.

“From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan’s purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator.” [17]

“From the first, the great controversy had been upon the law of God. In the controversy it was to be shown whether the ‘divine statutes were defective and subject to change, or perfect and immutable.’” [18]

“From Adam’s day to the present time the great controversy has been concerning obedience to God’s law.” [19]

“The very means by which Christ established the law, Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. The warfare against God’s law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time.” [20]

2. Satan’s Enmity Against the Son of God

“His accusations [against God’s people] arise solely from his enmity to Christ.” [21]

“Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners.” [22]

“The antagonism that exists between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Satan was most strikingly displayed in the world’s reception of Jesus. His life of self-denial and sinless devotion was a perpetual reproof to a proud, sensual people. It was this that evoked enmity against the Son of God.” [23]

“Satan’s hatred against God leads him to hate every object of the Savior’s care.” [24]

“The name of Jesus, our Advocate, he [Satan] detests!” [25]

“All the hatred and malignity of the arch rebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ’s supremacy.” [26]

D. The Nature

We shall now consider the nature of the great controversy. This naturally grows out of the basis of this mighty conflict. As a natural development of Satan's open opposition and hostility, both to the law of God and to the divine Son of the Most High, comes his abhorrence, his grim malignity, and his intense hatred of all that is good, all that is noble, all that is true. Hence he has made war against the truth of God; he has ever sought to hinder the advancement of the message of salvation; always has he endeavored to exterminate the children of God. His has been a constant, vigilant, never-ceasing antagonism, culminating in his relentless warfare and supreme attempt to overthrow the government of heaven.

Through the ages there have been many phases to this warfare. Sometimes it has been a clash of principles, a verbal conflict between the champions of error and the witnesses for the truth. Sometimes it has been a moral or spiritual contest, in which forces have been brought to bear upon God's children to turn them from their allegiance to Jehovah. When the agents of unrighteousness have been unsuccessful in such unholy attempts, they have subjected God's children to imprisonment, to torture, and to death. In such instances the conflict has veered from the moral or spiritual to the mental and physical. Again, on many occasions, nations have gone to war, as in the days of Israel, in defense of the principles of righteousness. Then the conflict became military in its nature. Many such instances are recorded in the Word of God. There were times, even though nations entered into military combat, when God stepped in and worked marvelously on behalf of His people. When it seemed that all was lost, Jehovah sent help from heaven and miraculously delivered His children. Such experiences as are recorded in the Divine Oracle are worthy of careful and thoughtful study, especially in view of the great and trying days that are before God's remnant people.

But let us meditate on this more fully. In view of what has just been mentioned, let us consider the following aspects of the great controversy:

1. The Moral Aspect

This has been well expressed by the messenger of the Lord as:

a. The controversy between truth and error.

"The great controversy between truth and error, between Christ and Satan, is to increase in intensity to the close of this world's history." [27]

"The great controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil." [28]

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God." [29]

b. The controversy between good and evil.

"The whole universe is watching with inexpressible interest the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil."

c. The controversy between righteousness and sin. We read that during the ministry of Jesus-

"Satan summoned all his forces, and at every step contested the work of Christ. So it will be in the great final conflict between righteousness and sin." [31]

d. The controversy "between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition." [32]

e. The controversy between the law of God and the laws of men.

"Upon this battle we are now entering, a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah." [33]

"By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world." [34]

"The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, 'both small and great, shall conform to the customs of the church.'" [35]

"Then will be opened before him the course of the great conflict that had its birth before time began, and that ends only when time shall cease. The history of the inception of sin; of fatal falsehood in its crooked working; of truth that, swerving not from its own straight lines, has met and conquered error, all will be made manifest." [36]

2. The Spiritual Aspect

From the same writer we cull the following pertinent extracts concerning-

a. The conflict in the heart of man.

“Many look on this conflict between Christ and Satan as having no special bearing on their own life; and for them it has little interest. But within the domain of every human heart this controversy is repeated.” [37]

“As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be the ‘accuser of our brethren,’ ‘which accused them before our God day and night.’ The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil and whose name is registered in the Lamb’s book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. Satan’s accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God’s law can he obtain power over them.” [38]

b. The conflict between good and evil angels.

“We should see angels flying quickly to the aid of these tempted ones, forcing back the hosts of evil that encompass them, and placing their feet on a sure foundation. The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend.” [39]

c. The conflict against the saints.

Satan’s hatred of the people of God has existed all through the centuries. He has worked through the nations of earth, he has worked through religious organizations, and this has been well expressed by Ellen G. White as follows:

“Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who serve God and those who serve Him not.” [40]

“Every inroad made by the gospel upon the enemy’s dominion is met by fierce opposition from his vast armies. The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed.” [41]

It is in this connection that the mental and physical phases of the controversy are seen. The lot of God’s faithful children throughout the centuries has certainly been one of persecution, imprisonment, and death. What anxiety of soul, what pain and agony, they have suffered for the truth’s sake. This mental and physical suffering, however, has not been forgotten by the Lord of hosts.

Observe also that through the centuries Satan has used the nations of earth in a studied endeavor to obliterate God’s children. We will notice the following considerations:

(1) Satan delights in war.

“Satan delights in war; for it excites the worst passions of the soul, and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood.” [42]

“It suits his satanic majesty well to see slaughter and carnage upon the earth.” [43]

(2) Satan has always warred against God’s people.

“Because Israel had been chosen to preserve the knowledge of God in the earth, they had ever been the special objects of Satan’s enmity; he was determined to cause their destruction. Satan was determined to frustrate the carrying out of the divine purpose, and to this end he was seeking to move upon the heathen nations to destroy them utterly.” [44]

“As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God.” [45]

“As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God’s people in the time of trouble.” [46]

“The anti typical land of promise is just before us, and Satan is determined to destroy the people of God.” [47]

(3) Satan has warred through many nations. [48]

It has been his set policy through the ages to war against God's children. In seeking to accomplish his designs he has worked through the kings and rulers of earth. Divine revelation shows the manifestations of his diabolical obsession through such nations as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, the ten nations in the days of Jehoshaphat, also through Rome, both pagan and papal. He is seeking to do the same today.

"The same spirit that crucified Christ and slew the apostles, the same that moved the blood-thirsty Nero against the faithful in his day, was at work to rid the earth of those who were beloved of God!" [49]

During the time of the plagues Satan will make his final and supreme attempt to crush forever the faithful people of God.

Satan manifests his hatred against the saints of the Most High at all times and in all places. In the coming contest he excites the religious leaders, the apostate system of religion, and the nations of earth in one supreme effort to crush forever God's faithful People. He leads them to pass a death decree, so that all who will not yield their allegiance to God will be put to death.

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Revelation 13:15.

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof." [50]

After quoting Isaiah 51:21-23, Ellen G. White comments: "The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them." [51]

"Under the rule of Rome, those who suffered death for their fidelity to the gospel were denounced as evil-doers. So it will be now. While Satan seeks to destroy those who honor God's law, he will cause them to be accused as lawbreakers." [52]

"A refusal to obey the commandments of God, and a determination to cherish hatred against those who proclaim these commandments, leads to the most determined war on the part of the dragon, whose whole energies are brought to bear against the commandment-keeping people of God. He caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Revelation 13: 16, 17." [53]

(4) Satan has thus warred against Christ. [54]

In making war with the saints he makes "war with the Lamb" (Revelation 17:14) Jesus so identifies Himself with His people that what is done to them is recognized by Him as done to Himself. We read, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40.

Referring to this verse, the messenger of the Lord remarks:

"If we do good to these, He will accept the deed as though done to Himself." [55]

"Inasmuch as you have done this to one of Christ's disciples, you have done it to Jesus in His person." [56]

King James of England, under whose auspices the Authorized Version of our Bible was published and who was quite a student of prophecy, referring to Revelation 17:14, has given us the following:

"For they shall fight with the Lamb, in his members, albeit all in vain, for in the end the Lamb shall overcome them, because he is Lord of lords, and King of kings." [57]

3. The Military Aspect

Time and again God has worked through the armies of earth to hold back the forces of evil. The days of Israel present many instances of this, and also of divine interposition.

a. God worked through the military might of Israel, and sent special help from heaven to overcome the hosts of Sisera.

b. Think of the humanly inadequate forces of Asa against the hosts of the Ethiopians centuries ago, and how God wrought for His people.

c. Observe also Jehoshaphat going forth to battle against the enemy with a choir at the head of his army, and yet Jehovah wrought a wonderful deliverance for His cause.

History provides many other instances, and in the closing phases of the great controversy we shall again see the nations in deadly combat. They will be in “corrupt harmony” with the beast and his Image in their final attack to overthrow the government of God. But this phase of the subject will be considered more in detail later.

4. The Miraculous Aspect

This has just been referred to here, but it should be mentioned again in this connection. Many of the military conflicts in the days long ago were, in a sense, typical of great final conflict between Christ and the Satan. This means that battles which took place not only at Megiddo but in other places were typical of many of the events clustering around the final deliverance of the people of God.

In the days of Sisera, God interposed and wrought a marvelous victory. The same was true in the days of Asa, when he was besieged by the Ethiopian hosts. It was true also when the Lord brought confusion to the legions of the enemy as they sought to overwhelm Jehoshaphat and His people in the days of Judah.

So it will be in the last days. When all human agencies fail, when all earthly protection is withdrawn from the saints, God will be the hope of His people. He will protect them; He will deliver them; He will save them.

“The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” Joel 3:16.

“A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with your eyes shall thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” Psalm 91:7-11.

5. The Retributive Aspect

This brings us to the last aspect of the great controversy. When the nations, urged on by evil angels, have filled up the cup of their iniquity, they actually make war on the Son of God. We read, “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Revelation 19:19.

But their attempt is futile, and the nations of earth, with all who have joined with them, go down in utter, inglorious defeat. They will make war with the Lamb, but “the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings.” Revelation 17:14.

Hence, throughout the centuries the great controversy has presented many and various aspects. It has taken various forms, according to the issues involved, and according to those who participated, whether as aggressors or as victims of aggression. Whatever turn it took, however, there was manifested the force of aggressive warfare. It has been so since the controversy began; intensity will continue to increase unto the very end.

E. The Outcome of the Great Controversy

The great controversy between Christ and Satan is to continue to the very end. This has been clearly outlined by the messenger of the Lord:

The controversy “against God’s law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time.” [58]

The great controversy, however, is to end, and the Spirit of prophecy foreshadows the fact that there will be a “last” conflict in this great controversy. Note the following: “The very means by which Christ established the law, Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.” [59]

This last conflict is undoubtedly the final contest known as Armageddon.

“Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon.” [60]

“Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of Spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: ‘I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.’ Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion.” [61]

Thank God, the great struggle that has lasted so long will ultimately end. Nevermore will sin raise its ugly head to contaminate and defile the universe of God.” The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.” [62]

The Closing Events in the Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

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In this section of the study we shall consider the closing events of the great conflict. For our purpose the term “closing events,” in the main at least, will be understood to apply to what we know as “the great day of the Lord.”

A. The Importance of the Subject

1. The Vital Importance of Our Knowing the Things That Belong to Our Peace

Not only has the Spirit of prophecy counseled us to study these closing events, not only are we assured that we may know what is to take place, but the Lord in His mercy has emphasized the solemn and serious responsibility of meditating on these things. We need not be deceived by the specious devices of the enemy. God would have us alert, wholly consecrated to Him, and ready when the great time of testing comes to the children of God. Much counsel of this nature has been given to the church.

“A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.” [63]

“It was needful that men should be awakened to their danger; that they should be roused to prepare for the solemn events connected with the close of probation.” [64]

“Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience.” [65]

“In view of that great day the word of God, in the most solemn and impressive language, calls upon His people to arouse from this spiritual lethargy, and to seek His face with repentance and humiliation.” [66]

“Unless we understand the importance of the moments that are swiftly passing into eternity and make ready to stand in the great day of God, we shall be unfaithful stewards. The watchman is to know the time of night. Everything is now clothed with a solemnity that all who believe the truth for this time should realize. They should act in reference to the day of God. The judgments of God are about to fall upon the world, and we need to be preparing for that great day.” [67]

2. The Last Crisis Will Be the Most Terrible in the World’s History

That the crisis which is before the people of God will be the most terrible the world has ever known is emphasized over and over again in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. Observe the following:

“The ‘time of trouble such as never was,’ is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess, and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. ‘Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the land, as I live, said the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.’ [68]

“The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed.” [69]

The great test in this conflict will come concerning loyalty to the commandments of God.

“Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, ‘both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,’ shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false Sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death. On the other hand, the law of God enjoining the Creator’s rest-day demands obedience, and threatens wrath against all who transgress its precepts.”

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controversial. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false Sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.” [70]

In this crisis hour God will be the hope and comfort of His people.” This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!” [71]

“In the hour of the church’s greatest danger, most fervent prayer will be offered in her behalf by the faithful remnant, and God will hear and answer at the very time when the guilt of the transgressor has reached its height. He will ‘avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though lie bear long with them.’ [72]

Divine help will be forthcoming in the darkest hour.” Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action. The two opposing parties will continue to exist till the closing up of the last great chapter in this world’s history.” [73]

“Clad in the armor of Christ’s righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. ‘Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,’ she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.

“The darkest hour of the church’s struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for ‘when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,’ God will be to His church I ‘a refuge from the storm.’ In that day, only the righteous are promised deliverance.” [74]

3. The Final Events Are Made Plain

God has made plain in His Holy Word the events that are to take place in the closing scenes of earth’s history. The messenger of the Lord wrote years ago:

“God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath.” [75]

“We are to understand the progress of events in the marshaling of the nations for the final conflict of the great controversy.” [76]

We feel encouraged to enter into this study, especially in view of the following paragraphs from the Spirit of prophecy:

“In the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented.” [77]

“We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field.” [78]

It is not possible to explain everything in the prophetic word, but “let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol in the Revelation, that it is useless for them to search this book in an effort to know the meaning of the truth it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John will give to the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things.”

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days. The angel commanded, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.’” [79]

Even with this encouraging assurance it is still true that many things in the Word of God will not be revealed until we enter the kingdom of God.” Some passages of Scripture will never be perfectly comprehended until in the future life Christ shall explain them. There are mysteries to be unraveled, statements that human minds cannot harmonize. And the enemy will seek to arouse argument upon these points, which might better remain undiscussed.” [80]

What a wonderful experience it will be in the home of the saved to enter into the mysteries of the purpose and plan of God. We are told:

“Then will be opened before him [man] the course of the great conflict that had its birth before time began, and that ends only when time shall cease. The history of the inception of sin; of fatal falsehood in its crooked working; of truth that, swerving from its own straight lines, has met and conquered error, all will be made manifest. The veil that interposes between the visible and the invisible world will be drawn aside, and wonderful things will be revealed.” [81]

4. The Issues in the Final Conflict

It is evident that When the time comes for the final conflict there will be an agreement of some kind among the spirits of devils, the kings of the earth, and the leaders of men in various phases of endeavor. Satan ultimately succeeds in bringing about a confederation of all earth’s interests, the great purpose of which is that he be exalted as divine.

“Fallen angels upon earth form confederations with evil men. In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law of God will be fully made void in the nations of our world. Rebellion against God’s holy law will be fully ripe. But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But omnipotence will interpose, and to the apostate churches that unite in the exaltation of Satan, the sentence will go forth, “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire. For strong is the Lord God who judges her.” [82]

There is but one outcome to this effort, deceptive and diabolical as it is, and that is that “Satan is uniting his forces for perdition.” [83] In this final struggle Satan is bringing to a focus the same hostility to and contempt for the law of God that he has had from the beginning. The law of Jehovah is despised, the Sabbath of the commandments is disregarded, and a false institution is put in its place.

“Satan’s enmity against God’s law has impelled him to war against every precept of the decalogue.” [84]

“The crisis will be reached when the nations shall unite in making void God’s law.” [85]

“The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part.” [86]

“More and more the world is setting at naught the claims of God. Men have become bold in transgression. The wickedness of the inhabitants of the world has almost filled up the measure of their iniquity. This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it. The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will

reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.” [87]

“The very means by which Christ established the law, Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict in the great controversy between Christ and Satan.” [88]

In addition to Sunday sacredness another great error will be widely accepted.

“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of Spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.” [88]

“By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.” [89]

Through these two great deceptive, erroneous, and misleading teachings, there will be brought about an accord a rapprochement, a harmony, between the church and the world. As to the kind of unity that will obtain, note the following:

“The word of God plainly declares that His law is to be scorned, trampled upon, by the world; there will be an extraordinary prevalence of iniquity. The professed Protestant world will form a confederacy with the man of sin, and the church and the world will be in corrupt harmony. Here the great crisis is coming upon the world.” [91]

Although this test is inevitable, we should remember that - “the Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the conflict in which they must engage. How often when Satan has brought all his forces to bear against the followers of Christ, and death stares them in the face, have earnest prayers put up in faith brought the Captain of the Lord’s host upon the field of action and turned the tide of battle and delivered the oppressed. Now is the time when we should closely connect with God, that we may be hid when the fierceness of His wrath is poured upon the sons of men.” [92]

B. The Day of the Lord

As already mentioned, we shall consider the closing events of the great controversy as synchronous with the period known as the “great day of the Lord.” Let us then give consideration to this particular period, called by one of the Biblical writers the “day of God Almighty.”

1. The References to the Day of the Lord

There are many scriptures in both the Old and the New Testament that refer to the day of God. They present a graphic picture of the events of that great day. Note the following:

Isaiah 2:12-21; 13:6, 9, 13; 34:8-10.

Jeremiah 30:7; 46:10.

Ezekiel 13:5; 30:1;

Joel 1:15; 2:1-11; 3:14-16.

Amos 5:18-20.

Obadiah 1:15.

Lamentations 2:22.

Zephaniah 1:7-18; 2:1-3;

Zechariah 14: 1.

Malachi 4:5, 6.

1 Corinthians 5:5.

2 Corinthians 1: 14.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-5.

2 Peter 3:10-12.

Jude 1:6.

Revelation 6:17; 16:14.

It is evident that these Old Testament scriptures refer to the closing scenes of earth's history; a number of them are referred to in the New Testament, and in direct connection with eschatological events. They portray happenings that come within the period known as "the day of the Lord." The following might be studied in this connection [93]:

Isaiah 2:19 with Revelation 6:16. Isaiah 13:8 with 1 Thessalonians 5:3. Isaiah 13:10 with Revelation 6:12,13. Ezekiel 13:15 with Revelation 16. Joel 2:11 with Revelation 6:17.

Joel 3:15; 2:10 with Revelation 16:8, 10.

The Terms Used for the Day of the Lord

a. It is called:

"The day of the Lord." 2 Peter 3:10.

"The day of the Lord God of hosts." Jeremiah 46:10." The day of God." 2 Peter 3:12.

"The day of the Lord's anger." Zephaniah 2:2." The day of the Lord's vengeance." Isaiah 34:8.

b. It is called:

"The great day of the Lord." Zephaniah 1:14.

"The great day of his wrath." Revelation 6:17." The great and the terrible day of the Lord." Joel 2:31." The great and dreadful day of the Lord." Malachi 4:5." That great day of God Almighty." Revelation 16:14.

3. The Beginning of the Day of the Lord

The beginning of the day of God is marked by several important features:

a. The close of probation.

"It was needful that men should be roused to prepare for the solemn events connected with the close of probation. The prophet of God declares: The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" [94]

b. The close of Christ's Priestly ministry.

"When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin." [95]

c. The standing up of Michael.

"When our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He [Michael] will stand up." [96]

d. The issuance of the divine decree closing probation's hour.

“When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man’s behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. When Jesus leaves His position as man’s intercessor before God, the solemn announcement is made, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ [97]

e. The Pouring out of the seven last plagues.

“When our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.” [98]

“When the seven last plagues shall be poured out then it will be forever too late to repent. At that time shall Michael stand up.” [99]

“The seven last plagues will be poured out after Jesus leaves the sanctuary.” [100]

f. The closing of the door of mercy.

“When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of earth. Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above.” [101]

4. The Duration of the Day of the Lord

Many are the events that take place during this great day. In view of the particular importance of some of them, we shall consider them as separate items of study. It will involve meditating on such questions as the time of trouble, the seven last plagues, the war of Armageddon, the deliverance of the saints, the coming of the Lord, and brief mention of the utter destruction of the hosts of evil and the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord.

The apostle Peter describes in graphic language the closing events of this great period of time:

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.” 2 Peter 3:10-13.

Reference is here made to the destruction not only of sin and sinners but also of the earth itself, and to the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. We feel warranted in concluding, therefore, that “the day of the Lord” ends when every trace of sin has vanished from the fair universe of God.

“The day of the Lord,” then, we believe, begins at the close of probation and ends when the reign of sin is over and the reign of everlasting righteousness is established.

We shall now give closer study to some of the important events that take place during this period of “the day of the Lord.”

C. The Time of Trouble

We are all well acquainted with the expression “the time of trouble.” It is referred to several times in the Scriptures. There, however, it is mentioned in a general way as a period applying to the last days—something that occurs just before the Second Advent of our Lord.

The Spirit of prophecy writings have amplified the thought, and make reference to three aspects of this period. These might be listed as follows:

1. The general time of trouble.
2. The time of Jacob’s trouble.
3. The little time of trouble.

The first and second of these take place after probation closes; the third occurs a little time before the door of mercy is forever shut.

1. The General Time of Trouble

The general time of trouble is referred to particularly in the writings of the patriarch Job and in the prophecy of Daniel. In Daniel we read:

“At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of thy people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1. In Job we read: “Has thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or has thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” Job 38:22, 23.

From Daniel’s reference it is evident that the time of trouble immediately follows the standing up of Michael. This, we have already seen, is synchronous with the close of probation and the beginning of the seven last plagues.

From Job it seems clear that the time of trouble continues until the seventh plague; the reference to the “hail” tells us that the time of the last plague is included. This, he says, has been reserved for the day of battle and war.”

It should be noted also that the following four scriptures have their application to the general time of trouble:

a. Revelation 22:11-The decree goes forth:

“When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still.” [102]

b. Amos 8:11, 12-The Word of God is sought:

“Behold, the days come, said the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.”

Referring to this passage, the Spirit of prophecy tells us: “All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God’s mercy which they have so long despised.” [103]

c. Revelation 14:9, 10-The unmixed wrath of God is poured out:

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”

d. Isaiah 28:21-The strange act of God is seen:

“God’s judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is none the less certain and terrible because it is long delayed. ‘The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wrath as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. ’ To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act.” [104]

2. The Time of Jacob’s Trouble

The Divine Record, however, mentions another period, known as “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” This is mentioned by Jeremiah: “Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jeremiah 30:7.

This is the only place in Scripture where this particular period is referred to, at least under this name; it is a shorter period of time, and immediately precedes the coming of Christ.

This time of trouble is associated with Satan’s war against the church of God, and is referred to by the messenger of the Lord on several occasions. [105] Observe also the following:

“Jacob’s experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ’s Second Coming. The prophet Jeremiah, in holy vision looking down to this time, said: Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble.” [106]

The time of Jacob’s trouble begins, it seems, at the moment the international death decree goes forth that the saints are to be slain.

“A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob’s trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God.” [107]

This will be a worldwide decree.” When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof.” [108]

As to the time when the decree is issued, we might notice the following excerpt: “I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus’ work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints.” [109]

Hence it would seem that the time of Jacob’s trouble would begin after the general time of trouble had begun. According to this extract from Early Writings, the death decree is issued after the “plagues” (plural) begin to fall.

This, it seems, would mean at least two. The plagues would then continue until the deliverance of God’s people. There is further reference, however, as to the time. We read:

“The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God’s people. Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: ‘There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.’ The sea ‘became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.’ And ‘the rivers and fountains of waters became blood.’ Terrible as these inflictions are, God’s justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: ‘Thou art righteous, O Lord, because thou has judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou has given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.’” [110]

Now notice the comment on the last words of this text: “By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands.” [111]

If we understand this aright, it would locate the issuance of the death decree about the close of the second plague. Before the wicked are given blood to drink under the third plague, they will have manifested their hatred of the saints by condemning them to death. Therefore, it seems that the issuance of the decree marks the beginning of the time of Jacob’s trouble, and that this would be promulgated about the time of the close of the second and before the pouring out of the third vial.

As the wicked suffer from the sores of the first plague, they will lay the blame for these judgments on the saints of God.

“Many of the wicked were greatly enraged, as they suffered the effects of the plagues. It was a scene of fearful agony. Parents were bitterly reproaching their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers.” [112]

“Those who honor the law of God have been accused of bringing judgments upon the world, and they will be regarded as the cause of the fearful convulsions of nature and the strife and bloodshed among men that are filling the earth with woe.” [113]

“The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, ‘both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,’ shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false Sabbath.” [114]

“The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob’s trouble.” [115]

The decree that condemns the saints to death is referred to as follows:

“Then I saw the leading men of earth consulting together, and Satan and his angels busy around them. I saw a writing, copies of which were scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people were at liberty after a certain time, to put them to death.” [116]

“It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state, ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death.” [117]

“The angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob’s trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs’ graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, does thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’” [118]

“As the saints left the cities and villages, they were pursued by the wicked, who sought to slay them. But the swords that were raised to kill God’s people broke and fell as powerless as a straw. Angels of God shielded the saints. As they cried day and night for deliverance, their cry came up before the Lord.” [119]

At the close of this time of crisis, in this fearful hour of soul agony, God will gloriously deliver His people.

“With earnest longing, God’s people await the tokens of their coming King. As the watchmen are accosted, ‘What of the night?’ the answer is given unfalteringly, The morning comes, and also the night. Light is gleaming upon the clouds above the mountain tops. Soon there will be a revealing of His glory. The Sun of Righteousness is about to shine forth. The morning and the night are both at hand, the opening of endless day to the righteous, the settling down of eternal night to the wicked.” [120]

3. The Little Time of Trouble

There is reference also to another aspect of the time of trouble. This, however, is just before our great High Priest finishes His work in the sanctuary above. Mention of this is found in Early Writings, as follows: “And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully.” [121]

This pronouncement of the Spirit of prophecy, which came in 1847, is amplified in a further pronouncement made at a later date. We quote from Early Writings:

“The commencement of the time of trouble, here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.” [122]

It seems clear from this excerpt that during this little time of trouble there will be bloodshed and slaughter among the nations; yet with all this, the powers of earth are held in check, and the final contest will not come until the plagues are poured out. These engagements are but preliminaries to the last great battle.

Thus there are three aspects to the time of trouble: (1) that before the close of probation, (2) the general time of trouble from the close of Christ’s ministry in heaven to the coming of the Lord, and (3) the one known as Jacob’s trouble, from the time the death decree goes forth, right up to the time of the deliverance of the saints of God.

D. The Seven Last Plagues

Much counsel has been given by the Lord regarding the importance of the seven last plagues and the vital need of the preparation necessary to stand in that evil day. One of these plagues has been singled out and given special mention, and that is the last of the series.

“We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field.” [123]

1. The Nature

These plagues are the judgments of God that will fall upon the shelterless heads of the wicked. The term “judgment” is used of the plagues in Revelation 16:7 and 18:10, and we find also the following: “When God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.” [124] In these plagues will be poured out the wrath of God (Revelation 15:1); it will be the wrath of God unmixed with divine mercy (Revelation 14:10).

The list of the plagues, their nature, and their recipients are as follows:

Vial Nature Poured Out On

No. 1 Grievous sore Earth

No. 2 Blood Sea

No. 3 Blood Rivers

No. 4 Intensified heat Sun

No. 5 Darkness Beast

No. 6 Euphrates dried up Euphrates

No. 7 Great hail Air

2. The Duration

The time during which the seven last plagues are poured out is a relatively short period, compared with the over-all period of “the day of the Lord.” We have considered the time of the plagues to be about one year. This is based particularly on the statement in the Apocalypse, which reads, “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day.” Revelation 18:8.

Referring to this time, Ellen G. White remarks:

“Fallen angels upon earth form confederations with evil men. In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law of God will be fully made void in the nations of our world. Rebellion against God’s holy law will be fully ripe. But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived, and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But Omnipotence will interpose, and to the apostate churches that unite in the exaltation of Satan, the sentence will go forth, “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire. For strong is the Lord God who judges her.” [125]

The prophetic forecast of the particular period of one day is seen in the book of Isaiah: “Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.” Isaiah 9:14.

“But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of your enchantments.” Isaiah 47:9.

This passage from Isaiah 47:9 is quoted by the messenger of the Lord in connection with the destruction of Babylon in Prophets and Kings, page 534.

To the period of the seven last plagues applies also that well-known passage from the Psalms:

“A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not conic nigh thee. Only with your eyes shall thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.” Psalm 91:7-11.

These plagues doubtless come within one symbolic day, or literal year. A paragraph in The Great Controversy, however, seems to indicate that in so far as it affects the saints, the period may be shortened:

“The people of God must drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work, they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religions experience. Yet for the elect’s sake, the time of trouble will be shortened. ‘Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. ’ The end will come more quickly than men expect.” [126]

3. The Recipients

Those who are the recipients of the plagues are clearly mentioned in both the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy. In the main these final judgments seem to fall on Babylon, but the wicked generally in all the world are affected by them.

Notice the mention made-

a. In the Scriptures.

Those who have the mark of the beast and worship the image. Revelation 16:2. Those who have shed the blood of the saints and prophets. Verses 6, 3, 7. Those at the headquarters of the beast. Verse 10.

Those who constitute Babylon. Revelation 18:10-17.

b. In the Spirit of prophecy.

On all the wicked. Early Writings, Pages 120, 282.

On all false shepherds. Ibid., Pages 124, 282, 289.

On earth's inhabitants. Ibid., Page 289.

On kings and nobles, rich and poor. Testimonies, Volume 1, 140.

4. The Scope

This has been well expressed in The Great Controversy. We quote as follows:

“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals.” [127]

5. The First Five Plagues

a. The first, second, and third.

Under the first plague a malignant sore falls upon those who have the mark of the beast and who worship his image.

Those who had received the mark themselves and those who had marked others are now marked with a grievous, festering sore.

Under the second and third plagues the seas and rivers are turned into blood. Again we see the retributive aspect of these divine judgments. Men have shed the blood of saints and prophets; now they themselves are given blood to drink.

“The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel, were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the revelator, in describing these terrific scourges: ‘There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.’ The sea ‘became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.’ And ‘the rivers and fountains of waters became blood.’ [128]

b. The fourth and fifth.

Under the fourth plague the sun's heat is intensified, and to such an extent that men are scorched and burned. With many, the sun, through the years, has been, either directly or indirectly, an object of worship. Now the very object of their veneration turns and rends them. The terrible condition obtaining in the earth at this time is described in Joel 1:10-20 and Amos 8:1

“Power is given to the sun ‘to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.’ The

prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: ‘The land mourns; because the harvest of the field is perished.’ ‘All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.’ ‘The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate.’ ‘How do the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture. The rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.’ ‘The songs of the temple shall be howling in that day, said the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.’ [129]

The darkness that falls under the fifth plague is a darkness deep and intense. It is evidently more than physical darkness, and is similar to that which afflicted the land of Egypt centuries ago.

“Suddenly a darkness settled upon the land, so thick and black that it seemed a ‘darkness which might be felt.’ Not only were the people deprived of light, but the atmosphere was very oppressive, so that breathing was difficult. ‘They saw not one another; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.’ [130]

Chapter 39 in *The Great Controversy* gives detailed information on the events that will take place during the period of the plagues. As to what occurs [131] under the first five of these judgments we might note:

- (1) God’s restraining influence is withdrawn.
- (2) Satan has full control of the wicked.
- (3) Satan plunges the world into final trouble; all the elements of strife are let loose.

“As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.” [132]

(4) Nations invent deadly instruments of warfare.” Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels, with their living cargo, will be entombed in the great deep.” [133]

- (5) Saints now live without an intercessor.
- (6) Satan has full control of apostate churches.
- (7) The wicked are incensed against the saints.
- (8) Satan incites the wicked to greater hatred against the saints.
- (9) The decree to annihilate God’s people is issued.
- (10) Anarchy, lawlessness, bloodshed, and woe are everywhere.
- (11) Satan controls destructive powers of nature.
- (12) There is a famine for the Word of God.
- (13) Spiritual darkness is followed by physical darkness.
- (14) Under a strong delusion men believe Satan is supreme.
- (15) Satan appears impersonating Christ.

6. The Sixth Plague

This is one of the most important, if not the most important, plague of the series. So much takes place under the pouring out of this vial that we do well to give it careful study. This plague, together with the seventh, sees the concentration of Satan’s efforts and the fullest manifestation of his evil cunning in all his rebellious attempts to overthrow the government of God.

First of all, let us look at a suggested outline of what occurs at this time. Then we will meditate on a few of the important features.

1. Concerning the kings of the east.
 - a. The vial on Euphrates.
 - b. The waters dried up.
 - c. The way of the kings of the east prepared.
2. Concerning the kings of the earth.

a. Promoters of the gathering.

(1) Primary factors.

(a) By Satan.

(b) By spirits of demons.

(c) By unclean spirits.

(2) Secondary factors.

(a) By the dragon.

(b) By the beast.

(c) By the false prophet.

b. Process of the gathering.

(1) The approach "To go forth unto the kings."

(2) The deception "Working miracles."

(3) The gathering – "To gather them together."

c. Purpose of the gathering.

(1) To the battle of the great day of God.

(2) To the place Armageddon.

(3) To the battle against Christ.

3. Concerning the people of God.

a. The assurance – "Behold, I come."

b. The warning – "Lest he walk naked."

c. The blessing - On him "that watches."

Before referring further to any of these items, however, let us remember that we are now in the realm of unfulfilled prophecy, and that upon several of these matters we have been given very little counsel and enlightenment. Here we do well to move cautiously, and not seek to be more definite in our conclusions than the Word of God and the Spirit of prophecy would warrant. Francis D. Nichol, in his book *Reasons for Our Faith*, has made some pertinent and helpful observations on this question:

"There are ardent souls who violate the principle that some things are secret and belong alone to God, by seeking to fill in the details of an unfulfilled prophecy. It is remarkable how brief most prophetic statements in the Scriptures are. Evidently God did not see fit to tell us all the details. He has given us enough prophetic information to provide us with great way marks that leave us in no doubt as to the direction in which the world is going, and the direction in which our feet should go in order to reach the kingdom of God. But how tempting it is to paint in detail where God has given only a few simple, bold strokes to the outline. And how plausible the painting looks when it has been completed with the aid of a vivid imagination."

"Where the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy are both silent as to the details of future events, reverence and a realization of the blunders of former speculators prompt us to be silent also." [134]

The Spirit of prophecy also gives counsel: "Many feel that a responsibility rests upon them to explain every seeming difficulty in the Bible in order to meet the cavils of skeptics and infidels. But in trying to explain that which they but imperfectly understand, they are

in danger of confusing the minds of others in reference to points that are clear and easy to be understood. This is not our work. Nor should we lament that these difficulties exist, but accept them as permitted by the wisdom of God.” [135]

We shall endeavor to follow this advice in our approach to some of the questions in this section of the study. This will apply to such items as the Euphrates, the kings of the east, and in a specific sense to certain phases of the war of Armageddon.

a. The Euphrates.

Evidently both the name Euphrates and its drying up are to be considered symbolically, for the drying up of the literal river could have little or no significance in the worldwide events of the last days.

The river Euphrates naturally means waters, and these, we are told, represent “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” (Revelation 17:1, 15) But these waters are dried up, and when this historic moment arrives, the way is prepared for the final gathering of the nations of the whole world, even those from the east, to the battle of the great day of God.

b. The Kings of the East.

When seeking to ascertain what is meant by the expression “kings of the east,” it will be well to keep in mind the fact that it is the kings of the earth and of the whole world that are to be gathered to this final conflict. None are to be left out; they will come from all parts of the globe, irrespective of religious or political affiliations; they are gathered by the powers of evil to the last great contest—the contest in which the God of heaven eventually takes a hand. That this great conflict is worldwide is further seen in the prophecy of Jeremiah. He makes reference in no uncertain language to the final conflict.

“The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation. For the Lord has a controversy with the nations. Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.” Jeremiah 25:30-32.

Here we have the prophetic picture of the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Note that all the nations are assembled. But from where do they come? The previous verses in this chapter give the answer: they come from the south (verses 19, 21, 23, 24), they come from the west (verses 9-10, 22), they come also from the east (verses 21, 25), and from the north (“And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth.” Verse 26),

One fact is clear, however, and that is that all the nations will come; they will come from the four corners of the earth, from the north and from the south, emphasized particularly by the prophet Daniel (Jeremiah 25 and Daniel 11). And from the west and from the east, stressed particularly by the seer of Patmos (Revelation 16:12), and they will all be gathered to “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

7. The Seventh Plague

In order to obtain a general view of what takes place under the pouring out of the seventh plague, let us notice particularly an outline of events.

The great voice from heaven announces, “It is done.”

1. Happenings from heaven.

a. The voices.

b. The thundering.

c. The lightning.

d. The great hail.

2. Happenings on Babylon.

a. It is remembered before

b. It falls into three parts.

c. It blasphemes God.

d. It receives wrath of God.

3. Happenings on earth.

a. The earthquake.

b. The cities fall.

c. The islands flee.

d. The mountains disappear.

Revelation 16, however, gives us but the bare outline of the nature of the plagues and on whom they fall. Revelation 18 goes more into detail and shows especially how the vials of wrath affect great Babylon, the particular object of the unmingled wrath of God.

Note that the following seven features which occur under the seventh plague are features which take place before or in connection with the Second Advent of the Savior:

Great voice from heaven. Isaiah 30:30; Jeremiah 25:30; Joel 3:16; Zephaniah 1:14; Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 340.

Thunder and lightning. Isaiah 30:30; Early Writings, Page 15.

Earthquake. Isaiah 2:21; 13:13; 24:1; Jeremiah 4:24, 26; Joel 3:16; Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 110; The Great Controversy, Pages 637, 638.

Islands flee. Revelation 6:14 (Isaiah 13:13; Joel 3:16); Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 340. Mountains disappear. Revelation 6:14; Jeremiah 4:24; Revelation 16:20.

Great hail fell. Isaiah 30:30; Ezekiel 13:13; 38:22; Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 509; The Desire of Ages, Page 740; The Great Controversy, Page 637.

His wrath. Revelation 6:16, 17; Zephaniah 1:15. (The Desire of Ages, Pages 739, 740, and The Great Controversy, Pages 641, 642, show that Revelation 6:16, 17 and Revelation 19:16 portray the same events.)

We naturally think of the actual coming of the Lord in connection with the seventh plague, but it must be remembered that the Second Advent in itself is not a plague. There will be, under the seventh plague, the mighty earthquake, the great hail; there will be the removal of islands and the dislocation of mountains. But all these things precede the punctiliar coming of our blessed Lord. Hence, we might think of the glorious return of the Savior as coming immediately at the close of the seventh plague. This will be the grand climax. Then the wicked hosts that were not destroyed by the plagues and by one another will be overthrown. We read, "He will come in flames of fire to take vengeance on those who have no knowledge of God." 2 Thessalonians 1:8, Weymouth. And this will be at the same time that Christ will come "to be glorified in his saints." 2 Thessalonians 1:10.

Concerning a suggested detailed sequence of events under the sixth and seventh plagues, see Appendix E, Page 328.

E. The War of Armageddon

In considering this phase of our study, we need to remember that we are again dealing with unfulfilled prophecy, and we shall endeavor to go no further in interpretation than the data given us in the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy, plus, of course, what may be gleaned from geographical and language sources.

We all know that there have been, and still are, many divergent views on the question of the great day of the Lord, and particularly concerning the nature, time, and place of the great conflict bearing the name Armageddon. The following positions are those that are most frequently urged:

1. That the battle is a spiritual conflict—one between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness.

2. That the battle is particularly of a military character, which takes place between the nations of earth, divided undoubtedly into two camps, warring against each other.

3. That the battle is between Christ and the armies of heaven on one hand and Satan and the kings of the earth on the other.

4. That the battle partakes of the features of numbers 2 and 31 and while the nations are locked in deadly combat, the Lord rides forth with the armies of heaven to have His controversy with the nations of earth.

It is not our purpose to examine these views in detail, certainly not to deal with the negative aspects of the problem, but to suggest more or less in point form what we believe to be the truth on this question. We hope to do this with due regard to the excellent counsel to which we referred just now, and shall seek to hold to the aspects of the question that we feel have been clearly revealed in either the Scriptures or the Spirit of prophecy.

The suggestion we shall make is that the battle of the great day of God, otherwise known as Armageddon, takes place during the last plagues. That this conflict is really a war-an over-all controversy in which there are several engagements against the truth of God, against the saints of God, of the nations among themselves. The final phase is reached when Christ and His angels ride forth and He has His controversy with the nations.

1. The Mention

a. Mention is made of Armageddon but once in the Bible, and that in Revelation 16:16. It is true,

however, that there are references to the great and final contest in many places in the Holy Scriptures. We need only to recall such passages as:

(1) The reference in Job in which, after calling attention to the treasures of the hail, he remarks, "Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war." Job 38:23.

(2) Also the statement in Ezekiel that tells of the preparation necessary "to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." Ezekiel 13:5.

b. There are also certain references in the Spirit of prophecy, as follows:

(1) In the published writings:

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven." [136] This is the only reference we have found in the published volumes.

(2) In the manuscripts:

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white." [137]

"Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The nations of the world are eager for conflict; but they are held in check by the angels. When this restraining power is removed, there will come a time of trouble and anguish. Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels, with their living cargo, will be entombed in the great deep. [This certainly forecasts a physical conflict.] All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon." [138]

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The Powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber and the armies of the living God will take the field." [139] (Italics supplied.)

c. The Spirit of prophecy writings refer to this great conflict also under different terms or phrases:

(1) It is called the battle of the "great day of God Almighty."

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and Powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield-the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed." [140] (Italics supplied.)

(2) It is called the “last struggle against the government of heaven.”

“Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world’s Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing, and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scripture.” [141]

(3) It is called a “greater battle” in the closing scenes of earth’s history.

“We are told of a greater battle to take place in the closing scenes of earth’s history, when ‘Jehovah has opened his armory, and has brought forth the weapons of his indignation.’ ‘Has thou,’ He inquires, entered into the treasures of the snow? Or has thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?’ The Revelator describes the destruction that is to take place when the ‘great voice out of the temple of heaven’ announces, ‘It is done.’ He says, ‘There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent.’ [142]

The emphases in the foregoing quotations have been supplied. They should be carefully studied, for they indicate quite clearly the nature of the great final contest.

(4) Many other expressions are used in these writings to designate the final attempt of Satan to overthrow the government of God. Such expressions as the following are used frequently:

The word “conflict.”

The great conflict. Testimonies, Volume 7, Page 141.

The coming conflict. The Great Controversy, Page 592.

The future conflict. Testimonies, Volume 5, Page 449.

The last great conflict. The Great Controversy, Page 582.

The final conflict. Testimonies, Volume 6, Page 352.

The spiritual conflict. Prophets and Kings, Page 176.

The last mighty conflict. Testimonies, Volume 6, Page 14.

The word “crisis.”

The approaching crisis. Testimonies, Volume 5, Page 717.

The last great crisis. Christ’s Object Lessons, Page 178.

A great crisis. Testimonies, Volume 5, Page 718.

A terrible crisis. Ibid., Page 463.

A stupendous crisis. Prophets and Kings, Page 537.

The crisis of the ages. Ibid., Page 278.

The crisis is fast approaching. Testimonies, Volume 5, Page 209.

How we need to heed the counsel that we are to understand the program of events in the marshaling of the nations for the final conflict in the great controversy.” [143]

2. The Word a Symbol

Various place names are used in the book of Revelation, such as-

Place Name Revelation Verse

Babylon 14:8

Holy City 11:2

Sardis 1:11

Egypt 11:8

Laodicea 1:11

Sodom 41:8

Ephesus 1:11

Pergamos 1:11

Smyrna 1:11

Euphrates 9:14

Philadelphia 1:11

Thyatira 1:11

It will, I feel sure, be readily conceded that these names are used as symbols, and although they are all actual locations, some of them at least, in their prophetic application, refer to altogether different geographical centers. A case in point is that of "Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified." Revelation 11:8.

Even though Armageddon seems to be a made name and has no actual geographical location, as do the names just mentioned, would it not be consistent to regard this name also as symbolic? Many, in their study of this question, have so regarded it. Note the following excerpts:

"The use of proper names and designations calls for special notice here. Even the names of the churches addressed in the epistles are not altogether an exception, for these are really intended to be typical of the whole Church. Abaddon, Harmageddon, Gog and Magog belong solely to apocalyptic language; and in our book Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, Jezebel, Zion, and Sodom have a typical sense only." [144]

"BY the employment of the Hebrew term, attention is called to the symbolic nature of the name." [145]

"The battle-field of Deborah, the heroine, judge, and prophetess, and of Barak, whose name means 'lightning,' on the one side, and the vanquished Canaanites on the other, is an appropriate symbol for the theatre of the final conflict between Messiah and the armies of the demon spirits." [146]

The following are further extracts concerning the name Armageddon's being a symbol:

"Armageddon is one of the notorious difficulties in REVELATION, though it must be said that many commentators have seen only the more obvious literal difficulty involved in it. John has pointed out to his readers that the word is a transliteration into Greek of a Hebrew word, and it is widely accepted that the original must have meant 'Mount Megiddo.' Commentators have noted, first, that there is no such mountain-for Megiddo, the scene of the battle celebrated in the Song of Deborah (Judges 5:19), is a plain; secondly, that there was a tradition, exemplified in such passages as Ezekiel 39:1 and Daniel 11:45 that the final conflict was to be among the mountains of Israel. Some have assumed therefore that mount Megiddo means the range of hills skirting the plain. We must cast aside such prosaic and literal notions. There is really no excuse for holding them, for John has told us as plainly as may be that the name is symbolical." [147]

“The word, like Euphrates, is the expression of an idea; the idea that swift and overwhelming destruction shall overtake all who gather themselves together against the Lord (Milligan).” [148]

“No hill of Megiddo has transmitted its name to later times.” [149]

“Why Har-Magedon? There was, we have every reason to believe, no such place. The name is symbolical.” [150]

Although it is without a geographical location or even a satisfactory etymology, the name ‘Armageddon’ has impressed itself upon the imagination as being the final battlefield against all evil powers to their utter defeat. This is about enough; we need to add only [Revelation] 19:11-21.” [151] (Italics supplied.)

“Armageddon. The name here given to the place where Satan’s hosts are gathered and where doubtless the battle of [Revelation] 19:11 ff. is conceived to occur is unquestionably purely mystical. It is unknown to Hebrews literature, and it would be contrary to the apocalypticist’s use of proper names to identify it, in its eschatological application, with any place so called. It is then an imaginary name for designating the scene of the great battle between Antichrist and the Messiah.” [152] (Italics supplied.)

3. The Meaning

The word “Armageddon” is found but once in the entire Bible. (Revelation 16:16) It has generally been considered as connected with Megiddo, which is mentioned twelve times in the Old Testament. (Joshua 12:2 1; 17: 11, Judges 1:27; 5:19; 1 Kings 4:12; 9: 15; 2 Kings 9:27; 23:29, 30; 1 Chronicles 7:29; 2 Chronicles 35:22)

It is found with the spelling “Megiddon” once, in Zechariah 12: 11.

The Ar at the beginning of the word translated “Armageddon- in the Authorized Version should be Har, and is so found in a number of English versions, as the Revised Version, Rotherham, Moffatt, Weymouth, Twentieth Century, et cetera. Har is the Hebrew word for “mountain,” and it is so rendered nearly five hundred times in the Old Testament.

If we consider Har as “mountain,” and the remainder of the word, mageddon, the same as the “Megiddo” of the Old Testament, we have the meaning – “mountain of Megiddo.” But was there such a mountain? We do find in the Old Testament writings references to:

The city of Megiddo. 1 Kings 9:15.

The plain of Megiddo. Zechariah 12:11 (LXX).

The waters of Megiddo. Judges 5:19.

The king of Megiddo. Joshua 12:21.

The inhabitants of Megiddo. Joshua 17:11.

The valley of Megiddo. 2 Chronicles 35:22.

The field of Megiddo. 2 Chronicles 35:22, Douay.

But there was no hill or mountain bearing that name. This is recognized by many students of prophecy, as the previous excerpts show. This being the case, we are forced to think of this word in a symbolic sense, and to consider it as a name given by the Lord to express not so much a limited geographical area as the worldwide nature of the last great battle of the day of the Lord.

Those who hold to the idea that Megiddo is a valley do so in spite of the fact that a mountain is indicated in the word “Har-magedon.” They apply it to the valley or plain of Megiddo, and this, one can readily see, is the opposite of a mountain. Those who advocate this refer to the fact that four great battles

were fought there in ancient days, battles in which the children of Israel participated. These are:

Great victory which Barak won over the Canaanites. Judges 4, 5.

Victory of Gideon over the Midianites. Judges 7.

Battle in which Saul met his death at the hands of the Philistines. 1 Samuel 31:8.

Battle in which Josiah was killed by the Egyptians. 2 Kings 93:29, 30.

Here are recorded two great victories for the children of God and two great disasters. Doubtless

the victorious experiences were typical of the battle of the great day of God. At that time there will certainly be disaster for the hosts of evil and glorious victory for the cause of righteousness and truth. Not only were these engagements in the valley of Megiddo typical of the final struggle, but there were other military combats that convey their lessons and fore view of what God will do in delivering His people from the hosts of evil in the last days.

Under God Asa defeated the Ethiopians at Mareshah, west of the Dead Sea; Jehoshaphat defeated the hordes of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites southwest of Jerusalem; and Hezekiah routed the armies of Sennacherib at the siege of Jerusalem. There were other instances also, several of them being wonderful examples of divine intervention in saving God's cause from disaster and reproach.

"The pride of Assyria and its fall are to serve as an object lesson to the end of time. 'The pride of Assyria shall be brought down.' This is true not only of the nations that arrayed themselves against God in ancient times, but also of nations to-day who fail of fulfilling the divine purpose." [153]

Hence, we believe that these incidents of the days of long ago, irrespective of whether the contest took place at the valley of Megiddo or in any other place, were typical of the final conflict.

Those who advocate the Megiddo of the Old Testament as the Mageddon of the war of Armageddon, do so because they consider that it comes from the Hebrew word Gadad, meaning "to press, to cut, to penetrate." One authority gives as the meaning of Megiddo, "A place of troops"; another authority gives, "A place of troops or squadrons"; still others, "A place of slaughter."

There are others, however, who think that the Hebrew basis is the word Mogad or Mogath, rather than Gadad. This gives an entirely different concept. This means to be glorious, to excel in glory. The meaning of Armageddon would then be "the glorious mountain." This is significant, for the habitation of the Most High is designated by similar language. Jeremiah speaks of His "glorious high throne" (Jeremiah 17:12); David refers to the tabernacle on high as "the glorious sanctuary" (Psalm 96:9, margin). This is a picture of Mount Zion, the dwelling place of our God. It is significant also that when the Lord rides forth for the salvation of the saints, His voice sounds forth from Mount Zion.

"The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:16.

"And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." Isaiah 30:30.

"And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem." Amos 1:2.

Fuerst, in his Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, gives one meaning of Megiddo as "a place of God"; and this is in full harmony with what has just been mentioned.

Hence we might think of both meanings in our understanding of what takes place in the final crisis. It is certainly indicative of slaughter for the wicked hosts; it is also the mountain of God-the glorious holy mountain to the redeemed of the Lord.

4. The Location

If we accept the principle that the names of cities mentioned in the book of Revelation are symbols, then we need to look for a location for Armageddon undoubtedly of wider and larger scope than the geographical valley of Megiddo, or of any other specific area on the earth. The following considerations should be borne in mind in our study of this phase of the subject:

a. All the nations of earth are involved.

"The kings of the earth and of the whole world." Revelation 16:14.

"I will plead with all flesh." Jeremiah 25:31.

"Indignation of the Lord is upon all nations." Isaiah 34:2.

“Even all the nations of the earth.” Jeremiah 25:31.

“From one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth,” Jeremiah 25:33.

“The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations.” Isaiah 34:2.

b. The whole earth is involved.

“Gather the nations assemble the kingdoms all the earth.” Zephaniah 3:8.

“Assemble yourselves and come, all you heathen.” Joel 3:11.

“To destroy the whole land.” Isaiah 13:5.

“Even upon the whole earth.” Isaiah 28:22.

We might rightly conclude that the entire earth is to be the battlefield. This conclusion we feel is sustained by the Spirit of prophecy.

“A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The Earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.” [154] (*Italics supplied.*)

Of the time when Christ rides forth with the armies of heaven we read:

“The whole earth heaves and swells.” [155]

“He arises to shake terribly the earth.” Isaiah 2:21.” All the inhabitants of the earth.” [156]

“Every eye beholds the Prince of life.” [157]

“All faces are turned into paleness.” Jeremiah 30:6.

“At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole Earth.” [158]

Furthermore, the persecution of the saints will not be in one locality only; it will be simultaneous efforts all over the world:

“When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction.” [159]

“As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false Sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.” [160]

“Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world.” [161]

“The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth.” [162]

It will surely not be necessary for the nations of earth to be gathered together in any one specific locality for this battle. The conflict will be worldwide, whether against the truth, against the saints, or even among the nations themselves. Then in that phase of Armageddon in which Christ and His armies ride forth, they will bring the contest to the nations just where they are, anywhere on the face of the earth.

5. The Time

Much of the difficulty in understanding what the conflict of Armageddon really means is due to the failure to note carefully when this great contest takes place. In connection with this particular aspect of the question, note:

a. It will take place “soon.”

“The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven. It cannot now be said by the Lord’s servants, as it was by the prophet Daniel, ‘The time appointed was long.’ Daniel 10:1. It is now but a short time till the witnesses for God will have done their work in preparing the way of the Lord.” [163]

“We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” [164]

“To take place in the closing scenes of earth’s history.” [165]

b. it will take place during the day of the Lord.

Revelation 16:14: “of that great day of God Almighty.”

Ezekiel 13:5: “in the day of the Lord.”

Revelation 16:14, RSV: “on the great day of God.” Weymouth: “To assemble them for the battle which is to take place on the great day of God.”

The battle of Armageddon is linked intimately with the “great day of God Almighty.” (Revelation 16:14)

“A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed.” [166]

Armageddon, then, cannot come before the close of probation; it is actually in the day of the Lord. Furthermore, it is not mentioned until the sixth plague. During that time the nations are gathered for it, and the actual contest begins during the sixth plague. The duration of the war of Armageddon, it seems, is from some time during the sixth plague to the Second Advent of Jesus, which occurs at the end of the seventh plague.

6. The Battle of the Nations

For many years, in fact, ever since the beginning of our work, we have taught that the battle of Armageddon, in some way or other, would involve the nations of earth in a last and final clash of arms. This position, we believe, is well sustained by the Word of God.

It will be well, however, to make a careful survey of some of the Scripture passages we have used in this connection, to see their application in the light of the illumination shed on them by the Spirit of prophecy. Let us think of such scriptures as Isaiah 9:5; Jeremiah 4:19, 20; Jeremiah 25; Joel 1:12,18; 3:8-16; Zephaniah 1 and 2; Zechariah 14; Matthew 24:6, 7; Luke 21:25.

Most of these references are used in the writings of Ellen G. White, and we shall seek to place some of these texts and comments in a classification as follows:

a. As applying to war among the nations before the close of probation.

“And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that you be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” Matthew 24:6, 7.

“Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” Luke

“And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity.” Luke 21:25.

b. As applying to the last days, and to the days prior to the close of probation.

(1) Concerning Matthew 24:6, 7:

“Everything in our world is in agitation. Before our eyes is fulfilling the Savior’s prophecy of the events to precede His coming: ‘You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.’ The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of great trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place, that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis. Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom. But a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth; and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.” [167]

“Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that are to precede His Second Coming: ‘You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application to the last days.’” [168]

“There are wars and rumors of wars. The nations are angry. But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their heads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle.” [169]

(2) Concerning Luke 21:25:

“He has warned the world of the day of final destruction, and has given them tokens of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come. Jesus declares, ‘There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations.’ Those who behold these harbingers of His coming are to know that it is near, even at the doors.” [170]

“I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land. Once more the inhabitants of the earth were presented before me; and again everything was in the utmost confusion. Strife, war, and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this war and confusion. War caused famine, want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men’s hearts failed them for fear, ‘and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.’” [171]

(3) General Spirit of prophecy extracts:

“The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other.” [172]

“The world is stirred with the spirit of war.” [173]

“The nations are angry with one another. Widespread preparations are being made for war.” [174] “The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.” [175]

The Scriptures tell about the nations in conflict all through the centuries of history, but we would hardly think of such wars and contests as Armageddon. Some of the texts we have reviewed, and even others might be mentioned, but many of them refer to warlike conditions in the last days, and particularly to those days just prior to the close of probation.

c. As applying to the time when the angels loose the winds of strife.

Inasmuch as the war of Armageddon begins under the sixth plague, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the wars mentioned above are the preliminaries to the great, final struggle in which all the nations will be involved. During these preliminary hostile engagements the nations experiment with their newly invented and diabolical engines of destruction. They build up mighty and powerful armies; they develop gigantic plants for the manufacture of more and more terrible means of extermination; they delve into the secrets of God in splitting the atom and using this hitherto latent force of nature for wholesale and widespread annihilation. In these developments the prophecy of Joel is fulfilled. This constitutes a sure sign that the day of final decision (concision, margin) is at hand. It waits only the loosing of the four winds by the angelic beings who, to a large degree, are holding them in check until the sealing work is fully completed.

It is after the saints are all sealed, and the mighty fiat goes forth from the throne of God, that the actual war of the day of God is to take place. This will be, in part at least, while the judgments of God are falling without mercy upon the shelterless heads of the ungodly,

and will reach its climax when the Lord from heaven rides forth to have His controversy with the nations. This is indicated in Revelation 7:2, 3, where we read:

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

“As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle.” [176]

“When God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.” [177]

“There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere.” [178]

“Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.” [179]

“John sees the elements of nature-earthquakes, tempest, and political strife-represented as being held by four angels. These winds are under control until God gives the word to let them go.” [180]

“Strife and bloodshed among men are filling the earth with woe.” [181]

“Angels are holding the four winds, which are represented as an angry horse seeking to break loose, and rush over the face of the whole earth, bearing destruction and death in its path.” [182]

d. As applying to the closing scenes of the great day of the Lord.

The following scriptures have their application to this time, and, it seems, during the time of the sixth plague particularly:

Joel 1:12-18. Prophets and Kings, Page 726.

Jeremiah 4:19. Ibid., Pages 538, 727.

Joel 2:11. The Great Controversy, Page 310.

Amos 5:18,20. Ibid.

“The earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption.” [183]

“For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.” Isaiah 9:5.

This is applied to the time of the sixth plague, immediately preceding the Second Advent. We read: “The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, ‘with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,’ is stilled. The cry bursts forth from lips so lately scoffing, The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” [184]

See also the prophetic forecast of Jeremiah: “Thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried, for the whole land is spoiled.” Jeremiah 4:19, 20.

On this passage, note the following from the Spirit of prophecy: “The darkest hour of the church’s struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance.” [185] Then follow quotations from Jeremiah 4:19, 20. Note also the following:

“I saw the sword, famine, pestilence, and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments upon them, and they rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that then the evil would be stayed.” [186]

Under date of February 15, 1846, Miss Harmon (later Mrs. E. G. White) wrote to a little paper that had printed her first vision:

“About four months since [which would be October, 1845], I had a vision of events, all in the future. And I saw the time of trouble such as never was, Jesus told me it was the time of Jacob’s trouble, and that we should be delivered out of it by the voice of God. Just before we entered it, we all received the seal of the living God. And I saw famine, and sword, nation rose against nation, pestilence and the whole-world was in confusion.” [187]

Not only will war and bloodshed exist among the nations of earth, but it seems that, because of the resultant confusion, men will turn on one another. We see this mentioned in the Scriptures:

“They shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.” Zechariah 14:13.” Every one by the sword of his brother.” Haggai 2:22.” Every man’s sword shall be against his brother.” Ezekiel 38:21.

In the Testimonies:

“The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the Earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption.” [188]

“In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God’s unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth-priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low.” [189]

“The swords which were to slay God’s people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.” [190]

“After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other.” [191]

This reign of carnage, of decimation, of slaughter, takes place after the voice of God is heard delivering His people from the hands of the wicked, and before the actual Advent of Christ, and is, we believe, part of the war of Armageddon, the grand climax of which is reached, however, in the next episode, when Christ the Lord rides forth to have His controversy with the nations, and when the noise of physical combat among the nations will be stilled.

e. As applying to the Second Coming of our Lord.

There can be little doubt that the following scriptures apply in a definite way to the actual coming of our Lord in glory:

Joel 3:12-16; Testimonies, Volume 1, Page 184; The Desire of Ages, Page 780.

Jeremiah 25:32, 33; Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 340; The Great Controversy, Pages 656, 657. Zephaniah 1:14, 18; 2:1-3; Prophets and Kings, Page 390; Testimonies, Volume 9, Pages 95, 96. Here reference is made to the voice of the Lord sounding from His holy habitation, and His riding forth for the salvation of His people. Here we see Jehovah also in His controversy with the nations of earth, and the wicked, high and low, rich and poor, being destroyed by the presence of the Lord. These scriptures are clear in the picture they portray, and evidently apply to that climactic event.

Concerning the cessation of the contest among the nations we read that at the coming of the Lord “the derisive jests have ceased. Lying lips are hushed into silence. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, ‘with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,’ is stilled.” [192]

From this review of the texts relating to the clash of nations, together with the comments from the Spirit of prophecy, one might conclude that whatever conflict there might be between the nations-which could be part of the great war of Armageddon-comes after the voice of God has delivered the saints. Then the nations, together with religious leaders, are so chagrined and frustrated at seeing the children of God those whom they had determined to obliterate from the face of the earth-now beyond their reach that they turn and fight among themselves until the earth itself literally rolls “in blood.”

“When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life.”

“The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion.”

“Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption.”

“The multitudes are filled with fury. The swords which were to slay God’s people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.” [193]

Such is the picture presented to our gaze at the moment following the deliverance of the people of God by Christ Jesus. At that time He most surely delivers over “them that are wicked to the sword.” Jeremiah 25:31.

7. The War

a. The war of Armageddon.

The word used to designate this conflict in our Bible is “battle,” whereas the more correct translation of the original word is “war.” This will be seen in the following considerations:

(1) The word rendered “battle” in Revelation 16:14 is from the Greek word Polemos. This and its verbal form polemeō are rendered as follows: Battle-5 times. War, or make war-15 times. Fight-4 times.

An analysis of the Scriptural passages reveals their application:

To the war in heaven-3 times.

The Papacy against the saints-5 times.

To the judgments of God-1 time.

To Armageddon-4 times.

To the end of the millennium-1 time.

It will be noted that “war” rather than “battle” is the thought of these words. They are rendered “battle” 5 times, but “war” 15 times.

The Revised Version uniformly renders polemos and polemeō by the word “war.”

(2) The Greeks, it seems, used at least two words to indicate hostilities: polemos, meaning war, and mache, meaning battle. Archbishop Trench, in his Synonyms of the New Testament, remarks:

“Polemos and ‘Mache’ occur often together. There is the same difference between them as between our own ‘war’ and ‘battle.’ The Peloponnesian War; the Battle of Marathon. Dealing with the words in this antithesis ‘polemos’ embraces the whole course of hostilities; ‘mache’ the actual shock in arms of hostile armies.” [194]

Another student of the Word of God writes:

“To collect them to the war of the great day of God Almighty.’ The English version, and some private versions, puzzle or mislead readers by using the phrase ‘the battle’; while the word ‘polemos’ is not ‘a battle,’ but battle in the abstract, or war. A battle is expressed by mache. So in Latin a battle is proplium, and a war is bellum. John speaks of the war of the great day of God the Almighty.” [195]

W. E. Vine assures us:

“Polemos, a war, is incorrectly rendered ‘battle’ in the A. V. of 1 Corinthians 14:8; Revelation 9:7, 9; 16:14; 20:8.” [196]

(3) The words battle and war in the original tongues, as well as in the English translations, are both used in connection with this final series of hostilities. Note the following scriptures:

Jeremiah 4:19: “Thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.”

The word for war is Polemos in the LXX.

Joel 3:9: “Proclaim you this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up.”

The word war is used twice in this text, and in each case is *polemos* in the LXX.

Job 38:23: “Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war.”

The one word is from *mache* and the other from *polemos* in the LXX.

Ezekiel 13:5: “You have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord.”

The word battle in this text is the same as that rendered war” in Joel 3:9 and Jeremiah 4:19, and is from *polemos* in the LXX.

The conflict of Armageddon, then, is the “war” (*polemos*) of that great day of God Almighty.”

Hence, if we recognize Armageddon as a “war” rather than a “battle,” we shall be prepared to recognize a series of engagements rather than one conflict in this closing struggle.

8. Certain Suggested Engagements

All through the ages Satan has warred against heaven. Now comes his final effort-his attempt to vanquish the government of the Most High. Into this blind obsession he pours all his hellish craftiness, his diabolical cunning, his malignant hatred; it is his supreme essay, his last desperate venture, to gain universal sway.

There have been crises in the work of God before, but nothing like this crisis; there have been times of acute trouble through the centuries, but never a time of trouble like this one. There have been times of devastating, destructive war, but never such a time of utter abandonment, of universal carnage, of vindictive malignity, as now. To the evil one Armageddon is the grand culmination of all the pent-up passions of devilish spite and satanic bitterness. Now is seen the fullest fruition of his hellish design; now it is seen in all its naked enormity. It is stripped of its glamour and veneer; the principles of the arch rebel are now unmasked, and can be seen by all the inhabitants in the great universe of God in their true perspective.

The war of Armageddon is the summing up of all this remorseless opposition and Violent hatred. Wars there have been throughout the centuries; nation has fought against nation all through earth’s history. The kings of the earth have engaged in titanic struggles right up to the close of probation, but nothing up to that time could be called Armageddon.

The same applies to every other kind of conflict-the contest between good and evil, or the war against the saints. Nothing before this could be denominated Armageddon. But this last, mighty struggle is called by this name.

We might suggest at least four great battles in this last mighty war:

a. There will be the battle between truth and error.

This involves the conflict between good and evil, between the law of God and the laws of men.” The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God.” [197]

“The whole universe is watching the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil.” [198]

b. There will be the battle against the saints.

Satan still continues his set purpose to obliterate the people of God.

“God’s people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction.” [199] “There will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction.” [200]

c. There will be the battle of nation against nation.

This seems to take place after the voice of God is heard bringing deliverance to the saints. Then the leaders of men, together with the nations of earth, become so enraged, so infuriated, that their prey has been snatched from their grasp, that they turn and fight one another.

“When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow-men, but because God has conquered. The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion.”

“The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God’s unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth, priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low!” [201]

“The very hands that once crowned them with laurels, will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God’s people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.” [202]

d. Then there will be the battle when the Lord from heaven rides forth and has His controversy with the nations.

Then the kings of the earth, together with the beast and his armies, are arrayed against Christ the Lord.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful!” Revelation 17:14.

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Revelation 19:19.

Now the sword of divine justice is unsheathed; now the artillery of heaven is brought into action.

We read in Jeremiah:

“A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, said the Lord. Thus said the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth.” Jeremiah 25:31-33.

The Lord speaks of this phase of the war in language we can understand. In connection with Armageddon and His Second Coming, we read of-

His controversy. Jeremiah 25:31.

His battle. Revelation 16:14.

His vengeance. Isaiah 34:8.

His indignation. Verse 2.

His slaughter. Verse 6.

His destruction. Isaiah 13:6.

His strange act. Isaiah 28:21.

His year of recompence for the controversy of Zion. Isaiah 34:8.

Of this grand climax, when the nations make war against Christ and are destroyed, we read:

“Jesus rides forth a mighty conqueror ‘faithful and true,’ ‘in righteousness he does judge and make war.’ And ‘the armies which were in heaven follow him.’ [203]

“At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth, consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His glory.” [204]

Hence, the last act in the great controversy covers not only the contest between righteousness and unrighteousness but also Satan’s final effort to annihilate God’s people. The last clash of nations, as well as the final, very real, literal, and physical agony and anguish of soul, will be experienced by the ungodly at the return of Christ the Lord.

However spiritual the conflict between good and evil may have been, it is nonetheless sure that the end of the conflict will mean real combat, real fire, real hailstones, and real destruction upon the nations.” The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven.” [205]

“The enmity of Satan against good, will be manifested more and more, as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion; and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe.” [206]

“The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend.” [207]

This is the last phase of Armageddon, the battle that is soon to be fought.” The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white.” [208]

D. The Deliverance of the Saints

This has already been referred to in part, but let us observe the details a little closer. We will notice the following:

1. The Warning

The Lord has through the years earnestly counseled His people concerning the trials to be experienced during the time of trouble. Besides the general counsel in such passages as Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, we have explicit direction-

In Zephaniah: “Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord’s anger come upon you. Seek you the Lord, all you meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zephaniah 2:1-3.

In Revelation: “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Revelation 16:15.

In the Spirit of prophecy: “I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing,’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” [209]

“He [Satan] is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

“Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His Word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” [210]

2. The Experience

The experience of God's people, as we have already seen, is called the time of Jacob's trouble. It is a time of intense trial for the redeemed of the Lord.

"A refusal to obey the commandments of God, and a determination to cherish hatred against those who proclaim these commandments, leads to the most determined war on the part of the dragon, whose whole energies are brought to bear against the commandment-keeping people of God. 'He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead: that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.' Revelation 13: 16, 17." [211]

"God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction." [212]

The Scriptures forecast the time when the boycott will be imposed, and none without the mark of the beast will be able to buy or sell. (Revelation 13:17) It tells also of the passing of the death decree for all who will not yield to the demands of apostasy. (Verse 15)

"He [the prince of evil] is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight." [213]

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof." [214]

"The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble." [215]

"As Satan accuses the people of God the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested."

"Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold on the Angel; and the language of their souls is, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'" [216]

3. The Assurance

But God does not forsake His trusting children." I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10.

"As the wrestling ones urge their petitions before God, the veil separating them from the unseen seems almost withdrawn. The heavens glow with the dawning of eternal day, and like the melody of angel songs, the words fall upon the ear, 'Stand fast to your allegiance. Help is coming.'"

"Christ, the almighty victor, holds out to His weary soldiers a crown of immortal glory; and His voice comes from the gate ajar: To, I am with you. Be not afraid. I am acquainted with all your sorrows; I have borne your grief. You are not warring against untried enemies. I have fought the battle in your behalf, and in My name you are more than conquerors."

"The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them." [217]

"Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress, and have heard their prayers."

"Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall as powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war." [218]

"In the midst of the time of trouble that is coming, God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them." [219]

4. The Deliverance

How the saints welcome the signs of deliverance! They have held on to the promises of God. They have remembered Daniel's assurance, "Thy people shall be delivered" (Daniel 12:1); they have called to mind Joel's comforting promise, "The Lord will be the hope of his people" (Joel 3:16). They have taken heart as they looked forward with expectation to the fulfillment of Habakkuk's prophecy that the Lord would go "forth for the salvation of thy people" (Habakkuk 3:13). Now the hour has come." It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen." [220]

The voice of God, which they have so longed to hear, is heard." By the people of God, a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up. ' [221] This is immediately followed by the expression: "It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people." [222]

We read:

"That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. . . .

"The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. . . .

"Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying, 'My grace is sufficient for you. ' . . .

"Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints." [223]

It is interesting in this connection to note the three resurrections that occur during the closing scenes of the great controversy. The first of these is what we have called the special resurrection, which takes place during the seventh plague. The next is the general resurrection of the righteous at the Savior's Second Advent; and the last comes at the close of the millennial period, when all the hosts of the wicked are called forth from the tomb.

The last named is merely mentioned here as part of the list, but with no further comment. The special resurrection is intimately connected with the voice of God, which we have been considering. At this time those who died in the faith of the third angel's message will come forth from their graves glorified; at the same time those who crucified Jesus and those who have been violent opponents of Christ and the truth of God through the ages will be raised to see the Son of man come in His glory. The picture is beautifully painted for us in Early Writings:

"It was at midnight that God chose to deliver His people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up, and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law.

"The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming, and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn. At the end of every sentence the saints shouted, 'Glory! Hallelujah!' Their countenances were lighted up with the glory of God, and they shone with glory as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked could not look upon them for the glory. And when the never ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image." [225]

The saints who come forth in this special resurrection hear the voice of God, for they hear "God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law." [226] Then just before the actual moment of the Second Advent of Christ, the voice of God is again heard "declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming." At this time God delivers "the everlasting covenant to His people." [227]

In a little while Christ is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, and the living righteous are "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." 1 Corinthians 15:51,52." At the voice of God," when raised from the dead, "they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught tip to meet their Lord in the air." [228] What a time of ecstasy and joy!

“Angels gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ’ Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers’ arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.” [229]

G. The Grand Finale

Space forbids our going into detail concerning the events of the millennial period and of the relatively short period that follows, also concerning many other aspects of the over-all question, but a full and illuminating description is given in *The Great Controversy*, in chapters 41 and 42.

But, thank God, the time is soon coming when the great controversy will be ended. Satan, together with sin and sinners, will be utterly destroyed. Then the universe will be clean, with no longer any taint of evil. To this the following paragraphs point:

“Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will ‘grow up’ to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ’s faithful ones will appear ‘in the beauty of the Lord our God,’ in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! Long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood. . . .

“Now is fulfilled the Savior’s prayer for His disciples, ‘I will that they also whom thou has given me be with me where I am. ’ ‘Faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,’ Christ presents to the Father the purchase of His blood, declaring, ‘Here am I, and the children whom thou has given me. ’ ‘Those that thou gave me I have kept. ’ Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! The rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin’s discord banished, its blight removed, and the human once more in harmony with the divine!” [230]

Again we quote: “The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean.” [231]

The early Advent believers looked forward to this grand consummation when they sang the following hymn:

“Hosannah! Hark, the melody, Strikes sweetly on my ravished ear! The constellations make reply

In echoes from each distant sphere, Till all the wide expansion rings With ‘live for ever, King of kings!’

“He comes! he comes! the heavens rend!

Floods clap your hands, you mountains joy! Forests in glad obeisance bend! Earth, raise your hallelujahs high, Let Zion wake the lofty strain-

‘Live King of kings! for ever reign!’

“Ripe is the vintage of the earth;

Its clustering grapes are round and full; And vengeance, vengeance bursts to birth,

Sudden and irresistible!

Messiah comes to tread again, The wine-press of the battle-plain.

“The cry is up, the strife begun, The struggle of the mighty ones; And Armageddon’s day comes on, The carnival of Slaughter’s sons; War lifts his helmet to his brow: O God, protect thy people now!

“Assemble quickly, fowls of the air. Come to the supper of the Lord: The great ones of the earth prepare To reap the harvest of the sword; And captains’ flesh shall be your food, And you shall drink of heroes’ blood.

“Yea, come, O King, and take the spoil;

With thy confederates share the prey:

Ha! Ha! Death ‘grins a ghastly smile’;

The morning dawns-and where are they?

The flames, the flames, great Autocrat, Spread over thee in Jehoshaphat.

“The graves are cleaved! the saints arise!

The resurrection of the just!

And now, unto their kindred skies,

Up leap the tenants of the dust!

They rise to meet their Lord in air,

And tune their hallelujahs there.” [232]

“The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that Was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.

“I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kingdoms, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. ’

“And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” [233]

Appendix A

Satan Works Through Nations to Exterminate God’s People

Satan, in his determination to exterminate the people of God, has worked through such nations as the following:

1. Egypt

Satan attempted this through Egypt. Concerning the oppression of Egypt in the great long ago, we read:

“Thou art the Lord . . . and did see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt.” Nehemiah 9:7-9.

“Egypt shall be a desolation . . . for the violence against the children of Judah.” Joel 3:19.

“The king and his counselors had hoped to subdue the Israelites with hard labor, and thus decrease their numbers and crush out their independent spirit. Orders were issued to the women whose employment gave them opportunity for executing the command, to destroy the Hebrew male children at their birth. Satan was the mover in this matter.” [1]

2. Assyria

Concerning the hardships Assyria and Babylon inflicted on Israel, we read:

“The Assyrian oppressed them [my people] without cause.” Isaiah 52:4.

“Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria has devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore thus said the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.” Jeremiah 50:17, 18.

3. Babylon

But note what Inspiration says more particularly concerning Babylon:

“The king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, he has swallowed me up.” Jeremiah

“Thus said the Lord of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go.” Jeremiah 50:33.

4. Ten Nations

In the days of Jehoshaphat no less than ten nations, led by Moab and Ammon, endeavored to destroy God’s children. The list as given in Psalms 83:4-8 embraces:

Moabites Gebalites Amalekites

Ammonites Tyrians Philistines

Ishmaelites Edomites Assurites

Hagarenes

The Spirit of prophecy applies this psalm to the experience of Jehoshaphat, as recorded in 2 Chronicles 20. [2]

C. H. Spurgeon comments on this episode as follows:

“All these had come to the aid of Moab and Ammon, which two nations were among the fiercest in the conspiracy. There were ten to one against Israel, and yet she overcame all her enemies.” [3]

5. Persia

Concerning Persia we read:

“Letters were sent by post into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day.” Esther 3:13.

“Satan worked to counter work the purposes of, God. Haman plotted ‘to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. ’ A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God.” [4]

6. Greece

Greece also persecuted and attempted to blot out the people of God.

“The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have you sold unto the Grecians, that you might remove them far from their border.” Joel 3:6. On Zechariah 9:13 the Pulpit Commentary remarks: “Not a vague term for the far west but to be taken strictly as the appellation of Greece a power arrayed in conflict with the people of God.” [5]

Over and over we read in the first book of Maccabees of the determined efforts to destroy God’s children. (See 1 Maccabees 1:24-30, 50; 3:35, 52, 58; 5:2, 10; 12:53)

But note particularly: “There was a great affliction in Israel.” 1 Maccabees 9:27.

“One of his honorable princes, a man that bare deadly hate unto Israel, with commandment to destroy the people.” 1 Maccabees 7:26.

“The king had given commandment to destroy the people, and utterly abolish them.” 1 Maccabees

7. Pagan Home

Satan tried through pagan Rome to annihilate God’s people.

“And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.” Daniel 8:24. Concerning the persecution in the days of ancient Rome we read.” The dragon is said to be Satan; he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Savior to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era, was the Roman empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion.” [6]

8. Papal Rome

Satan worked mightily through papal Rome.

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” Daniel 7:21.

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.” Revelation 13:7.

“Now began the 1260 years of papal oppression. . . . Christians were forced to choose either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman’s axe. . . . Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield.” [7]

Appendix B

In Warring Against the Saints Satan Wars Against Christ

In his attempts to obliterate the children of God through ages, Satan has used the nations to further his designs. In this war against the saints, however, he is really making war against Christ. This is a principle that is fully recognized in the Bible, in the Spirit of prophecy, and in other writings.

1. In the Bible

“Who shall receive one such little child in my name receives me.” Matthew 18:5.

“He that receives you receives me.” Matthew 10:40.

“He that receives whomsoever I send receives me.” John 13:20.

“He that hears you hears me.” Luke 10:16.

“He that despises you despises me.” Verse 16.

“He therefore that despises, despises not man, but God.” 1 Thessalonians 4:8.

The same thought is seen in the story of Saul the persecutor. When Saul was engaged in putting the early believers to death, the Lord said to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?” Acts 9:4.

2. In the Spirit of Prophecy

“Whoever by word or deed injures a believer thereby wounds Jesus. Whoever gives a cup of cold water to a disciple because he is a child of God will be regarded by Christ as giving to Him.” [1]

Regarding the experience of the saints during the time of trouble, we read:

“They [the unfaithful leaders] learn now that Christ identifies His interest with that of His suffering people; and they feel the force of His own words, ‘Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.’” [2]

“The Lord of hosts has said, He that touches you, touches the apple of his eye.” [3]

In the utmost extremity of God’s people the Lord gives assurance:

“The words fall upon the ear, ‘Stand fast to Your allegiance. Help is coming.’ Christ, the almighty victor, holds out to His weary soldiers a crown of immortal glory; and His voice comes from the gates ajar: ‘Lo, I am with you. Be not afraid. I am acquainted with all your sorrows; I have borne your grief. You are not warring against untried enemies. I have fought the battle in your behalf, and in My name you are more than conquerors.’” [4]

In persecuting the saints, men are fighting against God.” Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear, He has borne before us.” [5]

“The day of His vengeance hastens when every act of cruelty or injustice toward God’s faithful ones will be punished as though done to Christ Himself.” [6]

3. In Other Writings

-You have done (you did) it unto me. The Lord so perfectly identifies himself with the human family, whose nature he assumed, that he made their sorrows and sufferings his own (Isaiah 53:4 63:9; 8:17), he suffered with the sufferers; his perfect sympathy placed him in their position; in all their afflictions he was afflicted. From this identification it follows that he regards that which is done to others as done to himself. Thus he could expostulate with the persecutor, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?’ [7]

“Jesus Christ takes what is done to his faithful ministers, whether in kindness or in unkindness, as done to himself, and reckons himself treated as they are treated: ‘He that receives you, receives me.’ [8]

“He will take the kindness done to them, as done to himself. ‘You have done it unto me.’ . . . Note, Christ espouses his people’s cause, and interests himself in their interests.” [9]

“The general rule which Christ would go by, as to those to whom he sent his ministers; he will reckon himself treated according as they treated his ministers.” [10]

Appendix C

Some of the Texts in the Old Testament Referring to Events Connected With the Second Advent

Parallel References From Spirit of Prophecy Writings Are Given

Isaiah 2:10-12, 20, 21

The Great Controversy, Page 638; Prophets and Kings, Page 727. Isaiah 13:4, 6, 9, 11

The Great Controversy, Pages 310, 311, 638.

Isaiah 24:1-8

The Great Controversy, Page 657; Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 14; Prophets and Kings, Page 726.

Isaiah 26:21

The Great Controversy, Page 657; Prophets and Kings, Page 726.

Isaiah 28:21, 22

The Great Controversy, Page 627.

Isaiah 30:30

The Great Controversy, Page 635.

Isaiah 34:4, 6, 8, 2

The Great Controversy, Page 673; The Desire of Ages, Page 780.

Jeremiah 4:19, 20

The Great Controversy, Page 310; Prophets and Kings, Pages 538, 727.

Jeremiah 25:31, 33

The Great Controversy, Pages 656, 657.

Jeremiah 30:7

Prophets and Kings, Pages 538, 727.

Ezekiel 13:5

Early Writings, Page 71.

Hosea 4:1, 2

Prophets and Kings, Pages 297, 298.

Joel 1: 15-18

Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 15. Prophets and Kings, Page 726.

Joel 3:16, 12

Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 341. The Desire of Ages, Page 780.

Amos 5:18, 20

The Great Controversy, Page 310.

Zephaniah 1:7, 8, 14-16

Prophets and Kings, Page 390. Testimonies, Volume 9, Pages 95, 96.

Zephaniah 2:2, 3

Prophets and Kings, Page 390.

Zephaniah 3:19, 20

Prophets and Kings, Page 391.

Zechariah 14:12, 13

The Great, Controversy, Page 6. 57.

Appendix D

Unfulfilled Prophecy

The following paragraphs are from an excellent presentation by F. D. Nichol, which appears in his book *Reasons for Our Faith*. They are taken from chapter 2, bearing the title "Don't Read Into Scripture What Is Not There."

"In the book of Deuteronomy is found a text which some of us are likely to remember only in part. The text reads thus: 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.' Deuteronomy 29:29. We obtain great spiritual satisfaction from the thought that God has revealed certain things to us, and that they are for our blessing and instruction. Accordingly, we study with constant enthusiasm the revelation of God as it is found in the writings of the prophets.

"But at times we ought to give attention to the first part of the text, which informs us that some things are secret; they belong to the Lord and not to us. If we always keep this portion of the text clearly in our mind, allowing it to have its proper place in our thinking whenever we are studying the Word of God, we shall be saved from many unfortunate blunders.

"There are certain types of mind that are much more tempted than others to forget the first portion of this text, persons who seek to explore areas that God has not seen fit to make clear to men. This is not a proper carrying out of the command to search the Scriptures. Oftentimes this seeking for the meaning of secret things proves quite harmless, and at other times it may have unfortunate results; but at all times it is alien to the true principles of Bible study. . . .

“There are the ardent souls who violate the principle that some things are secret and belong alone to God, by seeking to fill in the details of an unfulfilled prophecy. It is remarkable how brief most prophetic statements in the Scriptures are. Evidently God did not see fit to tell us all the details. He has given us enough prophetic information to provide us with great way marks that leave us in no doubt as to the direction in which the world is going, and the direction in which our feet should go in order to reach the kingdom of God. But how tempting it is to paint in detail where God has given only a few simple, bold strokes in the outline. And how plausible the painting looks when it has been completed with the aid of a vivid imagination. . . .

“We have a message that must be preached, and with courage we should preach it. But there is a wide difference between proclaiming the great time prophecies, with the related Bible forecasts of conditions in the last days, and unwarranted speculation on particular happenings of the day. Surely we have a sufficiently positive and startling message for the world when we stay by the clear statements of prophecy. Of course, to a certain extent we must deal with unfulfilled prophecies; but if we will confine ourselves to what is stated by the prophets, we shall be safe. The temptation is to fill in details where the prophets are silent.

“Sir Isaac Newton, who was as devout as he was learned, well remarked that ‘the folly of Interpreters has been, to foretell times and things by this Prophecy [of the Revelation], as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also in contempt.’ Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John, Page 251.

“With such a wide field of fulfilled prophecy to expound to the world, how unfortunate that any should fall before the temptation to wander off into speculation on unrevealed details of unfulfilled prophecy, or to attempt to construct out of some present happenings a whole chain of closely connected links to tie together that happening in direct and logical relationship to the day of Christ’s coming! It is not a sufficient defense for a person who thus makes predictions to inquire, ‘Well, is not my explanation of the outcome of these present happenings plausible and reasonable?’ Experience proves that too often in this uncertain world what is plausible and apparently reasonable today becomes impossible tomorrow. Where the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy are both silent as to the details of future events, reverence and a realization of the blunders of former speculators prompt us to be silent also.

-Fortunately, there are not many who allow themselves to fall before this temptation to speculate. But sad to say, it takes only a few such people to bring great perplexity, embarrassment, and even confusion to many. It is one thing to view with godly fear the events of our present troubled day as playing a part in the last act of this world’s sinful drama, and to declare with confidence that all these events provide increasing evidence that the day of the Lord is near and hastens greatly. It is an altogether different thing to single out some particular happening and dogmatically attempt to find in it the key to unlock the mystery of all the remaining details of this world’s history. We will never go astray, nor will our message ever be brought into disrepute, if we confine ourselves to the definite utterances of the prophets. Nor will we lack for a timely, soul-saving message for the world.” - Pages 26, 27.

Appendix E

Sequence of Events Under the Sixth and Seventh Plagues

The following is a suggested sequence of events that occur under the sixth and seventh plagues, based upon the Bible and the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. The writer is greatly indebted to Raymond F. Cottrell for the following material:

1. Three unclean spirits-Spiritualism, apostate Protestantism, and the Papacy-go forth to gather the nations.
2. They deceive the kings of the earth, and the people join in making void the law of God. Revelation 16:13-16; Isaiah 24:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:8. (See also The Great Controversy, Pages 561, 588, 624; Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 43)
3. Satan beholds his masterpiece-men who reflect his image. Revelation 17:2, 8, 11, 12; 18:3, 23; The Great Controversy, Page 624.
4. The challenge, “Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” leads to exaltation of Satan incarnate as director of the battle against the saints. Revelation 13:4, 7, 8.
5. Satan is invested with supreme authority over the nations, and the “ten kings- receive power for one hour with him. Revelation 17:12-14, 17; 18:2, 3; 19:19; Testimonies, Volume 7, Page 182.
6. Thus the nations are gathered. to the final contest that will result largely from Satan’s master delusion. Revelation 16:14, 16; Isaiah 13:4; Zephaniah 3:8; Jeremiah 25:31; The Great Controversy, Pages 561, 562, 656.
7. A power from beneath leads men to war against Heaven, and the nations marshal their armies for the last great battle against the Lamb. Revelation 17:14; Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 43; Volume 6, Page 14; The Great Controversy, Page 624.

8. Earth's leaders consult together to root out and destroy the remnant people of God. Psalms 2:1-5, 9; Early Writings, Pages 282-285.
9. The universal death decree against Sabbath observance has already been issued by the highest earthly authority. The Great Controversy, Page 615; Early Writings, Page 36; Life Sketches, Page 117; Testimonies, Volume J5, Page 213; Prophets and Kings, Page 512; Testimonies, Volume 1, Pages 353, 354.
10. Time is fixed when secular protection is withdrawn from those who will not yield their faith, and liberty is given after a time for their enemies to kill them. Revelation 13:15-17; The Great Controversy, Pages 615, 631, 626; Early Writings, Pages 282, 283; Prophets and Kings, Page 512.
11. All not surrendered to God will join Satan in his rebellion against heaven. Testimonies to Ministers, Page 465; Testimonies, Volume 7, Page 141; The Desire of Ages, Page 763; The Great Controversy, Page 560.
12. There is a simultaneous conspiracy to strike a decisive blow in one night to destroy God's people. The Great Controversy, Page 635; Testimonies, Volume 8, Page 117.
13. God's pitying eye rests upon His people in this great crisis. The Great Controversy, Page 634.
14. The wicked suffer thirst from the fourth plague, but angels will provide food and water for the saints. Isaiah 33:16; The Great Controversy, Page 629; Early Writings, Page 282; The Desire of Ages, Page 122.
15. Many of the saints are imprisoned and under the sentence of death; many flee, are pursued; but weapons of enemies fall powerless to the ground. Isaiah 33:3, 10, 16; The Great Controversy, Page 626; Early Writings, Pages 282-284, 34.
16. Fierce battle wages between those who fear God and those who fear Him not. Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 15.
17. On all sides the saints hear plotting of treason and see the working of rebellion. The Great Controversy, Page 619.
18. The trials of the saints are acute; the furnace fires seem about to consume them. The Great Controversy, Page 621.
19. In this their severest trial they endure weariness, delay, hunger, and privation. The Great Controversy, Page 621.
20. Some of the saints suffer under terrible pressure of discouragement; all are tried to the limit, but none are left to perish. Revelation 16:15; The Great Controversy, Pages 622, 618, 629.
21. It is a time of fearful agony; the saints cry to God for deliverance. Psalm 50:3-6; The Great Controversy, Pages 630-632; Early Writings, Pages 34, 37, 272; Testimonies, Volume 5, Page 213.
22. They suffer great mental anguish, and wrestle and agonize with God, as did Jesus in Gethsemane. Early Writings, Pages 283, 284.
23. It seems to the saints that God has forsaken them, and that they must seal their testimony with their blood. The Great Controversy, Page 630.
24. Angels desire to deliver them, but may not, for they must "drink of the cup." Early Writings, Page 284.
25. In this crucible of affliction, during this time of Jacob's trouble, their characters will be perfected. The Great Controversy, Page 631; ELLEN G. WHITE in Review and Herald, Aug. 12, 1884, Page 513.
26. Urged by Satan, men surround the saints to destroy them before the time appointed, but God preserves them. Psalm 121:5-7; 91:3-10; 46:1-3, 6-9; Testimonies, Volume 1, Page 353; Early Writings, Pages 283-285; Prophets and Kings, Page 725.
27. Satan cannot destroy the living saints, now 144,000 in number; angels protect them. Revelation 15:24; Testimonies, Volume 9, Page 17; Patriarchs and Prophets, Page 256; Early Writings, Pages 15, 60, 283-285; The Great Controversy, Pages 634, 649, 654; Prophets and Kings, Page 513.
28. In a supreme exercise of faith they learn to trust wholly in God. Testimonies, Volume 2, Pages 596, 597.

29. All the elements of strife are still let loose. The whole world is involved in ruin more terrible than was Jerusalem of old. The Great Controversy, Page 614.
30. The time comes appointed in the decree-the crisis when powers of earth are arrayed against God's people. Revelation 17:14; The Great Controversy, Pages 634, 635.
31. At midnight, just as the wicked rush forth to slay the saints, God manifests His power to deliver, and darkness covers the earth. Isaiah 17:12-14; Exodus 12:29, 30; Job 34:20; Amos 8:9; Early Writings, Pages 283-285; The Great Controversy, Page 636; Testimonies, Volume 1, Page 354.
32. The King of kings rides forth to deliver His beleaguered people. Testimonies, Volume 6, Page 406; The Great Controversy, Pages 633, 634.
33. Signs and wonders are seen, angry clouds clash, the moon stands still and the sun shines in its strength. Revelation 6:14; The Great Controversy, Page 636; Early Writings, Pages 285, 34.
34. The voice of God announces, "It is done"; the 144,000 are delivered. Revelation 16:17; Hosea 1:7; The Great Controversy, Page 636; Early Writings, Pages 285, 37; Life Sketches, Page 117.
35. The saints behold the Son of God seated on His throne. The Great Controversy, Page 636; Early Writings, Pages 285, 286, 34; Testimonies, Volume 1, Page 354.
36. The faces of the saints are illuminated by the glory of God. Early Writings, Page 37; Life Sketches, Page 117.
37. The angry multitude are arrested and filled with fear. They see the rainbow of the covenant and gaze terror stricken upon it. The Great Controversy, Page 636; Early Writings, Page 285.
38. There is a mighty earthquake; great hail falls from heaven. Isaiah 24:1-6, 18-22; 30:29, 30; Revelation 16:18, 21; Isaiah 13: 13-15; The Great Controversy, Pages 637, 562; Early Writings, Pages 34, 285.
39. The sea boils; the earth heaves and swells; palaces crumble to ruins. Revelation 16:18, 19; The Great Controversy, Page 637; Early Writings, Page 34.
40. The graves are opened, and many come forth in a special resurrection. Daniel 12:2; Revelation 1:7; The Great Controversy, Page 637; Early Writings, Page 285.
41. The tables of the law are revealed. God's voice pronounces the doom of the wicked. Revelation 11:19; 16:17, 18; Joel 2:11; Psalm 50:1-5; Isaiah 30: 27-33; The Great Controversy, Pages 638, 639.
42. God delivers the everlasting covenant of peace and announces the day and hour of Jesus' coming. Shout of victory over the beast and his image. The Great Controversy, Page 637; Early Writings, Pages 34, 285, 286; Life Sketches, Pages 102, 103; The Great Controversy, Page 640.
43. The saints cry out, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." Isaiah 25:8, 9; The Great Controversy, Page 644; Early Writings, Page 287.
44. The wicked are dismayed as God's voice turns the captivity of His people. Jeremiah 25:30, 31; The Great Controversy, Page 654; Early Writings, Pages 92, 266.
45. The refuge of lies (incarnation of Satan) is swept away; the covenant with death is disannulled (Spiritualism). Isaiah 28:17, 18; Revelation 16:19; 18:19-21; The Great Controversy, Pages 560-562.
46. The multitudes are filled with regret that God has conquered, and apostate Sabbath keepers, particularly, are in agony as they see the saints delivered. The Great Controversy, Page 654; Early Writings, Page 37.
47. Recognizing that they have lost out, both ministers and people fall at the saints' feet and confess God has loved them. The Great Controversy, Page 655; Early Writings, Page 15.
48. Realizing they have been deceived, the people accuse one another; they unite in condemnation of their ministers who confess their work of deception. The Great Controversy, Pages 655, 656; Early Writings, Page 282.

49. Those deceived then turn on their false teachers, who suffer tenfold more than the people. Revelation 17:16; Jeremiah 25:34-38; The Great Controversy, Page 656; Early Writings, Page 282.
50. The swords with which the saints were to be slain are now turned by the wicked on one another. Jeremiah 23:1, 2; Isaiah 63:1, 6; 34:8; The Great Controversy, Page 656.
51. The ten kings, in their hatred of Babylon, now proceed to burn her with fire. Revelation 17:16, 1; 18:6-10, 19; 19:1, 2.
52. Strife and bloodshed are now everywhere, leaders and people fight among themselves, and the nations are locked in deadly combat. The world is deluged with blood. The Great Controversy, Page 656; Early Writings, Page 290.
53. While the wicked are engaged in this dreadful scene of carnage, a small black cloud appears-the sign of the Son of man. The Great Controversy, Page 640; Early Writings, Pages 15, 16.
54. As it nears the earth it becomes brighter and brighter, and the Son of man is seen with the sickle in His hand. Revelation 14:14.
55. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, is now stilled as the armies of the living God take the field. Isaiah 9:5; Revelation 6:15, 17; Isaiah 2:10-21; The Great Controversy, Page 642.
56. The tribes of the earth mourn, hide in caves, in rocks, and in mountains, and pray to be buried from the presence of the Lord. Matthew 24:30.
57. God now calls for a sword upon the inhabitants of earth, now trodden down by the “overflowing scourge,” God’s “strange act.” Jeremiah 25:29-33; Isaiah 26:21; The Great Controversy, Pages 562, 627, 634.
58. The angel of death, represented by Ezekiel’s five men with slaughter weapons, go forth in the general destruction of the wicked, including their leaders. Isaiah 28:17-22; Ezekiel 9:5-7; The Great Controversy, Page 656; Early Writings, Page 289; Testimonies, Volume 3, Page 267; ELLEN G. WHITE in Review and Herald, Sept. 23, 1873, Page 117.
59. The light that illumines the faces of the saints causes the wicked to fall like dead men, and now at the coming of Christ they are slain by the brightness of His glory. Revelation 16:19; Isaiah 26:20, 21; 63:1, 6; 11:15, 16; Jeremiah 25:33; Psalm 50:3, 6; Zechariah 14:12; Revelation 14:19, 20; The Great Controversy, Page 657; Testimonies, Volume 1, Pages 184, 354.
60. The beast goes into captivity; the great whore has been judged, for God has avenged His people on Babylon. Revelation 18:21; 17:16, 1; 18:6-10, 19; 19:1, 2; 13: 10.
61. Satan, pronounced guilty, is banished to the desolate earth for one thousand years; the land rests; the jubilee begins. Revelation 20:1, 2; The Great Controversy, Page 658; Life Sketches, Page 103.
62. As a cloud nears the earth there is another mighty earthquake, and the sleeping saints are called forth from the tomb. 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Early Writings, Pages 16, 285, 286; The Great Controversy, Page 644; Early Writings, Page 287.
63. The harvest is now reaped; the saints meet the Lord in the air and are taken to the city of God. Earth is completely emptied of its human population. Revelation 11:14-16; Matthew 24:31; Early Writings, Page 16; The Great Controversy, Page 657.
64. Now the Lord God omnipotent reigns supreme; the dominion of this world has at last become His, and He “shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15.

Appendix F

The Use of Polemos and Mache in the New Testament and in the LXX

In the study of the use of these words we have briefly considered not only the substantive but also the verbal forms of these two words. What is mentioned in this Appendix will give further data on the use not only of polemos but also of poleme6, the verb, and of machomai and mache, the verb and the noun respectively.

In the text of the presentation, emphasis was laid upon the fact that the words polemos and polemeb would more properly be translated “war”—a word that describes the entire period of hostilities; that machomai and mache would better be rendered “battle”—a term usually given to designate one engagement. Let us observe:

1. Concerning “Polemos” and “Polemeh” a. In the New Testament.

Polemos: This is rendered-

Battle-1 Corinthians 14:8; Revelation 9:7, 9; 16:14; 20:8-5 times War-Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7;

Luke 14:31; 21:9; James 4:1; Revelation 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:7; 19:19 10 times

Fight-Hebrews 11:34 1 time

16 times

Polemes: This is rendered

To fight-Revelation 2:16; 12:7, 17 3 times

Make war-Revelation 13:4; 17:14; 19:11; James 4:2 4 times

War-James 4:2 1 time

It will be noted that “war” rather than “battle” is the general thought expressed by these words. While they are rendered “battle” 5 times, they are rendered “war” 15 times. Several of the English translations give “war” instead of “battle” in Revelation 16:14, as will be seen in the renderings of the RV, Alford, Robertson, Fenton, Cunningham, Moulton, Spencer, et cetera.

b. In the Septuagint.

These words are referred to many times in the LXX. There are more than 350 instances of their use, and taking the over-all use of the words, it would seem that they are rendered “battle” about as many times as they are rendered “war.” In drawing our conclusions, however, we need to bear in mind two facts concerning many of the references in which the words are used:

(1) Since there was but one engagement in many of the wars, the conflict was both a war and a battle.

(2) Quite often reference is made to no particular contest, but rather to going to war or to battle.

With these considerations in mind, it can be said that these two words are quite generally used with the sense of “war,” and convey the idea of a period of conflict during which there could be one or more engagements. Naturally the sense would have to be determined by the context in each case.

2. Concerning “Mache” and “Machomai”

a. In the New Testament.

The use of these words in the New Testament is confined more to verbal controversy than to the field of military operations. This is true in the 8 times the words are used.

They are translated:

Fight, fighting - 3 times

Strife, striving - 5 times

b. In the Septuagint.

The words are used more often in the LXX. There the words express both military and verbal controversy.

One can find such translations in the A. V. as: contend, rebuke, strive, chide, strife, fight, smite, and battle.

3. Concerning the Hebrew Word “Milchamah”

a. This is a Hebrew word for war that is rendered polemios in the Greek of the LXX. Milchamah is used frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures to designate military encounters in Old Testament days. In the A. V. it is rendered:

Fight - 5 times

Battle - 150 times

War - 158 times

b. It is the word rendered "battle" in Ezekiel 13:5:

"You have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."

c. It is rendered "war" in such texts as Genesis 14:2; Jeremiah 4:19, and Joel 3:9. We quote: "Proclaim you this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up." Joel 3:9.

"My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart makes a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war." Jeremiah 4:19.

17. Health And The Gospel Message

T. R. FLAIZ, M. D

Our Bodies a Living Sacrifice

It is a matter of more than passing significance that a small Christian denomination, less than a million in membership, has seen fit as a part of its world program of evangelism to pour millions of dollars annually into the support of health education and medical ministry. This small denomination has during the past few years trained some three thousand physicians, more than eight thousand nurses, and hundreds of other medical workers. In both home and foreign lands a large percentage of its annual appropriations includes some form of medical and health education activity.

This group has accepted for its membership and loyally maintains certain health standards and habits, certain practices in matters of diet and drinking, and a personal relationship to health questions not generally regarded by Christian peoples as essential to Christian life and yet acknowledged universally as desirable for those who have the fortitude to live according to such standards.

It may be reasonably asked, "On what basis and for what reason have these people espoused these health ideals and assumed these large medical responsibilities?"

In the closing verses of that impressive book of Malachi, the prophet tells us that "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, God would send the prophet Elijah, who would lead out in a mighty reform movement, turning "the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," and, obviously, the hearts of all toward their God as a preparation for the coming of the Lord. Luke, in speaking of this, states that the Elijah message would "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Paul, in writing to Titus, gives directions as to how to live in this present world. He says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ," who would redeem a people "from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

This is a brief but glorious statement of the closing scenes in the great drama of the conflict between Christ and Satan. This is but the meager portrayal of the transformation that will be experienced by the people of God before the coming of their Savior.

The battleground of heaven, where the devil challenged the authority of the government of God, was shifted after creation to this world. Satan set about the conquest and destruction of the latest subject of creation-man and his Eden home. Man was brought into being through a process that gives us an insight into his nature." And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and we are told that he "became a living soul."

We are told also that man, as he came from the hand of the Creator, was perfect. He was endowed with three distinct characteristics and entities-his spiritual, intellectual, and physical forms-all a part of the original man as he first came perfect from the hand of the Creator.

The enemy of this new creation set about the subversion and the destruction of this newest handiwork of God. It had been made clear to man that undivided loyalty and obedience to God were the conditions attached to the continued enjoyment of his Edenic bliss. It had been made clear to him also that the result of disobedience would be death. Through deception of the evil one, man was led to experiment with sin and disobedience. The moment man sinned, that perfect physical body, intended-with the nourishment of the life giving properties of the fruit of the tree of life-to live forever, began to weaken and die.

Even so, not until more than two thousand years passed did man so fully lose the vital principles of life that he fell from the prospect of eternal life to a mere span of threescore years and ten. Constantly increasing disease and early death were to be the lot of man to the end of time. This disease and this death were, according to Scripture, the immediate result of sin. It was the mark of triumph of the evil one.

The work and the character of Satan in this world are well illustrated in the story recorded in the first chapter of job. As prince of this world he ruled with a relentless and cruel hand. Our every disease, our every plague and pestilence, is the handiwork of the evil one, who, since the fall of man, has worked for his continued destruction. The dread Malaria, which claims its millions of victims each year, the degenerative diseases-cancer, arteriosclerosis with its cardiovascular diseases, poliomyelitis (four families have been

driven from the mission field in recent months by this paralyzing, killing disease), the crippling and punishing arthritis which binds so many millions in torturous suffering-are all the inglorious achievements of the evil one in his progressive program of wrecking not only the spiritual and the intellectual but the physical man created perfect in his original Edenic home. Christ mentions specifically that these are the work of the archenemy.

Rebuking the hypocritical ruler of the synagogue who protested against the Sabbath-day healing of the woman afflicted with what was probably an aggravated case of spinal arthritis, Christ replied, "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" The ruler of the synagogue was in agreement that it was desirable to come to the synagogue on the Sabbath day for spiritual refreshment, for a restoration of those spiritual powers that had been lost in the onslaught of the evil one, but he did not recognize that the physical marks of the work of the enemy were just as truly tokens of his triumph, evidences of his degenerative activities. The Lord pointed out that it was just as desirable that this woman should receive physical restoration as that her lagging spiritual experience should be restored on this day of rest.

So, also, the unfortunate victims of satanic power who had lost their mental faculties, and had wandered in lonely and waste places over across the Sea of Galilee in Gadara. were restored to their natural powers by the healing words of our Savior.

Christ's entire ministry was an exemplification of His statement that He had "come to seek and to save that which was lost"-that which was lost spiritually, intellectually, and physically. He healed the palsied man, but He did so with that challenging statement, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," indicating that the Lord was accomplishing a twofold, yes, a threefold work of restoration in those for whom He labored.

Christ told us that He had come to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and His entire labors during the three and a half years of His ministry here on earth were labors in which He was restoring those whom Satan had demoralized spiritually, confused mentally, and weakened or destroyed physically restoring into the image of God!

Christ's ministry was well prophesied by Isaiah in the words, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. To comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Isaiah 61:1-3.

This prophecy emphasizes that one of the ministries to be performed by Christ was the loosening of those who were bound. Christ spoke of the arthritic woman as having been bound by Satan, lo, these eighteen years; and He declared it to be a part of His legitimate ministry to free those who had been thus bound-whether by arthritis, by leprosy, by mental ailments, by palsy, or by actual death.

Christ selected and commissioned first of all twelve disciples, and later seventy, whom He sent out, as reported by the apostle Luke, himself a physician, in these words: "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

Matthew, the publican, in reporting this same occasion, when he and his fellow disciples were sent forth to their mission field, states, "When he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." And Matthew records that they received the following charge as to the type of ministry they were to carry out: "And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give." And how well the disciples in the days that followed fulfilled the commission here given in their own ministry!

Peter and John, two great preachers of the early church, were on their way to the place of worship to conduct one of those remarkable meetings when they were stopped by a helpless beggar whose withered legs and broken ankles permitted him only to sit by the way and beg for alms. In line with their Lord's instruction, and on the authority of His name, the disciples healed this man, changing his hopeless and helpless infirmity into the radiance of athletic vigor. Here was another of these children of Abraham, bound probably from childhood by the bonds of Satan, now loosed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to glorify God in his restored body. Was there any purpose in this act of healing, beyond merely allowing one more Jew to go about his way among the thousands of Jews of that great city of nineteen hundred years ago? The devil was hereby rebuked and buffeted. A prisoner, a victim of his, was snatched from his hand and restored to the image and glory of God. Five thousand men, besides women and children, influenced no doubt very largely by this manifestation of the power of God, turned their hearts to the One which had come "to seek and to save that which was lost." Obviously, the ministry of healing was also the right arm of the Pentecostal message of the early Christian church.

The spiritual degeneration of sin, of which we have read, resulted directly from the repudiation or violation of moral law or principle. The almost immediate physical decay and degeneration, observed concurrently with the fall of man, resulted, not from some mysterious malign influence wielded over him by Satan and his hosts, but from the violation of certain well-defined and understandable physical laws or principles by which man was intended to live as an obedient child of God.

We have, therefore, violation of moral law, with its resulting sin and degradation. We have the violation of physical law, physiological law, with its resulting sickness and death. The interdependence of the physical upon the spiritual health, and to a lesser extent the dependence of the spiritual experience upon the physical health, made so clear in Christ's ministry, is a scientific principle recognized only recently by the medical world. One of America's outstanding physicians, pressed by this perplexing medical and psychological problem of his large practice, observes:

"In advising such people I found myself more and more frequently using some Biblical expression, or summing up certain recommendations in terms of an accepted religious doctrine. This growing tendency was forced upon me by the realization that my professional and scientific vocabulary was not always adequate. I found it a great help in counseling people to be able to reduce a set of scientific or at least partly scientific facts to a few, simple, practical precepts. The frequency with which these precepts resembled the teachings of religion impressed me increasingly as time went on until, finally, I found that I had adopted a large body of religious beliefs most of which I had discarded twenty years ago." [1]

Modern scientific medicine recognizes, not just a relationship between the spiritual and the physical being, but a close interdependence. A whole field of medicine, psychosomatic medicine, is placing its greatest emphasis on exploring the possibilities of healing the body through restoration of proper spiritual environment. The intelligent person struggling with a guilty conscience, or fighting against convictions on moral principles, is a very likely candidate for ulcers of the stomach or related disease. A man, perilously near death with hemorrhaging ulcers, made reconciliation with his estranged and somewhat wayward son. Hemorrhages ceased, and in an unbelievably short time he was fully recovered. Patients with serious nervous disturbances find in renewed religious experience their only source of healing. Let me quote again from Henry Link:

"The religion I speak of, therefore, is not the refuge of the weak but the weapon of those who would be strong. I see religion as an aggressive mode of life, by which the individual becomes the master of his environment, not its complacent victim." [2]

Jesus was the first exponent and practitioner of this threefold plan of healing. We read of His ministry:

"Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away without helped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole." [3]

And we are told that "the Savior made each work of healing an occasion for implanting divine principles." [4] Men of science are only now realizing the truth given to us many years ago:

"Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. The life of God in the soul is man's only hope." [5]

These basic principles of healing were the possession of this people three quarters of a century ago. Are we perhaps somewhat recreant to our duty in not giving wider emphasis to such basic principles in the test tube and the laboratory? We have from the lips of

the apostle Peter just what is to be the state of the chosen people of God, the remnant people who will be waiting for their Lord when He comes at that great day of the Lord,” spoken of by Zephaniah. Peter says:

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9.

Here is a people spoken of as a “royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people”—this remnant church that would be waiting for their Lord. For what purpose had they been chosen to such a high estate as to be regarded as “a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people”? Peter states that it was that they might “show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

Now, the priests of old were men chosen from the very finest of the family of Aaron in the tribe of Levi—the best, physically, mentally, and spiritually! Men who were diseased or crippled or otherwise physically imperfect were not acceptable to this priesthood. How much more this royal priesthood, which will be showing forth the praises of God in this closing generation! He calls that people a “holy nation,” and how could any people be called a holy nation if they were in any state less than the most perfect possible as relates to their spiritual, intellectual, and physical condition? They were to be a Peculiar people. They should stand out as separate from, different from, the rest of the world. The Advent people were called out from the world in and according to God’s prophetic plan, for the one purpose of serving as His instruments in heralding the Second Coming of our Savior and of being used by God in the time of the “glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ for the calling out of a people whom He would “purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

The early Advent people were zealously evangelistic. Thousands of devoted Adventists sacrificed their all in their devotion and dedication to the cause to which they had been called. Among other sacrifices made by these early Advent believers, and particularly the Advent workers, was the sacrifice of their health. Not until this movement was fifteen years on its way was it brought forcefully to the attention of our people that their responsibility in calling people to the repairing of the breach, the restoration of paths to dwell in, involved a return not only to spiritual paths but to paths of obedience to the physical laws of our being. From inspiration there came to us that first message indicating the importance of physical health as related to spirituality.

To most fully appreciate the significance of the message that came to our people at this time, we must remember that in the middle of the last century principles of diet were little better understood in America than they are today in the wilds of Africa. Very little was known about the treatment of the more common diseases. Typhoid fever was treated at that time, as it still is in parts of the world, by depriving the patient of his necessary food and liquids, without which recovery would seem to be almost impossible. Measles, pneumonia, influenza, bronchial infections, and other common diseases, including gastrointestinal diseases, were treated routinely by the use of arsenic, strychnine, calomel, quinine drugs, the action of which these early physicians had not the faintest idea.

Diphtheria, smallpox, typhoid fever, measles, with its many and serious complications, scarlet fever, different kinds of enteric diseases, tuberculosis, pneumonia, were all plagues of serious consequence, taking a large toll of the population both of the country at large and of our own Adventist believers and workers. Of the causes of these diseases, of their bacteriology, their prevention, little or nothing was known at that time. In frantic effort to stay the scourge of such diseases, physicians administered one drug after another, with no knowledge as to their efficacy. The result was that the patient must recover not only from the disease but from the depression of the poisonous drugs administered.

Add to this the fact that the country knew little or nothing concerning food values and the bearing of food, good or bad, upon health, and you have a picture of what the human frame had to surmount in case of illness one hundred years ago.

Common misconceptions concerning health matters of that time included the idea that white flour was far superior to the ordinary crude whole-wheat flour ground in the simple hand mills or on the stones out away from milling centers. Rich pastries, pies, cakes, and puddings not only were an evidence of affluence and good living but were supposed to contribute to the strength and health of the eater. The excessive use of cooking fats, butter, grease, and fat meats was recognized to be an important factor in adding to the waist line of the cater, which in turn was thought to be of itself an evidence of health and strength. Fresh or leafy vegetables were practically unknown as a common source of food value in America, whereas fruit was mostly of a poor quality and enjoyed by only a limited few.

If water appeared to be clear, it was regarded as perfectly safe to drink. Milk that was handled with any reasonably satisfactory degree of care was supposed to be wholesome and healthful. There was no knowledge at that time of the deadly organisms of typhoid, of tuberculosis, of dysentery, of undulant fever, and of many other diseases carried in these innocent-looking beverages.

Houses at night were kept closed securely against the dangers of “night air,” a factor contributing substantially to the prevalence of tuberculosis in those clays. Fresh air and the free use of water were thought to be dangerous to those suffering from any form of fever. Energetic and ambitious people conceived of sleep as something for the weak and the slothful. Intellectuals vied with one another in

cutting their hours of sleep as low as possible. John Wesley, the great evangelist, took pride in having disciplined himself down to four hours of sleep nightly.

Alcoholic beverages were supposed to give strength and ruggedness to the hard worker, courage to the discouraged for those in hardship, and to the soldier on the battlefield. It was supposed to give warmth to the one endangered by cold. Liquor was served as a regular ration to many groups of hard workers, such as coal miners, those working in the forests or in factories. Tobacco smoke was considered a cure for bronchitis. Meat was thought to be indispensable to health and vigor, particularly to those who were working under heavy stress.

It was in a time of such ignorance of health principles that the first light on healthful living came to the Advent people. That first message contained this remark:

“I saw it was a sacred duty to attend to our health, and arouse others to their duty. We have a ditty to speak, to come out against intemperance of every kind, in temperance in working, in eating, in drinking, in drugging, and then point them to God’s great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases. For health, for cleanliness, for luxury. I saw that we should not be silent upon the subject of health, but should wake up minds to the subject.” [6]

Mrs. White says further: “I saw that it was duty for every one to have a care for his health, but especially should we turn our attention to our health, and take time to devote to our health, that we may in a degree recover from the effects of overdoing and overtaxing the mind. The work God requires of us will not shut us away from caring for our health. The more perfect our health, the more perfect will be our labor.” [7]

In a time when it was thought to be a weakness to give any attention to personal health, to rest, to take full night’s sleep, or to take needed relaxation, it took courage to come forth with the observation:

“When we tax our strength, overlabor, and weary ourselves much, then we take colds, and at such times are in danger of diseases taking a dangerous form.” [8]

A candid statement as to concurrent health investigations indicates the complete honesty of those engaged in this earlier health promotion program. I quote:

“We do not profess to be pioneers in the general principles of the health reform. The facts on which this movement is based have been elaborated, in a great measure, by reformers, physicians, and writers on physiology and hygiene, and so may be found scattered through the land. But we do claim that by the method of God’s choice it has been more clearly and powerfully unfolded, and is thereby producing an effect which we could not have looked for from any other means. As mere physiological and hygienic truths, they might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence. But when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel’s message by the sanction and authority of God’s Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of present truth, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril.” [9]

This position was in full harmony with the plain statements of the apostle Paul in his emphatic stand in regard to care of the human body. He tells the Corinthian church:

“Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

And a little later, in the same letter, Paul emphasizes this same thought with these words:

“What? know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

With these basic principles so clearly stated we can better understand the significance of Paul’s appeal to the Roman church when he said: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1.

Such unequivocal instruction from the Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy made it abundantly clear to the pioneers of this movement that health instruction for our own personal health and for those to whom we carry the gospel is not a matter of mere personal whim or taste, but of great significance, and that any disregard of this knowledge or of this care of our health is a matter for which we must render account in the judgment.

The church, in its commendable purpose to give physical form to its spiritual convictions, has reacted to the counsel of the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Spirit of prophecy along four main lines:

1. The establishment of health institutions and sanitariums and hospitals in the homeland and in mission fields.
2. The acceptance of personal standards of health as individuals, health education of church membership, and health education as a feature of our public and lay evangelism.
3. Medical training of physicians, nurses, dietitians, and technicians-medical, X-ray and physical therapy-and now in the near future, dentists.
4. Medical evangelism at home and in mission lands characterized by personal instruction, medical-evangelical literature, temperance literature and promotion, and public service in Red Cross first aid, etcetera.

Health Institutions

Time does not permit deep or analytical study of the significance of these various fields of endeavor, but we must observe at least a tentative definition of the sanitarium, a term that is peculiarly Adventist in origin and in its worldwide interpretation by both Adventists and non-Adventists. When first applied to Seventh-day Adventist medical institutions the term sanitarium described a medical institution, preferably in a rural environment, staffed by conscientious Christian physicians practicing the very latest and best medical diagnostics and therapeutics and bringing to their patients highly conscientious personal care and attention in the spirit of humility and service, with the purpose of healing not only the physical malady but also the ills of their souls. Such could be accomplished only in an institution in which the nursing service, the room service, the food service, and the business service-in fact, all services of the institution-were Christ centered, and Christ centered in their unselfish devotion to the institution's high spiritual ideals. Only in the sanitariums, or in the mission hospital of the various mission boards, do we find the threefold ministry of healing the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual as the avowed and the practical object of the institution.

We hear many today lamenting the supposed fact that the true sanitarium is definitely a thing of the past, that we no longer have institutions such as we had in the Battle Creek Sanitarium in its prime, the early days of the Washington Sanitarium, the St. Helena Sanitarium, the New England Sanitarium, Paradise Valley, Boulder, and others whose origins date back to the turn of the century.

Some have proposed that the genius of this institution of another day was to be found in its massages, its hydrotherapy, its electrotherapy and massage, its sanitarium-type of dining room, with its wonderful spread of foods. Some have felt that the genius of this institution was in the fact that popular medications as they were known in those days were not given in these institutions. Some have felt that the genius of the sanitarium idea lay in the fact that the institution was staffed by full-time institutionally employed physicians, all of them with a devoted Christian outlook. Some have thought that the genius of the institution was in the fact that patients in those good old days came and stayed, not a few days to a week, but a month, two months, four to six months, and left the place feeling that they almost shared in its ownership. Only with such a long stay could the Christian influences come to their natural and fullest maturity. Doubtless all of the factors contributed their share to the sanitarium reputation.

We are now, In this year of our Lord 1952, frequently reproached for having left the "good old days" of our sanitariums, in which all these conditions prevailed. Let us examine for a moment the validity of some of these observations:

A patient of the "good old days" of fifty to seventy-five years ago came to the sanitarium with abdominal distress, loss of weight, dizziness, nervousness, poor sleep, irritability, and gloomy foreboding. Under the care of the institution's physicians he was finally solemnly declared to be suffering from the very specific disturbance of his physiological functions known as dyspepsia, with chronic indigestion. This patient was placed on a regime of treatment excellent for those days-abundant rest, hydrotherapy with its massages, baths, massage, and what-have-you. His diet was carefully studied by a trained food specialist, who, of course, knew nothing of vitamins, minerals, balance in diet, et cetera, but who nevertheless prepared an excellent menu for such patients.

Further, this dyspeptic was solemnly inspected at frequent intervals by the physician, until at some time, perhaps a month or six weeks later, the patient was given the hope that, all things going well, he could probably make some degree of recovery and ultimately might return to his work. Three, four, or five months later, if he survived, this patient, still a sick man, having been trained as to what foods he could but tolerate and what his limitations of work and exposure would be, and assured that he must return to the sanitarium at occasional intervals, returned to his home to live a convalescent existence for months. And after months of struggle with diet, hydrotherapy, and all the rest, this patient ultimately, in spite of all attentions and the kindest of care, began to lose ground and went under with the disease, the nature of which was quite unknown to these excellent physicians.

This same patient, coming to a sanitarium in the year 1952, would be placed on an accelerated program of careful examination and diagnostic X-ray work. At the end of two or three days there would be laid on the desk of the attending physician complete laboratory reports clearly indicating the nature of the disease with which the patient was suffering. This man, afflicted with pernicious anemia, would be told that he must receive injections of a simple nature the rest of his life. He would be able to live his normal span in excellent health, and before the week ended, with instruction as to diet and his general care and with a supply of medications-which his wife or his daughter might be able to give him at home-this man would return to his office desk again, carrying on his business and his family responsibilities, feeling the vigor of health he perhaps supposed would not be his again.

But some complain that we have departed from the spirit of our "good old sanitarium days," that we no longer sponsor the fine therapeutic measures employed in those earlier days. Why do our pneumonia cases not receive the hot foot baths, the massages, the chest packs, the mustard plasters-all of which contributed to the fame of the earlier institutions? The therapeutic value of these procedures is no less today than fifty years ago. We might observe, first of all, that today the arrival of a pneumonia patient in our sanitariums is not a frequent occurrence. Let us notice, however, what has happened in the treatment of pneumonia since the "good old days," taking an actual case as an example.

Sometime, about the year 1905, a physician was called to the home of one of our workers in southern Minnesota. The father had been stricken with pneumonia, and was in such serious condition that the physician called had not too much hope of his recovery. The mother, not discouraged by a physician's lack of faith, bundled up her husband, took him on the train to Madison, Wisconsin, to the fine sanitarium our denomination conducted there in those days. The physicians shook their heads gravely when they saw the man's condition, but assured the mother that they would do their best. Hot foot baths, fomentations, hot sheet packs, cold mitten frictions, mustard plasters-the entire "menu" was served strenuously for ten days before the patient turned for the better. Doubtless it was just these very therapeutic procedures, vigorous and rugged as they were, that saved this patient's life. It required another month of careful treatment during his convalescence to put the man sufficiently on his feet to be able to return to his home. After returning home he was not to do any work for another two or three months. Fortunately, in this case there were no complications so common in those days, such as lung abscess or empyema.

There can be no doubt that except for the excellent rational treatment given to this worker at that time he would not have survived. This patient, had he been visited by a physician in his home in 1952, would on the first visit have been administered the appropriate antibiotic. When the physician called the following morning he would have doubtless found him temperature-free and calling for food. The next day he would have been complaining that he was just wasting time lying around in bed when he felt so well. The wise physician would have required him to stay in at least another two or three days, but probably by the third or fourth day he would have been up and as likely as not back in his office, returned to his normal health with no complications. He probably would never even have come to the sanitarium. Had he been conveniently situated to be placed in a sanitarium, much the same procedure would have been followed by the wise physicians of the institution. The patient's stay would have been limited to a very few days, and these few days probably under protest.

This is much the picture with the entire field of medicine. Then, are we to admit that our sanitarium plan of treatment and care of the sick has become obsolete? If we refer to our time-honored sanitarium techniques in physical therapy, I can assure you that these definitely continue to have a wide range of use. This is more particularly true of rehabilitation work following such diseases as polio and arthritis, in which areas we should be doing much more than we are. This also applies to those diseased conditions resulting from the high pressure and tensions built up as a result of the fast living and highly competitive business life of the twentieth century. For such patients our sanitariums are indeed a haven of rest, and in this aspect lies one of our greatest but most neglected opportunities of service.

One of the greatest changes in the medical world that has been reflected so largely in the change of tempo and atmosphere in our sanitariums is the greatly shortened period of time that the patient is required to be under institutional care.

From an average hospitalization period of more than thirty days in the "good old days" the period of hospitalization now has dropped to less than seven days. These seven days cover the acute stage of the disease, or the postoperative period, when the patient is somewhat limited in activity. Diagnosis and therapeutics today deal in terms of far greater certainty. When the patient is able to be on his feet, he is usually securely on his way home. This accounts for the disappearance of many of our attractive sanitarium, dining rooms so well known thirty or forty years ago.

Earlier in this discussion our sanitariums were defined as a place where the sick are treated according to the very finest and latest-known medical therapeutics in the atmosphere of Christian medical ministry, in the Christ-centered atmosphere of prayer and praise, an atmosphere made possible largely by the attitudes of a Christian medical staff-nurses, helpers and attendants-all serving in the spirit of the Great Physician Himself.

The uncertain therapeutics of a half century ago have given way to the more effective and speedier lifesaving procedures of modern medical science. Patients leave the hospital or sanitarium after a few days' stay instead of after weeks or months. Has this militated

against our missionary objectives? On the contrary, from my intimate knowledge of the spirit prevailing in our sanitariums today, in our schools of nursing spread around the world, in the various departments of these institutions, I can assure you that the spirit of a Christ-centered medical ministry is no less a vital potent force in the impact upon the communities concerned than were the perhaps more colorful and certainly more patrician institutions of a generation or two ago.

All around the world, we meet those who have been patients in our sanitariums, and the story is the same. The patients, although impressed with the good diagnosis, the good surgery, the good therapeutics, are more impressed by the spirit of the institution—the atmosphere of prayer, the bedside prayer offered by the student nurse at the close of the day, the prayer offered by the surgeon before the anesthetic is administered for major surgery, and by the morning worship service brought to the patient over the communication system.

Hundreds, yes, thousands of those who have had contact with our medical institutions, whether we call them sanitariums, hospitals, or clinics—whether in America, India, Australia, Europe, Africa, or the islands of the sea—have been turned to their Savior by the kindly Christ-centered ministry received in these institutions that we still like to call sanitariums.

Health Reform

Turning to the second phase of our medical ministry, let us look for a moment at that which we have traditionally called health reform. We have already noted the popularly accepted habits of a hundred years ago. Drugging, drinking, smoking, use of undesirable foods, overeating, fear of ventilation, wrong concepts of rest and recreation, absence of knowledge of immunological protection against epidemic diseases—all of these shared the responsibility for the unbelievably low expectancy of life, less than thirty years at that time. This, against the present life expectancy of seventy years. Any wonder there was a demand for health reform?

In respect to the Biblical truth that our bodies are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in us, Paul carries truth home to us more personally when he says: “What? know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Out of respect to this basic truth that our bodies are not our own, that they are lent of God, and that we must hold them in purity and in physical protection, our people at an early date set about to study what would constitute the greatest honoring of God in our bodies.

Obviously, the reeling, incoherent, repulsive alcoholic was not glorifying God in spirit, in intellect, or in body. Alcohol was therefore written off as having no place in the life of the dedicated Christian. Every smoking physician knows in his heart that tobacco is no boon to his health. He knows that it damages vital structures and tissues of his body. These evils of tobacco were recognized a hundred years ago by our people, and fell under the ban of our early pioneers.

The habitual use of coffee and tea was recognized as lying at the foundation of certain neurological and circulatory disturbances often leading to a serious degree of ill-health. These drinks were condemned as being inimical to the best of health, and our people were counseled to leave them entirely alone.

Our pioneers were advised as to the desirability of exercise, fresh air, and wholesome recreation. At a time when intellectuals were priding themselves in cutting the amount of sleep on which they could survive, our people were counseling a rational program of sleep and rest consistent with the bodily needs. The popular concept of diet centered around the desirability of a liberal intake of strong foods—meat, potatoes, bread, rich and heavy cakes, pies, pastries, puddings. People who could live on such a diet were regarded as indeed fortunate, and their adequate contours were the evidence that these foods must be healthful and wholesome.

Health reform cut directly across this concept and taught the desirability and the healthfulness of eating only what one needs of the most desirable foods. A variety of well-prepared vegetables, whole-grain cereals, nuts, fruits, and dairy products prepared under sanitary conditions were recommended as the ideal diet. Our early Adventists, believing that there was more than ceremonial ground for the Levitical prohibition of certain so-called “unclean” meats, condemned their use on the grounds of unfitness for food. In addition to the well-known trichinosis carried in the flesh of swine, science is now revealing other reasons for repudiation of this popular article of diet.

Vegetarianism, maligned by physicians of that time as scientifically unsound, has been accepted by most Adventists as a highly desirable way of life. The complaint that the vegetarian diet is inadequate to maintenance of health has been abundantly proved false by the eating habits of fifteen million Brahmans and two million Jains of India, as well as by a few million Americans who are vegetarians by choice.

Health reform is not a troublesome prohibition of certain foods, drinks, or indulgences. It is not a penance by which we gain merit. We roundly condemn the too-prevalent attitude that would almost suggest that there is some kind of earned merit in eating or not eating, in drinking or not drinking, this or that.

Health reform in its broader aspects is a plan for life by which our spiritual, intellectual, and physical bodies and powers are maintained at their highest potential of effectiveness, for a more abundant and joyous life, an honor to our Creator and a fit dwelling place for His Holy Spirit.

Health reform, of necessity, includes a number of don'ts. It warns of the dangers of alcoholic beverages and tobacco. It counsels against the use of the stimulating drinks, tea and coffee. It tells us of foods that we are best advised to avoid; but more important than this, it tells us of the wide variety of good and choice foods, and it tells us of the desirability of consuming even the best of these in moderate quantities and at appropriate times. Health reform counsels us to live as far as possible in the open fresh air, preferably in a rural environment, of developing habits of breathing that will give our lungs full range of their capacity. It tells us of the desirability of an adequate intake of good fresh water. It tells us of the value of a full night of restful sleep induced by a wholesome and physiological natural readiness for such rest. Health reform warns us against the twentieth-century practice of working entirely beyond the human capacity for endurance, thereby developing tensions and pressures within which may result in either mental or physical tragedies, or possibly both. True health reform reflects its physical fitness and its mental alertness in a wholesome, joyous, and optimistic outlook, and a love and toleration toward others as described in Paul's great treatise on charity.

Health reform, above and beyond everything else, teaches us the limitations of the human frame as we attempt to breast the current of our modern pace. It invites us to accept the invitation of the Savior:

"Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28." Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7. Such is health reform, and in such a program Seventh day Adventists believe!

Training for Service

The third element in the Adventist program of medical ministry is that of training for service in such medical ministry. Time does not permit us to recall the long story of training first nurses, then physicians, and more recently a wider range of medical personnel. Our most recent addition to this splendid educational program is the development of our dental training college, which will open its doors to its first class of forty-eight students in September, 1953.

The Adventist concept of training in medical lines is clearly set forth in certain statements from the Spirit of prophecy. The sacred nature of the work these medically trained workers were to do is plainly indicated in the following quotation:

"Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick in response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel, who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete." [10]

The reason for this attitude is made clear in the following statement:

"The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel. Those who are selected to act the part of missionary physicians are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice. No selfish motive should be allowed to draw the worker from his post of duty. We are living in a time of solemn responsibilities; a time when consecrated work is to be done." [11]

In regard to the attitude of those thus trained and thus consecrated to this sacred ministry the messenger of the Lord has this counsel:

"The Lord calls for self-denial in His service, and this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers. We have before us an aggressive work which requires means, and we must call into service young men to labor as ministers and as physicians, not for the highest wages, but because of the great needs of God's cause. We need physicians and ministers whose hearts are consecrated to God, and who receive their marching orders from the greatest Medical Missionary that has ever trod this earth. Let them behold His life of self-denial, and then gladly sacrifice, in order that more workers may engage in sowing the gospel seed." [12]

Thus, in every home base and in every major mission field medical training is going forward in avenues appropriate to the area concerned, preparing those who will be able to step into this sacred ministry, following in the footsteps of the Great Physician Himself.

Medical Ministry Around the World

As we turn to the fourth phase, or area, of Adventist medical ministry, we find already prepared to step into this phase of service not only a large corps of missionary physicians and nurses but also thousands of ministers, Bible instructors, lay workers, volunteer workers from every walk of life—all ready to use this right arm of the message as a means of hastening the gospel to all of the world. Physicians, nurses, and technicians operate hospitals and sanitariums in which they pray with the sick and direct the expectant hopes of their patients to the Savior, the only Source of true healing and of complete restoration.

We find these medical workers training the youth in various lands to go out and do a comparable service for their own people. We find them writing and editing health literature, temperance literature, preparing books, tracts, magazines, to carry this same message of medical ministry. We find our gospel ministers and Bible instructors teaching their converts the simple principles of healthful living. We find others, trained for the purpose—and perhaps the earnest laymen teaching classes in first aid, home nursing, and the simpler techniques of caring for the sick. We find earnest laymen and these workers ministering to those who are afflicted with disease. We find them visiting the sick in their homes, giving simple treatments, teaching principles of healthful living. We find colporteurs carrying from door to door, from home to home, the gospel story in the millions of copies of our health evangelistic literature or our health and message-filled books.

Thousands in many lands are susceptible to the kindly ministrations of some form of medical service—ready to listen to the comforting words of the doctor, nurse, or medical worker, ready not only to listen to the medical counsel given but also to learn from their lips of the love and the redeeming power of the Great Physician Himself.

Christ, our Example, in His ministry gave first attention to the distress, the suffering, the material needs, of those who came to hear. Not only did He heal their diseases; He restored their weakened, distressed, and confused minds. To the hungry, on occasion, He supplied good food in abundance. He comforted those in distress, and even restored to life some who had been snatched away by death. The cleansed leper, the liberated arthritic, the blind who now could see, and the restored mental sufferers—all had had opened into their souls avenues for the entrance of the present truth the Master sought to tell them. Their restored and sound bodies were now fit dwelling places for the Holy Spirit, and they were candidates for citizenship in that heavenly kingdom.

But these people were cleansed and restored, not that they might go and sin again. The Master had said ‘“Go, and sin no more.”’ They were tokens of a far greater occasion of triumph; they were tokens of the millions who will one day be redeemed from suffering, from sorrow, and from death—tokens of that time when ‘“this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality.”’ Having lost their taint of deadly infection, the curse and the suffering of crippling deformity, the remorse of enfeebled mentality, they can now truly glorify God.

Yes, those to whom Christ preached the gospel, He first healed, restored them to health, to physical perfection, that they might glorify God in their bodies!

We too are called to share in this glorious experience. We, Seventh-day Adventists of the present day, through this fourfold ministry of health—our health institutions, our personal practice and teaching of health principles, our education of health workers, and our worldwide health evangelism—seek a more practical application of Paul’s challenge:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

It is to this intent that we honor a way of life which we choose to call “health reform.” It is to this intent that we take an intelligent interest in temperance, exercise, rest, food, drink, our living habits, and we hereby better understand that rational, well-balanced counsel of the apostle Paul: “Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

The Laws of Health

BY J. WAYNE MC FARLAND, M. D

My talk is based on the Bible, the Spirit of prophecy, and science. I find the first two in perfect agreement. Many times I find the latter not to be in agreement with the others, because many times a man-made idea creeps into science. I feel it is time we moved forward in

our health message. Our health work needs to be made health evangelism. We must unite as medical workers and teachers and ministers to save men and finish the work soon.

There are three texts I wish to call to your attention as a basis for discussing healthful living as a part of the three angels' messages. First: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1.

In the old dispensation the sacrifice had to be without spot, blemish, or any disease. In the new dispensation the apostle Paul definitely refers back to this sacrificial service with which they were all familiar, and says we now are to be "living" sacrifices.

My second text: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Man is composed of three parts. This is clear and distinct as set forth by this text. The Lord came to seek and to save that which was lost, and since all was lost, all must be saved. Man's body, mind, and soul came under the bondage of sin, and all three parts must be saved from Satan's bondage. We cannot emphasize too strongly that God saves the entire being. It is an absolute fundamental of Seventh-day Adventist thinking.

We preach the imminent return of our Lord, and the apostle Paul directs our attention to the fact that the entire being will be preserved blameless unto the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel of saving the entire man is the same gospel preached by Paul, by Peter, by James, and by John. And, thank the Lord, the gospel of saving the entire man is the gospel preached by the remnant church!

When we preach this gospel of saving the entire man we are but preaching the gospel given by Jesus Christ, the great Minister of soul and body, which brings me to my third text: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Luke 10:27.

The next evidence that I wish to bring is from the Spirit of prophecy, which, in pointing out the basis for teaching health principles, is in perfect agreement with the scriptures quoted." In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform, that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul." [13]

Lastly, I turn to medical science for proof of the inseparable nature of man's spiritual and physical and mental life, this time in the words of Dr. Andrew Ivy, world-famous physician and physiologist:

"Medicine is the handmaiden of science and religion. Religious and spiritual realms overlap more with the healing arts and sciences than in anything else man does. Try as we might to separate them, we can't do it, because that is the way we are built." [14]

This statement brings us face to face with laws, laws that cannot be changed. We are built that way. God created each of us with a mind, a body, and a soul that are inseparable. Everything that God created He placed under law, and these laws are for our benefit if we will follow them and obey them.

Let us study these laws governing the entire man. There is no question about there being a great moral code that governs the spiritual life. It is the Ten Commandments. If we disobey it, we have spiritual disease, soul sickness. Now, about the laws that govern mental life. If we disregard them, we have mental disease, for we then are ill at ease.

But we are looking for the laws that govern the physical life, the body. The rest of nature is under law-the stars, the planets, the birds, the insects. Everything in nature follows well-defined laws. It would be inconceivable to think that the human body would not be placed under law. It is, and that law is written very plainly and distinctly. Listen closely as we read to you the following quotation:

"All nature expresses the law of God, but in our physical structure Jehovah has written His law with His own finger upon every thrilling nerve, upon every living fiber, and every organ of the body." [15]

This is indeed a wonderful revelation. God wrote the great moral code with His own finger on tables of stone, but He writes the laws of health with His own finger on every physical structure. This thought helps us to understand another profound truth:

"Transgression of physical law is transgression of the moral law; for God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law. His law is written with His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty, which has been entrusted to man. And every misuse of any part of our organism is a violation of that law. . . . All should place themselves in the best possible relation to life and health. Our habits should be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God." [16]

Yes, God has three sets of laws. They are inseparable and they frequently overlap.

As a backdrop for our study of our body and the laws that govern it, let us go back to the day of creation on which man was created. Let us study just a bit of the design and the Designer.

The crowning act of God's handiwork was the creation of man. On the sixth day God the Father and God the Son completed the creation of living creatures, and Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator a perfect man. He was the masterpiece of creation, for God had said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Genesis 1:26.

We find delight in studying about birds, flowers, and creatures of the woods, but when we come to man we find the most marvelous study of all. The fact that we are created after the likeness of God should solemnize our study of the human body, for are we not studying the image of the great Omnipotent One, marred though it be by sin? Should it not lead us to study the laws governing our physical life in an entirely different manner from the way we study those governing any other part of nature? Surely no one can pursue such a study or delve into the mysteries of the body without exclaiming with the psalmist, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well." Psalm 139:14.

Let us consider some of the remarkable facts that occur at the beginnings of life just a few of these will help us to realize that we are fashioned both fearfully and wonderfully. From the union of two microscopic cells a new life develops. In the space of a few short months this one cell has divided and multiplied over two hundred billion times. In that original cell, created by the union of two cells, were present all the potentialities to form bone, muscles, hands, ears, eyes, and the various organs of the human body. The life coming from the Giver of all life has thus been perpetuated.

In beautiful language the Scripture describes how our heavenly Father watches and guards the tiny new being yet unborn." My substance ["body," margin] was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret." Verse 15. Is not this a precious promise, to know that Heaven watches over us from the very beginnings of life?

One of the many unraveled mysteries in the formation of this new life is the time at which the baby's heart begins to beat. Ordinarily organs respond to electrical impulses, which pass along over nerves. But in this case the heart begins beating before there are any nerve connections going to it. How does it start? Why does it always begin just at the time it should? Men may call it natural law if they choose, but it remains one of the Creator's unsearchable mysteries. The nerves that control the heart finally do grow down into the heart muscle before birth; they then carry on the work of sending electrical impulses to the heart about seventy-two times a minute throughout a lifetime.

The study of human anatomy and physiology reveals the skill of God. There can be found no place for chance or the theory of evolution in explaining man. The greatest embarrassment to the evolutionist is man himself. Evolution is hopelessly lost in explaining a design so complex and yet so beautiful and perfect in all its detail as a newborn babe.

After forming a perfect man with perfectly formed organs and in the image of Himself, God saw that one thing was still lacking. Man did not have life. The delicate and intricate design of the lungs had never functioned, but when God breathed into those nostrils the breath of life, the lungs, the nerves, the brain, responded instantaneously, and man became a living soul.

Should it not cause us to stop in awe and reverence, as we trace the finger of the great Master Designer in cell and tissue? Does it not make the study of the human body and the laws of physiology more than simply the acquirement of a lot of interesting facts?

We are not studying a mere mechanism. We have drawn aside, ever so slightly, a corner of the curtain that veils the mysteries of creation. We are looking upon the crowning workmanship of our heavenly Father, who said, "Let us make man in our image."

Sin entered the world and now we find disease and illness on every hand. These are the results of an enemy power. We have become so accustomed to seeing sickness and suffering, perhaps having suffered many illnesses ourselves, that we think this has always been the common lot of man, but such is not the case. Much of the suffering that exists need not be. Through either ignorance or willful disobedience of the laws of health, individuals bring upon themselves the vast majority of ills. Ellen G. White says:

"The violation of physical law, with its consequent suffering and premature death, has so long prevailed that these results are regarded as the appointed lot of humanity; but God did not create the race in such a feeble condition. This state of things is not the work of Providence, but of man." [17]

Now if we can find out what will restore man's diseased body so that his nerves, his heart, his lungs, or any other function is renewed, then we will have come across one of these great laws. What are the agencies or remedies that will restore God's image in man? In Ministry of Healing I find them listed; and I think this is a statement on which every Seventh-day Adventist minister should be able to speak: "Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power, these are the true remedies." [18]

Isn't that a beautiful sentence! Why, I don't have to go looking through the drugstore, I don't have to go down to the grocery store, trying to find some food supplement, I don't have to go to the doctor to find out whether there is some latest shot that is going to do the trick. Many times, brethren, it is by merely following these true, simple remedies that God has given to us that we can have our health restored.

Here are eight simple but very effective remedies to help us to better health. These are God's remedies, and if we could learn how to present these health factors to people in the right way, we would lead the world into a new field of preventive medicine. For not only are these eight simple measures true remedies; they are eight ways in which to keep the body in good health and the mind functioning properly; and it is time that we were leading the world. These are eight methods to foil the devil, who constantly endeavors to prostrate man with illness and to cast doubt and fears into his mind. Let me enumerate them again:

1. Air.
2. Sunlight.
3. Abstemiousness.
4. Rest.
5. Exercise.
6. Proper diet.
7. Use of water.
8. Trust in divine power.

Now I must reread Romans 1-9, verse 1 and also verse 2:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

From this point on we shall discuss how health of body, health of mind, and health of soul are related. We must learn how to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We have chosen to touch on four of these remedies to show the interdependence of the physical, mental, and spiritual realms, and in addition, how through neglect or ignorance of any one of these physical agencies we would find it more difficult to know what is the "acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Now where do we start? Should it be diet? No, there is something more important than diet. In fact, I should like to call your attention to the fact that health reform is not just any one particular phase of healthful living. It is not just any one of anything. It includes a well-rounded, well balanced program. Diet is only one of the eight natural remedies about which the Lord would have us learn. It is vital and important, but we can become greatly unbalanced by overemphasizing any one of the principles of health reform to the neglect of the others. There is something more vital than diet and more vital than just one article of diet in keeping us alive. Let us not forget that.

Fresh Air

Through the pen of inspiration we are told, "We are more dependent upon the air we breathe than upon the food we eat." [19] Counsels on Health states: "Fresh air will prove far more beneficial to sick persons than medicine, and is far more essential to them than their food." [20]

That is scientifically correct, for an individual could stay alive several days without water, and, believe it or not, he could last even longer without food, but without air-with its life-giving element of oxygen-he would die in a matter of just a few minutes. Here is a law of the body. We must have fresh air. As we study the process by which this vital element is used in the body, we find ourselves exclaiming with David, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Through one of the most remarkable transportation systems ever devised, oxygen from the air, taken in through the nose, finally makes its way to every minute cell composing the body tissue.

"The average quantity in the ordinary tranquil respiration of an adult is about a pint. . . . As the average in health is about eighteen inspirations a minute, . . . it follows that three thousand gallons of air pass through the lungs of an adult man every day." [21]

The lungs in turn are composed of 750 million air sacs or cells through which this oxygen passes to get into the blood stream. The blood then takes on oxygen from the air we breathe for the return circuit back to the cells. Four thousand eight hundred square yards of blood cell surface was exposed to the air while this sentence was read to you just now. Every second the blood goes rushing by, picking up the life-giving oxygen. The cells that transport this oxygen from the lungs throughout the body are the red blood cells, of which there are about twenty-five trillion in number. So strenuous is the work performed by these cells that each cell lives only about thirty days. This means that twelve million cells must be produced every second of every day- and all this to provide oxygen for millions upon millions of cells throughout the human body.

Some cells suffer more readily from the lack of oxygen than others. Listen to this: Those cells that are the most sensitive to the lack of oxygen are the cells that compose the nervous system. That is what we are interested in, for it is nerves and nerve tissue that make up the brain, and the brain is the organ that houses the mind, and it is with this mind that we choose and decide to do the “acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Nerves are important, then. They are something you should know about.

Now we must go one step further. There are cells in the brain that control motion, cells that control circulation, and cells in which reside the higher centers of man, such as his reasoning and will power; and it is these latter cells that are the very first ones of all the nervous system to be affected by lack of oxygen. Furthermore, this nervous system is electrical in nature. Some have compared the brain to an electric dynamo. These electric currents we can actually measure. Medical science can detect disturbances in the electric flow of the brain, and thereby locate brain tumors and scar tissue. Now, brethren, if the devil wanted to upset your mind, he would have easy access to it if he could upset the brain nerves. You probably have anticipated how he does it. How force fully comes to us this remarkable statement from the pen of Mrs. White. She wrote of electrical brain currents before man ever discovered them. This to me is one of the most profound statements on physiology I know.

“The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind.” [22]

Science and the Spirit of prophecy are in perfect agreement here. The next logical question to ask then is, Where do I get this electricity? How does the brain keep up its supply? The answer is simple: By getting fresh air. Mrs. White mentions several other places where we get the electricity for the brain, I can't go into that, but let me read you this most important statement: “Air is the free blessing of heaven, calculated to electrify the whole system.” [23]

Now we turn to science. In his textbook on physiology Dr. Samson Wright describes what happens with the gradual loss of oxygen:

“If anoxia [oxygen lack in the body from any cause] develops more gradually, the intellect and the senses become dulled without the person being subjectively aware of what has happened. . . . Symptoms similar to those resulting from an overdose of alcohol may be present: headache, depression, apathy and drowsiness, or excitement and general loss of self-control. . . . Memory is impaired. . . . Understanding is impaired more than sensation; the subject sees without knowing what he is looking at. He finds it difficult to understand printed or written words. . . . Finally, each sense is lost suddenly, hearing being retained longest.” [24]

We can see, then, that reasoning, will power, and judgment are affected by a slight lack of oxygen. Reduce the oxygen a little more, and the body cannot coordinate; reduce it still further, and one goes into coma.

Now, my brethren, exactly the same thing occurs when an individual takes alcohol. As Dr. Wright points out, the higher centers are affected first, the will power and reason; next the powers of locomotion; and last the cells that help one to breathe.

Now, the devil could not get us drunk, but just remember that he can keep our bodies in about a half-dead state by keeping us poring over books, studying day and night, so busy campaigning that we don't relax and forget to get outdoors to take in fresh air and oxygen. Then comes a problem that needs good, keen thinking, and we must “prove what is that good, and acceptable will.” But our judgment is impaired by lack of oxygen; we have had no fresh air or outdoor exercise and so we say “yea” when we should have said “nay.” Perhaps that is a strong statement, but it is no stronger than science can prove today. I repeat, “Air is the free blessing of heaven, calculated to electrify the whole system.”

A supply of this electrical energy would not hurt some of our churches. Does your church group have individuals in it who are depressed and gloomy? The pen of inspiration gives a vivid description of such poor saints with an insufficient supply of oxygen.

“The skin becomes sallow, digestion is retarded; the heart is depressed; the brain is clouded; the thoughts are confused; gloom settles upon the spirits; the whole system becomes depressed and inactive, and peculiarly susceptible to disease.” [25]

Why? For one reason-they do not have enough oxygen! It is not the only cause of disease, understand, but here is one cause for confused and gloomy thoughts that should not happen to Seventh-day Adventists. Incidentally, did you have some fresh air today? Speaking of patients, Ellen G. White says, "As they take exercise in the open air, restoration will begin in body, mind, and soul." [26] Now you can begin to see how these great laws overlap.

Here is a wonderful truth-that by exercising in the open air you are helping God to restore His image in you. You are keener of mind; therefore, better able to keep the soul from the snares of the devil. I submit to you that there is good religion in proper breathing and exercise. Do you believe that?

Water and Its Benefits

Now, brethren, if you will permit me, I would like to present this next topic just as we do in our evangelistic efforts. Pretend you are good Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, won't you, for just a little bit? Are you ready? Then we shall begin.

Today the health law we shall discuss is very simple. It requires only a bit of everyday knowledge and the determination to follow through. This one: Thou shall use water. I hear someone say to himself, "Oh, is that all? just water. I thought there might be a new wonder drug, something that I could swallow in pill form, and health and youth would bloom forth."

Unfortunately for those with "pillitis" and we have many of them-water, in the form easiest to take, comes not in capsules but as a liquid. You cannot have good health unless you get six to eight glasses of water daily.

How often, when doctors inquire of the patient, "How much water do you drink in a day?" the conversation runs something like this: "You know, doctor, that's a strange thing about me. I just never am thirsty. I can go all day without taking even a glass of water. I'm just like a camel."

The doctor probably muses over the facts as he sits and listens. The fact that people treat themselves like "camels" is the very reason they must sit across the desk hoping the doctor can relieve them of their back pain and other miseries. Naturally, the doctor does not embarrass them by pointing out all that he thinks. They might be offended, and then he would never have the opportunity to persuade them to give up their "camel" complex. But camel physiology and human physiology are quite different!

Many people do not realize how vital water is to the human system. Perhaps a few facts on body composition will make this more evident. From 70 to 75 per cent of the human body is made up of water. Even the muscles, which you might not think of being very much like water, contain about one half of that total amount. The blood, the life-giving fluid of the body, makes up only 7. 14% of the total amount of fluid. The brain cells, some fifteen billion of them, are 70 per cent water. It really is a compliment to you when someone, perhaps thinking to speak disparagingly, says, "You have a little water on your brain." If the water level of the body drops beyond a certain critical point, then actual changes in people's behavior occur. Water and disposition are more closely related than we think. This fact should encourage you to get your full quota of water each day-six to eight glasses.

Most people, of course, think of the kidneys when the subject of water is under discussion. True, it is that here we have the most wonderful filter system to be found anywhere. Nothing yet that man has devised can equal the wonder of the kidneys. Although they weigh only about five ounces, yet the amount of blood equivalent to all that is in the human body (about six quarts) passes through them every eighty minutes. These tiny filters inside the body know exactly what substances to let pass by, and then reabsorb the fluid after the poisons have passed on. The tiny tubules in the kidney are so small that you can only see the individual filters (called glomeruli) with a microscope. There are some two million of these filters. They do not all work at once, but each one starts and stops in a mysterious fashion. Each has a rest period. You find the law of rest throughout the body.

They, the kidneys and their tiny tubules, excrete one to two quarts of fluid each day, and they will not work properly if you neglect to furnish them sufficient water. Yet some folks work them overtime by trying to get along without water or by feeding them a little poison. Some beverages, that are all too common, could be dispensed with entirely and you would not suffer one bit. I speak of caffeine-, tannin-containing drinks and alcohol. It is true that you get liquids with coffee, tea, and cola drinks, but you also get poisons.

There are no vitamins or minerals in tea, coffee, and cola drinks; and if there were, they would be handicapped by the sugar used, because sugar contains neither vitamins nor minerals. Besides, these liquids have habit-forming propensities that are alarming to school authorities and nutritionists. Teachers and nutritionists speak out boldly against their use by children. Why? Because tea and coffee and cola beverages have a direct effect on the nerves of the mind, and minds are what educators are trying to train. And control of nerves is what many adults need. So, for best health of body and mind, let's mark these off the list and we shall be surprised how much better we feel. Then let's be sure we are taking six to eight glasses of water, between meals.

Isn't it grand that science comes along to support us in following out God's instruction to us through His messenger to dispense with tea and coffee? Some of our people need help on this point. Do deal gently and kindly with them it is hard business giving up tea and coffee, I know.

Here is a health tip: On arising in the morning, two glasses of warm water is all the laxative that many persons require. And isn't that much better than the "stuff" some folks swallow in order to force the intestinal tract to become punctual? Just a word of advice on the warm water: Should your stomach be one that has never had this pleasant surprise, better not gulp down the two glasses too fast! Your stomach may decide you have made a mistake and return it.

I must say one word about water on the outside. Very early in the history of the denomination hydrotherapy was a well-known word in every household, but today if we are not careful the world is going to outstrip us in what was one of our glorious heritages. Physical medicine and rehabilitation, as it is called today, is a part of the curriculum of every medical school in the United States, and it is rapidly finding its place in every hospital in the United States. I wouldn't want you to think that it is the last word in treatment of disease, for that is not true. But I do know this, that if we neglect it we will soon be having alternate hot and cold catching up with the world. Perhaps I am a bit biased toward physical medicine, having done considerable work in that field, but I have seen hydrotherapy do what no amount of drugs could ever accomplish. However, I find a statement that helps me to keep my thinking balanced on this question of hydrotherapy so that I will not try to make every sanitarium a bathhouse. Here it is: "More can be accomplished for sick people by regulating their diet than by all the baths that can be given them." [27]

Diet and Health

This was penned by God's messenger to the management of the St. Helena Sanitarium in the early days of its existence. Apparently there was some danger of overemphasizing one feature of God's program of healing to the detriment of both patients and institution.

So you see water inside and water outside is not the whole question. For sick people who want to get well, and for people who don't want to get sick, diet is more important than hydrotherapy. When Mrs. White says that feeding patients correctly is more important than all the baths we can give them, that settles it for me. Diet is the most important. One of the most rapidly expanding fields of science and research today is in this field of nutrition and its application to the treatment of disease. See how wonderfully this harmonizes with light given to us many years ago." The disease and suffering that everywhere prevail are largely due to popular errors in regard to diet." [28]

Here is an interesting statement by Dr. Victor G. Heiser, consultant in Public Health Administration, who has spoken about the relation of food to sickness in this fashion:

"Till recently we did not know that disease could be absolutely proved to be intimately connected with diet, but today I could prescribe a diet for you which you would not think at all unusual, predicting in advance any one of a half dozen diseases that you might contract as a result. Your diet, what you eat, largely influences the rate at which your organism ages and consequently, the duration of your life."

Our health law on diet reads: Thou shall eat properly to live. In the diet of the average person what is one of the foods that will influence the rate at which he ages and the duration of life? We shall come right to the point. Dr. Lotta Jean Bogert says:

"Sugar is a habit-forming food, so that persons who acquire a taste for it want more of it as such or want other foods highly flavored with it. Our acquired taste for sugar has ruined our taste for other foods with more subtle flavors, thus leading us into an unbalanced diet, and has tempted us to habitual overeating." [29]

We now know that our biggest health problem right here is that of overeating. Some, I am afraid, have felt that it is the "survival of the fittest," but actually it is the "survival of the fittest." And to a person who needs help in curtailing his calories the following facts on terminating his earthly stay might prove interesting.

Dr. Louis I. Dublin, Ph. D., with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for forty years, gives us these facts: Between the ages of twenty and sixty-four overweight men have a death rate 50 per cent higher than their normal contemporaries. Overweight women pay for their poundage with a death rate 47 per cent higher. The deaths are due to heart disease, hardening of the arteries, kidney trouble, cerebral hemorrhage, and diabetes. And now we have learned that excessive weight and cancer run a close parallel too. There are three miles of blood vessels in every pound of fat. But I would hasten to ease a bit of tension that might arise from this question by stating that it is known that about 5 per cent-but only 5 per cent-of people's overweight is due to some glandular malfunction. In the majority of cases it is just eating too much that harms the body and prepares the way for trouble.

I would like in this connection to bring out something from the Spirit of prophecy to let the thin ones know that they are not in any way allowed to escape this question of overeating; in fact, the Spirit of prophecy, if read in its broadest, fullest sense, will usually have

something to say on both sides of any question. We ought to remember that.” Some grow corpulent because the system is clogged; others become thin and feeble because their vital powers are exhausted in disposing of an excess of food.” [30]

This question of nutrition is a far-reaching one. (We shall have time to touch upon only one or two more points.) We know that about 50 per cent of the American people, and probably many from a good many other countries, fail to obtain optimum health and maximum vigor because of a low intake of vitamin B components. As a result they are nervous or tired, irritable, and feel half dead. They suffer from aches, pains, nervousness. junior is irritable, puny, catches everything that goes around. We have a popular idea that we can make up the deficit by swallowing a vitamin pill or two or getting a shot from the doctor. That’s taking a long chance to remedy something that usually can be corrected at the dining-room table.

But just what does happen to a person’s health-to these over-fifty-per-cent people who are not getting enough of just one particular food element, B? Here in the words of Dr. Williams and Dr. Mason, members of the Mayo Clinic staff, we have the picture. They took eleven normal women who were in good health and normally nourished and placed them on a diet of plain white bread, corn flakes, potatoes, polished rice, sucrose, skim milk, beef, cheese, egg white, butter, vegetable fat, cocoa, gelatin, canned vegetables, and coffee.

That resembles, in many respects, the diet of a lot of our neighbors. Of course, it wouldn’t sound like ours! This diet is sufficient as far as providing vitamins is concerned, and other elements also; but one thing was at a low level -that was vitamin B, (Thiamine chloride), the vitamin most essential to smooth-running nerves.

Here is what happened to the eleven women who ate this diet in the Mayo Clinic experiment: After several weeks marked changes occurred in the behavior of these previously normal women. They became depressed, irritable, quarrelsome, and fearful. They all became weak, lacked energy, and were unable to carry on their tasks efficiently. To add to this sad mental state a variety of symptoms appeared, such as headache, backache, sore muscles, gastric distress after meals, sleeplessness, tenseness, prickly sensation of the skin, and intolerance to noise.” In short, a group of women specially selected for the cooperative qualities in their previous normal behavior were transformed in a few weeks into inadequate suffering creatures with all the features usually associated with a neurotic personality.” And all this because they did not get quite enough vitamin B, in the diet.

I want you to notice just one symptom that these women complained of, and its consequences, for I think you will see the relationship between food, your mental attitude, and your Christian experience. Did you notice the symptom intolerance to noise? One of the symptoms found with a low intake of vitamin B, is “intolerance to noise- because of the effect the lack of vitamin B, has on the nerves.

Well, let’s imagine what this could mean in our neighbor’s home. It is late afternoon, just about time for Johnny to come home. Bang! goes the front door. Yes, Johnny is home! He yells, “Hey, Mom, look at it; I got a hundred in my spelling today!”

“Stop that yelling; go on outside and play. I can’t stand this noise! Now get out!”

And mother holds on to her head and frowns as though it would blow to pieces if she heard another word out of Johnny. So, he turns and walks out, wondering what’s wrong with mom. He thought she would be glad.

I’ll tell you what’s wrong with mother. She is feeding herself and family so that they are nervous, they are high strung, and they jump at one another. Instead of throwing her arms around Johnny with a great big hug and kiss and congratulating him on his progress, she sends him out; and he, instead of feeling a mother’s love, feels the effects of intolerance to noise.

What many a family needs is not more prayers by the preacher to keep them from squabbling, bickering, and fighting, but a change of practice at the dining-room table. The devil knows that as long as he can have people eat improperly, so that they do not get enough vitamins to run a nervous system, or taking so much sugar that it uses up all their vitamin B, so there is nothing to run the nervous system, he has it easy. They can’t control their disposition until they learn to control their diet. Now, perhaps this statement from Ellen G. White will mean much more to you:

“The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the up building of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being. The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death. Men and women must be awakened to the duty of self mastery, the need of purity, freedom from every depraving appetite and defiling habit. They need: to be impressed with the fact that all their powers of mind and body are the gift of God, and are to be preserved in the best possible condition for His service.” [31]

I recommend that in order to know what is the best diet you study the Bible. You will find that when God created man He made up the menu for him, and I think He gave him the best food and not the second best. He tried to get ancient Israel to follow more closely the original menu, but you remember He had some difficulty.

The same Jesus who led ancient Israel is leading us. He is going to lead us on to Canaan. Listen to His message through the Spirit of prophecy. And do notice how generous the messages are. Brethren, when we became Adventists it was this light that saved our family from losing a father just at the time a boy named Wayne needed a father most. It has never been difficult for me to cherish this light. It is not harsh-listen:

“We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God’s people.” [32]

“Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away: flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it.” [33]

It is obvious from a study of the Spirit of prophecy that this question of health was a gradual unfolding of light on subjects from good, healthful surroundings, cleanliness, and general hygiene, to alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee. And when the Lord began to send us testimonies that He would like to have modern Israel subsist largely on fruits, grains, vegetables, and nuts, with milk and eggs added, many of our people followed the counsel. That is the reason vegetarianism is among us as a people; that’s why our medical school and sanitariums and educational institutions all began practicing a more healthful type of cookery. That is why all our health books, magazines, and health periodicals advocate vegetarianism as being the best way to provide the body nourishment. We should thank the Lord for this wonderful counsel, which is now corroborated by some of the world’s leading nutritionists. Just one statement from E. V. McCollum, of Johns Hopkins University, discoverer of vitamins A and D:

“I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that it is a distinct possibility to be a well-fed and adequately fed lacto-ovo vegetarian. Meat is not essential for endurance. This has been demonstrated in certain races, and by individuals more than once.

“When the diet is properly planned, adequate protein and other essentials such as vitamins and minerals, can easily be obtained on a lacto vegetarian diet. I am certain that meat could be cut down or dispensed with entirely and no harmful effects would occur to the human organism provided the meatless diet contained milk, eggs and a liberal supply of fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts.” [34]

Another nutritionist states: “Milk and eggs are not only adequate substitutes for meat, but they carry in addition a rich supply of minerals and vitamins which will have to be added to the meat ration to make it equally valuable with either of the other two.” [35]

Having considered this problem thus far, let us keep clearly in mind that there are countries that have not had an abundance of the good things that we have. We must meet people where they are, and we are not to be conscience for them or for any individual in this matter. In many places where I have been I have had no burden to dwell at great length on certain questions of diet. What those folks needed was to learn the value of soap and water, rather than about meat substitutes. This question requires much tact and a degree of knowledge and much love; and on this one problem alone in some quarters we have had a considerable amount of zeal without knowledge, and, unfortunately, in other quarters a lot of knowledge with no zeal. Either extreme is dangerous, and from either of these extremes it is impossible to present a well-balanced discussion of vegetarianism.

Let us keep clearly before us that the question of meat eating is not a test of fellowship. I feel that we, particularly those who are keen to sit in the judgment seat, need to reread this statement and the others that are with it from the messenger of the Word.

“While we do not make the use of flesh meat a test, while we do not want to force any one to give up its use, yet it is our duty to request that no minister of the conference shall make light of or oppose the message of reform on this point. Do not take a position before the people that will permit them to think that it is not necessary to call for a reform in regard to meat eating; because the Lord is calling for a reform. The Lord has given us the work of proclaiming the message of health reform, and if you cannot step forward in the ranks of those who are giving this message you are not to make this prominent. In counter working the efforts of your fellow laborers, who are teaching health reform, you are out of order, working on the wrong side.” [36]

“As a people we should make advancement proportionate to the light received. It is our duty to understand and respect the principles of health reform. On the subject of temperance we should be in advance of all other people: and yet there are among us well-instructed members of the church, and even ministers of the gospel, who have little respect for the light that God has given upon this subject. They eat as they please, and work as they please.”

“We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God’s people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for every one, and to give the lower passions control

over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating were ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating.

“We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. As God’s messengers, shall we not say to the people, ‘Whether therefore you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God’? I Corinthians 10:31. Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the flesh pots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God’s storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins? Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting.

“All are now being tested and proved. We have been baptized into Christ, and if we will act our part by separating from everything that would drag us down and make us what we ought not to be, there will be given us strength to grow up into Christ, who is our living head, and we shall see the salvation of God.” [37]

Health and Our Relation to God

Now we come to the last part of this discussion, which is the most important part of the health program—yes, more important than fresh air, water, exercise, as far as helping us to better health is concerned.

I remember giving a talk on fresh air, at a camp meeting once, and a good sister came up and chided me: “Doctor, that isn’t the most important element in order to have good health. Here, read this.”

I will read it to you:

“Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does the spirit of gratitude and praise. It is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings, as much a duty as it is to pray.” [38]

That is the most important part of this health-reform program. How, then, shall we present the question of good living to the world and to our people? Ah! let it be in the spirit of enjoyment and of positive, vigorous health and calm trust in God, and not as some form of penance that we carry on in order to place our bodies in a strait jacket, trusting that the Lord will count it to us for righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, although I think we have shown that it is possible for the devil to use his knowledge of chemistry and help us to cut our way out. But we do these things and follow these health laws because we love the Father in heaven, who has shown us a “more excellent way.”

We should rid ourselves of this idea of healthful living as a form of penance. In the Spirit of prophecy we have law and love combined. The Spirit of prophecy should be used as a message of love. Reproofs are found, yes, but they are messages of love, and they are always spoken in love. The testimony of Jesus has always been one of love, for “love will do what duty makes a task, and love will run when duty slowly walks at last.”

I believe the only way to put over the great question of healthful living is not by attacking what is wrong, but by showing people a better way.” It is of little use to try to reform others by attacking what we may regard as wrong habits. Such effort often results in more harm than good!” [39]

Christ showed us how to work.” In His talk with the Samaritan woman, instead of disparaging Jacob’s well, Christ presented something better. This is an illustration of the way in which we are to work. Of all the people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous.” [40]

It requires tact, courtesy, and a happy, considerate Christian to get men over their wrong physical habits. And that’s just the place we must begin, for “if we would elevate the moral standard in any country where we may be called to go, we must begin by correcting their physical habits. Virtue of character depends upon the right action of the powers of the mind and body.” [41]

A man who is full of tobacco, alcohol, sleeping pills, tea and coffee, and an aspirin for his headaches, many times is not able to grasp easily the doctrinal points. The 2300 days, the sanctuary service, the state of the dead, the Sabbath, are topics that you have to go over and over again before he comprehends them. And mark my word, he must comprehend them—his eternal destiny depends on knowing where he is and where he is going. Why not start on the habits that cripple his mental faculties? Why not start saving man just where Jesus started—correcting his physical habits?

Try to emulate the manner in which Christ won men. Show them how much better they feel when they get rid of that old coffeepot, how much better their nerves will be. Their minds will be clearer when they learn how to breathe fresh air and have regular hours for meals, rest, and exercise every day. I haven't said as much as I would like about rest and exercise, but let me remind you that Christ says, "Come you yourselves apart and rest a while." We use our brains too much, our muscles too little.

Ellen G. White says: "Brethren, when you take time to cultivate your garden, thus gaining the exercise needed to keep the system in good working order, you are just as much doing the work of God as in holding meetings." [42]

That's how much the Lord thinks of this body-He wants it kept in top-notch condition." We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work." [43]

That can start right in the church member's own home. Yes, our people are looking for leadership into a better understanding and a better knowledge of how to apply the principles of healthful living in their most beautiful setting, not only in perfecting their own lives but in helping their neighbors to learn to trust God for physical and spiritual healing.

Trust in divine power? Ah! That's what the world needs now. I can perhaps help get rid of the sniffles and some of the few aches and pains, but there is nothing in the field of medicine or hydrotherapy or of diet that can take away the burden of sin that bears a man down with fear and remorse. Only Christ can do that. I must lead him to the cross of Calvary. If I am to give him the spirit of gratitude and praise, if I am to give him the thing which tends more to promote health of body and soul, more than anything else, I must bring him to the One who is all health and altogether lovely -the great Master Physician, Jesus Christ.

"When love and skill combine, expect a masterpiece." Brethren, we have great light and great knowledge. The skill is here. What we need most is love, Christ's love. Then He will help this remnant church to become a masterpiece. We have light that would draw the greatest scientists to inquire of us if we would just follow on to know the Lord.

What we need today is more unselfish, kind, and courteous Seventh-day Adventist Christians Who are happy and considerate, and are really enjoying living tip to this health message." The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is loving and lovable Christian." [44]

We pray for the Lord to send reapers into the harvest to help reap men-the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. May those who delve into the question of healthful living be those who have a deep love for their fellow men, who are tolerant of what they consider weaknesses in others.

The story is usually this, that where one man is weak, his brother may be strong; and where that brother is weak, the other may be strong. Therefore, we ought to love one another and bear one another's infirmities, and pray that the Lord will deal gently with us, as we endeavor in our leader ship to bring our people to a higher standard, to a new appreciation of healthful living.

'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.'" This is my prayer for each of us.

Our Changing Medical World

Why do we have a health program? Why is it necessary for us to have a denominational health program at all? We have studied this question only briefly. We came to the point that I want to emphasize before we move away from this study, and that has to do with the question of preparation of personnel to participate in such a program.

There has, unfortunately, not been through the years the close, intimate relationship and fellowship between our medical and our ministerial brethren that we believe would have been greatly to the advantage of the cause of God. I am glad to tell you that this old cleavage is less and less apparent. We are getting closer and closer, and that dividing line is entirely disappearing, and I am glad it is almost gone.

We have explicit instruction in this matter of the training of our personnel for medical service in our denomination. I am going to call your attention to some of the instruction we have on this matter. While it bears very definitely upon the preparation of our physicians, I think it applies to our other medical personnel as well. The Adventist concept of training in medical lines is clearly set forth in certain statements from the Spirit of prophecy indicating the sacred nature of the work these medically trained workers are to do. We have the following plain statement of the relationship of our medical work to our work as a whole." Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick." [45]

This is one of the problems they were meeting in an earlier day in our work. Some complained that the tithe was to be used for the support of the ministers. The tithe went to the priesthood in the olden times. Why should we use tithe for the support of medical men? Who were the medical men in olden days? They were the priests. To whom did people go in those days when they were sick? They reported to their temple, to the priests. This was the accepted plan. The doctor and the minister were united in one person, the priest. Some have complained that "tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick." Mrs. White replies in response to such statements as these, "I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel, who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete." [46]

Then we are told, "The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work." [47] That

is the emphasis we are placing upon our training in Loma Linda at the present time. I am glad to tell you that the spirit of Loma Linda today is just as highly spiritual in its emphasis on the dedication of its professors as any college we have in this denomination." The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel." [48] What a solemn statement that is regarding those who have the privilege of medical training. The medical man should feel as solemnly set aside as is the minister of the gospel." Those who are selected to act the part of missionary physicians are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice. No selfish motives should be allowed to draw the worker from his post of duty." [49] We are living in a time of solemn responsibility, a time when consecrated work is to be done.

That is the message that was sent to our administrators at an earlier day, indicating the place that should be reserved for our medical men. It is the same place that was reserved for our ministers---that of soul winning. We have no other purpose for training physicians than that of developing soul winners for the world field. In regard to the attitude of those less trained and less consecrated to this sacred ministry we have this counsel: "The Lord calls for self-denial in service. And this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers." [50] I think this truth is something that should come home to the heart of every physician.

"The Lord calls for self-denial in His service, and this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers. We have before us an aggressive work which requires means, and we must call into service young men to labor as ministers and as physicians, not for the highest wages, but because of the great needs of God's cause. We need physicians and ministers whose hearts are consecrated to God, and who receive their marching orders from the greatest Medical Missionary that has ever trod this earth. Let them behold His life of self-denial, and then gladly sacrifice, in order that more workers may engage in sowing the gospel seed." [51]

I am glad for that call. I am glad that it classifies the medical man right along shoulder to shoulder with the minister, and I believe that that is where he should stand. I believe there should not be one jot or tittle of difference made between these groups of workers. I believe we should be in such a situation that we can call in these young men and women, these physicians, and put them into a position of soul winning in any part of the world without any worry about extra expenses. I believe that the Lord has such a plan for us. And I believe that when we enter upon such a program we are going to see our medical work occupy more fully that place which God intended originally that it should. And I wish to assure you, brethren, as I study the situation in our training college, as I become better acquainted with our young medical men who are looking toward denominational service, that we do have in these fine young men one of the most consecrated and devoted groups of workers that we have anywhere in the denomination.

I believe I am correct when I say that as we call young men to the medical ministry in the foreign field, we do not find those young men asking, "How much am I paid for mission service?" I don't remember ever being asked that question. I believe that we have among our young medical men as consecrated a band of workers as is to be found anywhere. I hope that we as ministers will warm up to this group and that we will assure them that we are working with them in a very close fellowship and that together we will go forward to the finishing of this work.

We are receiving letters in our office constantly from our pastors, asking for explanations of how it happens that we as a people are doing this or that thing in our denominational medical program. Two of the questions that we have here today are illustrative of the questions that come to us from time to time.

"How do we understand the instruction of the Spirit of prophecy to apply regarding drugging? Have our medical institutions gone astray on this matter? We have heard that our mission hospitals depend largely on drugging for their therapy. Is this true?"

I suppose we could reply to this in a Yes and No answer, and I am going to tell you why. I shall give you a little illustration of how our attitude toward physical therapy, hydrotherapy, and other natural means of treatment applies in our mission field. We shall take for an example the hospital with which I was most closely associated--the Giffard Mission Hospital, in Nuzvid, South India. There we have a large turnover of patients. We see a great number of outpatients each day. One or possibly two doctors must see all of these patients. Perhaps fifty, seventy-five, or one hundred patients come in a day and must be seen by the doctor. There are three or four foreign nurses in that institution, assisted by the capable national nurses locally trained.

Among the fifty to one hundred patients who come in and must be seen daily we will say there are fifteen or twenty who have some kind of infection, some acute infection, or it may be a respiratory infection, or pneumonia, or what have you. Now, the missionary doctor has his choice. He can select out of the one hundred patients, we will say, fifteen or twenty of the whole group and say, "I am going to take you folks and give you correct treatment, and we will take you to the hydrotherapy department and we will treat you according to the best concepts of physical therapy. We will see that you get your fomentations; we will see that you get your diathermy and all, but the rest of you, the other seventy-five patients, will have to go home without treatment because of the limitations caused by lack of personnel. We can treat just so many people with that method." Now, would you wish for us to operate your hospital on such a plan? No; and we don't. Patients who come in with acute infections we treat according to the indications. If the infection is something that responds very satisfactorily to one of those "deadly" drugs we hear so much about-sulfa drugs-we use sulfa drugs, and almost like magic the patient is restored to health. Yes, we use sulfa drugs, lifesaving sulfa drugs. And let me say there are probably many of you here in this audience today, alive and well, because of sulfa drugs.

Brethren, let us not get so far off to one side on this question of drugs that we cannot see basic principles of health involved. In the mission field we do use sulfa, and before penicillin came, we used very much of it. We use it to save people's lives; we don't use it just to be drugging. We find that it is a means of saving people's lives, lives that could not be saved otherwise. By this plan of treating with what we have, we care for the entire one hundred patients, and we don't send them away not cared for, as we would have to do if we depended entirely on the other methods.

Let us see how this works in the clinic. Here comes a patient with a carbuncle, we will say. We have many such cases in our part of the country. Rich people, you know, people who eat too much of overly rich food, seem to be the ones who get most of the carbuncles. And they come in with very large ones, as large as the palm of your hand and standing out as big as a sauce dish on the back or on the neck. Ordinarily, with hydrotherapy that patient would probably by very careful treatment over a period of three, four, or six weeks finally conic through, though not for certain. What do we do today? I will tell you the simple technique that I used. When these very critical cases with those huge carbuncles that might take life within a matter of days came into the hospital, I got out the penicillin. I mixed up 20, 30, 40 cc. of penicillin, and I went all around the base of that carbuncle-that great ugly thing, hard, so painful that the patient cannot sleep day or night-I injected it all around with this penicillin. What was the result? The next day the whole mass was soft and painless. The staphylococcus germs were now inactive. Two or three days later the patient was feeling absolutely comfortable. The abscess drained off in a matter of five or six days. Ten days later the patient was on his way home, entirely well. He was out of danger within a matter of hours after that first injection. Is that good therapeutics, or is it better to put him through the tortures of lancing that tender flesh and the discomfort of all the hot fomentations, packs, and all the rest? Well, now brethren, I think that is a good, rational, and sensible way to care for that disease. And if you come into one of our hospitals with a carbuncle, I hope that you won't ask to have it handled by the good old-fashioned method.

Now you say, "Hydrotherapy, then, is out." No, hydrotherapy isn't out at all. In fact, hydrotherapy is one of the greatest lifesavers we know anything about, and I am going to tell you in a moment about that.

One evening when I was down in Bombay (this was about five years ago now) I had been out buying supplies in the city, and came back to the mission house. Those of you who have been in Bombay know the mission house with its guest room. I was just settling down to retire early when one of our workers came into the guest room weeping most disturbingly. He was a young man, probably twenty-eight or thirty years of age. I said, "Why, Winston, what is the trouble?"

He came over to me and leaned on my shoulder and said, "My father is dying."

I said, "What's the trouble?"

He said, "He has typhoid fever, and the doctor says he will probably die before midnight."

"Well," I said, "what has been done for him?"

"Oh, we have had the best doctor we can get here, and we have given him everything that we know available."

I said, "Who is your doctor?"

He told me of this supposedly good doctor who was in charge. I said, "Winston, do you mind if I come over to see him?" He said, "I will be happy for anything you can do for him."

Just at that moment Dr. Joseph Johannes, a fellow missionary physician stepped in, and I said, "Doctor, let's go over to see Winston's father."

We hurried over to the place and found that all that Winston had told us was quite true. His father was already (this was about 8 o'clock in the evening) going into Cheyne Stokes breathing, which is a terminal condition.

I asked them, "What has been done for him?"

The nurse who had been taking the doctor's instructions told me how they had treated him. He had been given this drug and that drug and this medication and that medication.

I said, "What have you been feeding him?"

"Oh, you don't feed typhoid patients."

I said, "What have you been giving him to drink?"

"Oh, we give a typhoid patient very little to drink. Eating or drinking might result in rupture of the bowel. Why, surely, that is common knowledge."

There that man had been starving to death and thirsting to death, because they had been afraid to give a little food or water.

I said, "It is obviously too late to do anything for him, but there is just a very bare chance that by going to work right now we may be able to help him." By present indications it seemed that he would pass away within a few hours. I thought the doctor was about right, that before midnight it would all be over. The family said, "He is gone anyway. If you can do anything for him, why let's do it."

In the first place this patient was in an inside room hot, sultry tropical night that it was—he was in the inside room, with doors closed to make sure he didn't get pneumonia. It would, of course, be tragic to get pneumonia with the typhoid fever. We agreed that Dr. Johannes would go over to the bazaar with Winston and bring a good supply of intravenous fluid-glucose solution or just plain saline, just so it was intravenous fluid. The doctor hurried out to the bazaar with Winston, and I took charge in the sickroom. I asked an attendant to bring me a kettle of boiling water just as quickly as possible. I said, "Now, let's move him into the other room." We got him into a corner room and opened all the windows, and then to the horror of the family we turned on the fan directly over him. The nurse, now thoroughly shocked, made references to doctors with no better sense than to do such things, more than implying that such should not be permitted to practice medicine. She was sure that this patient, ready to die in a few hours, would get pneumonia or worse.

Quickly we got the hot-sheet pack functioning. We wrung those sheets out of the boiling water, laid them on his bare body, with the cold fan overhead. We changed those sheets every two or three minutes, gave the treatment just as intensively as we knew how, while the nurse and the family looked on with critical eye, certain that it was hastening his death. In a little bit the intravenous fluid arrived. We opened his veins and got the water going into his veins. We gave him two quarts of fluid in less time than—well, a lot faster than the book says. Good methods say you are supposed to let it drip in slowly—but in this emergency we shot it in just as fast as it would go. This patient was dehydrated; his blood couldn't flow normally.

When we arrived there at eight o'clock that evening his temperature was 107°. You know that that isn't a very healthy situation. At ten o'clock we checked his temperature and it was 103°. We carried on with this vigorous program for a period of—well, from the time we started until about eleven o'clock. Now I noticed that he was beginning to move his leg a little. We were using hydrotherapy inside and out. We were pushing the hydrotherapy into his veins; we were using it all over him. We were using fresh air; we were using every agency we knew how. About eleven-thirty he began to move his lips as though he were trying to tell us something. At twelve o'clock the patient was speaking, though not coherently. Yes, he was now talking to us, and at twelve-thirty he was sitting on the edge of the bed, talking to the family who had supposed that it might all be over by that time. A few days later he was fully recovered and feeling fine. Now that, friends, is hydrotherapy, practical hydrotherapy, the hydrotherapy in which we believe and which we advocate.

I am sure you can see the rationale of it. Under those circumstances penicillin would have been of no use, sulfa would be of no value. We went to work on this patient with what we had. You may well imagine the surprise of the doctor on the case. The patient who conventionally should have been dead some hours before the next morning, is very much alive, and all due to what? Good hydrotherapy. No, we have not turned our back on hydrotherapy. Nor have our sanitariums turned their back on hydrotherapy.

We do use it, but we use it where it is most useful. I am sorry we do not use it more than we do. The greatest reason for its limited use is the lack of help. We try to use it in its place. We find it necessary to use other facilities and techniques besides hydrotherapy. We do use some so-called drugs useful, lifesaving drugs—and there are many people alive today because somebody had the good judgment to use some of these drugs. These are not the drugs referred to by the Spirit of prophecy. The Spirit of prophecy was talking about those useless, senseless things that doctors used to give just to be giving something.

No one knew why he gave quinine in malnutrition; no one knew why lie gave strychnine. They were given simply because there was nothing else to do. It might do some good, you couldn't tell; perhaps it was better to do something than nothing. Arsenic, calomel, surely we had better give the patients something. Some of these are pretty potent.

That was the kind of drugging that the Spirit of prophecy referred to fifty or seventy-five years ago. It was obviously not speaking of the rational lifesaving and life-restoring medications that we use today in good medicine. I hope that we will recognize this fact. I hope that we will be able to reassure our people on this matter. There are so many of our people who feel that our sanitariums and our doctors have really lost their way because they are using some of these medications. We receive in our office frequent complaints that "the doctor in our community is recommending or using this or that drug. What shall we do about it?" "Where can we go to get someone who uses just the natural methods?" Penicillin is one of the most natural methods we know of. It kills germs quicker, and gets the patient on his feet quicker in many cases than was formerly thought possible. Isn't that a good natural way of treating disease?

They say we should be using herbs as the Spirit of prophecy says. Do you know where penicillin comes from? Why, of course, it comes from a plant, after it is carefully extracted and made available in a very convenient form to use, and you don't have to eat a quart of mold to get the benefits of it. Does it make it something less desirable because we buy it on prescription from a drugstore? We should be rational about these things, and, brethren, we are trying to be rational. We are trying to educate our doctors and our nurses along rational lines, and we believe that the procedures being used in our institutions are good, sane, sensible procedures that we can stand behind. Let me assure you that these procedures are not in violation in any way of the spirit of this instruction we have in the Spirit of prophecy.

No, let us stand behind these physicians, these institutions, that are attempting to do a good service in restoration to health. You know there is something wonderful about the good balance that we find all through the Spirit of prophecy, and this good balance is something we ought to be able to carry on out into our medical ministry. The more we go into the instruction we have in the Spirit of prophecy, the more impressed we are with the excellent balance that appears in these important matters of health. We do not find condemnation of those things that we know to be perfectly rational. And remember, we must put ourselves in the setting in which the Spirit of prophecy instruction was given. The more I study the Spirit of prophecy on these matters of health, the more I am impressed with the wonderful treasure this denomination has in these volumes. I think that perhaps we have in recent years not studied them as care fully as we should, and I certainly recommend them to you, brethren, that we come closer, that we understand better, the intent and the spirit of these volumes. I recommend that we use them not only to instruct others but in our own personal lives as a guide, and that we attempt, through guidance we shall receive from this the instruction, to reach more fully the standard that was set for us-that which was given to us by John, by Paul, and by the other apostles when they commended to us that wonderful instruction, "What so ever you do," do it to the glorification of our Savior.

18. The Companions Of The Lamb

T. H. JEMISON

The Companions of the Lamb

Comparisons are not always odious; sometimes they are inspiring and challenging. One such is a comparison of two experiences mentioned in a few words of Peter and some from John in the Revelation. Peter's words are these from 1 Peter 1:8, where, speaking of Jesus Christ, he says, "Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Here is this world's supreme joy. The joy is not of this world, but while mortal man walks his way in this present life there is no delight comparable to that of loving the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting Him fully." Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not," you rejoice. Human tongue cannot speak that joy and glory.

Inexpressible as is the gladness of loving and trusting our Savior, there is ahead an exultance which is beyond reasonable comparison with any known this side of the day when "this mortal shall have

put on immortality." John pictures it in Revelation 14:14:

"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which follow the Lamb whither so ever he goes."

Here is the zenith of hope fulfilled. If love and trust in the Savior and anticipation of the kingdom to come produce joy unspeakable-inexpressible, indescribable-the realization of being one of that incomparably favored host who shall sing a song no others can sing

and who will “follow the Lamb,” will occasion such rejoicing that even immortal lips will be incapable of framing words adequate to depict it.

If, however, we look at those experiences as they really are, we find that they are not two, but only two phases of the same experience. The members of the group standing on Mount Zion have reached the climax of a fellowship with the Savior that was begun during the days of their earthly life. It is that fellowship which today leads to joy unspeakable and which tomorrow permits us to sing the song of praise which no others can know that is of particular interest to us now. What kind of persons will this fellowship make of human beings “conceived in sin and born in iniquity?” Through what type of experience will they pass? Why is special honor granted them in the kingdom of glory?

There is one source of information as to the character and destiny of these persons as there is for all other spiritual matters—the voice of the Spirit of God speaking through God’s chosen prophets. The Bible contains the basic revelation on all of these matters. To lead us to study the Scriptures more diligently and to aid us in understanding them, our God has given special leading and insight through Ellen G. White—the lesser light to lead to the greater light. It is interesting to conjecture beyond that which is revealed, but these conjectures must not then be regarded as on a par with that which has been revealed. Sufficient has been disclosed for all of our spiritual needs, if not to satisfy all of our curiosity. Then, for the things that we know about the 144,000 we must depend on that which has been revealed: the Bible, with the insight into its pages given through the modern prophet. This word of caution is contained in the following statement:

“And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has (lone or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works. Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said.” [1]

We must preach on the subject of the 144,000. The topic must be given a larger place in our thinking and in our speaking. It is not necessary that we enter the field of controversy that has caused so many to avoid more than a simple mention of this special group. (1) We may remain within the realm of that which has been revealed and preach frequently on the kind of character that will be possessed by each of the 144,000. We may deal with the steps in the preparation of that translation character. (2) Much has been revealed concerning the experience of the 144,000 just before the Second Advent, during the seven last plagues and the time of Jacob’s trouble. How to prepare for that time is pointed out. These things must be preached. (3) Revelation has made plain that the religious beliefs of the 144,000 will be free from erroneous teachings. We must instruct our people in how to test their beliefs and become established on a firm foundation. (4) Another clear point is that Satan, personally, and through the beast, has had a special controversy with the 144,000, and they have come off victorious. We must lead our people into the kind of experience that will withstand all the onslaughts of the evil one. (5) A little insight is given into the special reward that is to be theirs. We shall consider these items one by one, in each case only as an introduction to suggest lines of further study and preaching.

The Character of the 144,000

John states a profound idea simply: “And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:5. The fact that there was no guile found was the result of their condition—“without fault.” Significantly, *amomoi*, the word here translated “without fault,” is the same word that is used to describe Christ in 1 Peter 1:19 as “without blemish and without spot.” Paul uses the same word in Hebrews 9:14, where he mentions that Jesus offered Himself “without spot to God.” How could the character of these “first fruits unto God and to the Lamb” be better portrayed than by describing their character in the identical terms used to depict the Master Himself? We may consult the Gospels and the New Testament Epistles to discover anew the meaning of possessing that kind of character.

We must not for a moment underestimate the significance of this expression “without fault.” It means far more than is generally thought. Today even some of the ministry are declaring that it is discouraging to the people to emphasize this point frequently and strongly. There need be no discouragement to anyone. The prospect is the most glorious that has been set before man for this life. It is maintained that such perfection is even beyond what the human mind can conceive. That is true, for “higher than the highest human thought can reach is God’s ideal for His children. Godliness-godliness-is the goal to be reached.” For those who are to be members of the 144,000, there must remain no barrier nor even a shadow, to separate them from Him who is their life.

“One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City. He who enters heaven must have a character that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” [2]

“Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel.” [3]

Even the transformed mind has difficulty in grasping the idea of that perfection of character. We are inclined to set up in our own minds standards that are far below those established by our heavenly Father. Because our minds cannot comprehend all that He plans to do for us, we set our sights on a goal that we believe can be achieved. This, then, is our standard and not God’s. We may reach that

goal and still miss the entrance into the kingdom that is reserved for those who have met God's measure. There can be no question about it, when John saw the 144,000 "without fault" before the throne, he saw a group of persons who by the grace of God possessed perfect characters here on this earth in preparation for heaven.

There are numerous mentions of specific sins, wrong traits of character, weaknesses, and deficiencies that will exclude one from heaven. It is worth our while to notice a few of them briefly here, and to think of each often in connection with our personal experience.

"I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action." [4]

"No impatient man or woman will ever enter into the courts of heaven." [5]

"Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests?" [6]

"The peace and harmony of the heavenly courts will not be marred by the presence of one who is rough or unkind." [7]

"Selfishness, envy, pride, jealousy, idleness, or any other sin which is cherished in the heart, will exclude one from the blessedness of heaven." [8]

The particular characteristic mentioned in Revelation 14:5 is that "in their mouth was found no guile." Guile is falsehood-deception. James said, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." James 3:2. The Spirit of prophecy says plainly:

"An intention to deceive is what constitutes a falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectively as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment." [9]

Trickery, craftiness, double-dealing, political maneuvering, hypocrisy, all are lies, all are guile, all must be expelled from the life of the man who is preparing to be one of the 144,000. An Old Testament prediction states the matter emphatically, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." Zephaniah 3:13. Purity and truthfulness of speech and action is the badge of the Christian as contrasted with those who know not Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life," but as we approach the end it is becoming a rarity to find an individual who is genuinely truthful in all things.

"The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God-candidates for heaven." [10]

Revelation 14:5 is in effect a summary. We must go back now to the beginning of the chapter to notice some of the, other characteristics of these guileless ones. In verse 1 they are said to have the "Father's name written in their foreheads." That they bear the name of the Father indicates that they bear His approval. That the name is written in the forehead signifies that the Father's endorsement has been affixed to the mind, to the kind of thinking done by the individual. Here, then, are persons whose thinking reflects the thoughts of God, men and women who possess what Paul called "the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16) Through acceptance of the promises and power of the Creator and Redeemer, those standing on the sea of glass have become partakers of the very nature of God Himself. (2 Peter 1:4.) "In this world their minds were consecrated to God; they served Him with the intellect and with the heart; and now He can place His name 'in their foreheads.'" [11]

Christ made sharing the divine life and the divine nature a possibility for every one of the children of men. When one becomes united with the Savior, the true vine-

"The life of the vine becomes the life of the branch. By faith in Him as a personal Savior the union is formed. The sinner unites his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fullness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might. Then he has the mind of Christ. The humanity of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. Thus through the agency of the Holy Spirit man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is accepted in the Beloved." [12] (Italics supplied.)

By faith each of the 144,000 who bear the Father's name has united "his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fullness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might." And because of this he possesses the "mind of Christ." This, of course, is righteousness by faith-imputed and imparted righteousness-making the life of His trusting disciples "a series of uninterrupted victories," [13] climaxed by complete victory and translation.

The Experience of the 144,000

It is the similarity of the experience of the 144,000 to that of the Savior that sets them apart from all the others of the redeemed host. Review rapidly the chain of events leading up to their appearance on the sea of glass. These men and women all received the seal of the living God before the close of probation. That means that by the grace of God they perfected character under the most difficult circumstances in the history of the world—a time when Satan was working in such a fashion as to nearly deceive the very elect of God. They were ready when probation closed, and they had not known when that would take place any more than had others. If we can see the parallels that exist between the course of the life of a member of the 144,000 and the life of Jesus, we shall begin to see the reason why they will be so honored in the kingdom. To gain a concept of an experience matching that of the Savior is the most important part of our study, and prepares us for the most necessary and fruitful field of our preaching. We will notice now a series of similarities between the closing events in the life of the Master and the last period in the life of the 144,000 before the coming of the Lord. For the most part there will be selected either a single Bible verse or Ellen G. White sentence regarding Christ, and that will be followed by a parallel declaration concerning the 144,000.

1. Of Christ in Gethsemane it is said: "Christ was now standing in a different attitude from that in which He had ever stood before. Hitherto He had been as an intercessor for others; now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself." [14]

And of the remnant after the close of probation, this statement is made: "In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor." [15] There was no mediator to stand for Christ before the throne; His life must be sinless. After probation closes, none may intercede for the 144,000. No sin must mar their life. Under the circumstances, sin would mean death. Never before have men stood in such jeopardy.

2. Of the Savior it is said: "One stain upon His human life, one failure of His humanity to endure the terrible test, and the Lamb of God would have been an imperfect offering, and the redemption of man a failure." [16]

What was true of the Savior and His perfect example is true of those who are to enter with Him into His kingdom." One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City." [17]

3. As the end of Christ's ministry approached, Satan in desperation focused all the forces of evil on the Son of God, that he might cause Him to fail." Satan saw that he must either conquer or be conquered. The Issues of the conflict involved too much to be entrusted to his confederate angels. He must personally conduct the warfare. All the energies of apostasy were rallied against the Son of God. Christ was made the mark of every weapon of hell." [18]

A comparison is made between the course of Satan in dealing with Christ and his line of action in the last days." Satan summoned all his forces, and at every step contested the work of Christ. So it will be in the great final conflict of the controversy between righteousness and sin." [19] "The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent." [20] "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Revelation 12:17.

4. The fullest Old Testament picture of the agonizing of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane is given in the description of Jacob's night at Jabbok. Those who "saw the Master saw His face marked with the bloody sweat of agony." [21]

Of the comparable time in the lives of the 144,000, Jeremiah questions: "Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?" Jeremiah 30:6." It is a time of fearful agony. Day and night they cry unto God for deliverance." [22]

5. As Christ endured the suffering of the cross there came the contemptuous railing: "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him." Matthew 27:43.

Of the fearful time of the agony of the remnant comes this comment: "The wicked exult, and the jeering cry is heard, 'Where now is your faith? Why does not God deliver you out of our hands if you are indeed His people?'" [23]

6. An element that we frequently overlook in the experience of the Savior was that of fear, but "as Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness." [24]

And the remnant cannot escape the trial of their faith.” They fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Savior’s promise, “will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.” [25]

7. No assurance came to Christ during this hour of test.” Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Savior could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that their separation was to be eternal.” [26]

The 144,000 likewise lack any immediate confirmation of their hopes.” If they could have the assurance of pardon, they would not shrink from torture or death.” [27] They seem shut off from the very presence of God. [28]

8. Despite the apparent lack of assurance, there was one thing that remained for Christ to tie to: “In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. . . . By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey.” [29]

The assurance to God’s people is similar.” God will test their faith, their perseverance, their confidence in His power to deliver them. Satan will endeavor to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless; that their sins have been too great to receive pardon. They will have a deep sense of their short-comings, and as they review their lives, their hopes will sink. But remembering the greatness of God’s mercy, and their own sincere repentance, they will plead His promises made through Christ to helpless, repenting sinners. Their faith will not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered.” [30]

9. But, “All the efforts of Satan to oppress and overcome Him, only brought out in purer light His spotless character.” [31]

Of the final days of testing, it is written, “Let opposition arise. . . . let persecution be kindled, and the half-hearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity.” [32]

10.” By His life and His death, Christ proved that God’s justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan’s charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love.” [33] Through His obedience, Christ opened the way so that man could live the life of righteousness also.

In the time of greatest trial, when Satan brought his severest accusations, God could say of the remnant, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. They could join Christ in saying, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. Thus before the universe they vindicated God’s character and law.

11. Through the long series of tests and trials the work of Christ for mankind was accomplished. So, when the time comes for their deliverance, the remnant have accomplished what the Lord has entrusted to them as their work in the finishing of the great controversy.” Christ did not yield up His life till He had

accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, ‘It is finished.’ The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Savior’s victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.” [34]

Step by step, test by test, trial by trial, the experience of the remnant has paralleled that of the Savior. They have been tried as He was tried and have overcome as He overcame. They are honored as He was honored and made His special companions for all eternity.

Our evaluation of what constitutes honor is generally faulty. The 144,000 are to be most highly honored in heaven because they have been so signally honored on earth. The kind of honor they will enjoy in the world to come is in harmony with what we classify as distinction, but the honor which is theirs before the coming of Christ is a variety that most of us seek to avoid. This impressive declaration is beyond our understanding: “Of all the gifts that Heaven can bestow upon men, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and the highest honor.” [35] Of all generations of men, the 144,000 have entered most fully into fellowship with Christ in His suffering. They alone have known what it means to face the unbridled wrath of the evil one. They alone have stood without a Mediator at the throne of God, knowing that one flaw of character, one sin, would exclude them from entrance to the kingdom. Under these circumstances they have given the final demonstration of the validity and the efficiency of the plan of salvation, and have vindicated the law and the character of God. What greater honor could lie bestowed on any mortal being than that of entering into the very purposes of God and cooperating with Him in putting into effect the plan that reflects His character, and of showing to the universe that that plan is a practical and workable one that is capable of achieving the results for which it was intended.” For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” Philippians 1:29.” If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. - Romans 8:17. Because their experience has been so closely related to that of Jesus, because their fellowship with Him through suffering has been so personal, the 144,000 lift their song of praise to the Lamb in a

fashion that cannot be equaled by any others of the redeemed nor by the angels themselves. While their voices will blend with those of all the redeemed host, their words and tones will bear that incomparable quality that reveals oneness of understanding and purpose and experience. This is the most important of all our knowledge of the 144,000. This is to be the personal experience of each of us.

The Religious Beliefs Of the 144,000

The next characteristic of the 144,000 is stated in Revelation 14:4.” These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.” It seems obvious that the Lord is here presenting a spiritual condition rather than a physical one. There is nothing defiling about the condition of marriage; nowhere in the Scripture is it pointed out as sinful when it is lived in harmony with God’s plan. Even the relationship of the Savior with the saved is beautifully depicted as the marriage relation. (Ephesians 5:22-33) It is not celibacy but purity of life and of religious belief that is referred to here. Speaking to the church at Corinth, Paul said: “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:2. According to Jesus, it is the “pure in heart” who “shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8) But the best insight into the meaning of this expression is found in a sentence in the Spirit of prophecy writings: “They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith.” [36]

Satan’s plan for the last days has a twofold foundation. He seeks to lead men from believing the truth to accepting a strong delusion (2 Thessalonians 2:10,11), and he attempts to cause men to distrust God-to lose that deep and abiding confidence which is the right of one who knows his Lord. It might be said of the remnant as it was of Peter, “Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” Luke 22:31,32. The 144,000 standing on the sea of glass have followed carefully instruction like this:

“We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His word. Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the PC4ple who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. God calls upon us to hold firmly to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.” [37]

Of the trust that God’s chosen ones have put in Him, this comment is made: “But in this hour of trial the saints were calm and composed trusting in God, and leaning upon His promise that a way of escape would be made for them.” [38]

The faith of the 144,000 entered into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary as long as Christ ministered there for them; then it followed Him as He left the sanctuary, His ministry ended. They stood stiffly for His truth in both theory and practice. Their faith was a pure faith. They stand as virgins-undefiled before God.

The Victory of the 144,000

Another fact is made plain concerning the 144,000. They have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” Revelation 15:2.

“After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, ‘Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ Since those who keep God’s commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God’s law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.” [39]

“The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord’s memorial of creation. The mark of the beast is the opposite of this-the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God.” [40]

The final decision of each of the 144,000 against accepting the mark of apostasy is made under the most deceptive and trying circumstances. Satan himself appears as Christ. He appears as a being of dazzling brightness and deceives most of the world. As he goes about among them, the people prostrate themselves “in adoration before him.”

“The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’ His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Savior uttered. He heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.” [41]

Severe as have been the tests of God’s people in the past, nothing has compared with this personal appearance of the master deceiver as he appeared to Christ in the wilderness. It is only with a “Thus said the Lord” that it is possible for them to meet the tempter successfully.

“The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.” [42]

It is obvious, then, that the victorious ones have been diligent students of the Bible. They have mastered not only the simple fundamentals but the details of Scripture principle and prophecy; as a result they have been able to distinguish between a “Thus said the Lord” and the most subtle and clever imitations of the world’s master deceiver. Not once have they been fooled into accepting the counterfeit in place of the genuine. As their minds are filled with the Word, the Spirit of God, who spoke the word originally, comes in to possess them and to endow them with a spirit of discernment they could not own otherwise.

Jesus said of Himself, “The prince of this world comes, and bath nothing in me.” John 14:30.

“There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan’s sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.

“And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours.” [43]

Revelation 14:3 begins, “And they sung as it were a new song before the throne.” Revelation 15:3

identifies this as the “song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.” “It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven.” [44] We do not know all about this song, but some details have been revealed.

“When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and reechoing through the heavenly courts. The church history upon the earth, and the church redeemed in heaven, all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song, Christ all and in all, in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb.” [45]

Others of the redeemed host will join in the singing of the grand themes, but none will sing as do the 144,000, for no others know as do these specially honored ones the depths of the sacrifice and suffering of Christ. Although the words of the song may be learned, the experience cannot.

The Reward of the 144,000

The climax of the story of the 144,000 is reached in the Bible account in the simple statement that “these are they which follow the Lamb whither so ever he goes.” Revelation 14:4. All that is involved in following the Lamb is not made clear, but it indicates a fellowship that is not enjoyed by others of the redeemed host. It is natural and logical that those who have, through suffering, entered into the closest fellowship with the Savior in this life will be closest to Him in the life to come. There is a bond of unity, a oneness of thinking and experience that draws the Savior and the 144,000 together. With Him they have the privilege of entering the temple of God, where their names are inscribed in letters of gold on tables of stone. [46] In vision Mrs. White visited some of the other worlds. On one of them she saw and talked with Enoch, who had been translated without seeing death. She begged the angel to let her remain in that place, for she could not bear the thought of coming back to this world “The angel said, ‘You must go back, and if you are faithful, you, with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.’” [47]

It is clear that they do not remain with Jesus at all times. The record of one vision says, “After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us, and went to the city. [48] Wherever the Lamb may lead them, they will follow, enjoying in His fellowship, witnessing to His power and love, and glorying that they may be used as exhibits to show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us.” Ephesians 2:7.

In the preparation of this paper an attempt has been made to conform to the words of counsel given through the Spirit of prophecy concerning the study of this subject.

“Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truths, which should ever be kept in the treasure-house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand? This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question.” [49]

It seems apparent from this statement that Mrs. White did not believe that the matter of who compose the 144,000 had been made absolutely and unmistakably plain. The clear implication of the statement is that even if we could determine exactly who will make up the group, it would be of no particular spiritual benefit to us. Most certainly, though, entering into controversy on the subject will militate against spiritual growth. If two men enter into controversy, and a spirit of bitterness, of harsh criticism, or division ensues, one may be right in the points he maintains, but both will be excluded from the kingdom where no such spirit may enter.

There is one point of major importance to each of us and to each of our church members—the question, “How can I prepare to be among the 144,000?” There can be no doubt regarding the kind of persons who will be included among these chosen ones.

“The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd.” [50]

The meaning of the wearing of the robe of righteousness is made clear in these words:

“When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.” [51]

God’s ideal for His children is “higher than the highest human thought can reach.” “Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

“The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christ like life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.” [52]

“When the light is received and acted upon, you will be crucified to sin, being dead indeed unto the world, but alive to God. Your idols will be abandoned, and your example will be on the side of self-denial rather than that of self-indulgence.” [53]

“Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand. And let us do all that we can to help others to gain heaven.” [54]

19. The Gospel Commission And The Remnant

W. R. BEACH

Part 1

“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.” Revelation 14:6.

“And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:18-20.

Some weeks ago I had the privilege of visiting our first Seventh-day Adventist church in Switzerland. It was, in fact, our first organized church on the European continent. It is situated high among the forest-clad Jura Mountains of western Switzerland at Tramelan.

The church itself, a simple Swiss structure, was built in the early eighties. The pioneers of that day-sturdy in spirit and in purpose-built well the house of God. The church and its furnishings remain to this day in perfect condition.

As the chapel doors swung open before me, I thought of that Sabbath day in 1886, when the messenger of the Lord paid a visit to the Tramelan group. I felt a real thrill as I walked up the aisle to the platform and took my place behind the sacred desk. There Ellen G. White had stood and had spoken to the people. My heart kindled with emotion as I rested my hands on the old pulpit and looked into the eyes of our people.

I asked whether any present had attended that historic meeting sixty-six years ago. Two elderly sisters, their eyes still aglow with the first love of the Advent faith, indicated that they were among the early group and heard Mrs. White's sermon.

"Do you remember the subject?" I asked. "Oh, yes," they replied. "We shall never forget that." The text was, "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." Revelation 14:6.

This passage of Scripture was highly cherished by the early Advent believers. They considered it essential to a correct understanding of the Advent faith and responsibility. Through it they came to grasp the mighty purposes of God for the last church. The work of God on earth was now to be finished. The "everlasting gospel" was at long last to be proclaimed to "them that dwell on the earth." They realized-"The work that centuries might have done, Must crowd the hour of setting sun."

In short, the remnant church was commissioned to carry God's program through to completion. Indeed, the apostle John in the Revelation did no more than to re-echo, for the last days, Christ's great commission. Said the Master, "Go you into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

"Go you!" This was a divine command to spread the glad tidings of salvation, a summons to evangelize. Evangelism is the genius of Christianity. Is it possible, then, for one who professes to follow Christ not to dedicate himself to this objective? Men sometimes talk about heresy as if it related only to creed. Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." This was a mighty statement. But Jesus also said, "Go you." Is it not as heretical to deny one statement as the other?

Failure here to understand and to do the will of God would emasculate the essential idea of gospel organization. There could be a noble edifice, a large congregation, close knit theology, brilliant oratory, and inspiring music, but if the Master's call is not heard and heeded, the church is not that of Christ.

"Into all the world."

Nor was this parting word to the disciples an isolated pronouncement. It fitted perfectly into Christ's teachings and program. He who came to seek and to save that which was lost, proclaims, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. Christ offered Himself a "propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2.

Jesus did not say, "I am the light of Palestine." He proclaims, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. He did not teach His disciples that they would be "the salt of Nazareth." Said He, "You are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13. Jesus had a world vision. He had a vision of world conquest. He explained: "I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 8:11.

This was grand strategy on a universal scale. It arose from the fact that God's plan of salvation embraced the world. The total riches of heaven were poured out to assure the success of the plan. There could be no provision for any other. It had to be for all men. All men had to be made acquainted with it, and brought to a decision to accept or to reject it.

The initial contacts with sinful Adam and Eve made this clear, and revealed that the controversy between the serpent and the Seed of the woman would be long and severe. Throughout the vicissitudes of the struggle, God would make Himself known to all men. To this end He called patriarchs and prophets and humble instruments to be His messengers. A people was entrusted with His oracles and set at earth's crossroads with a mission to instruct the nations.

Fitful, more or less unsatisfactory efforts followed through centuries on end. However, Divine Providence overruled the hesitations of God's representatives. The Bible story tells countless tales of how a knowledge of true worship was communicated to many peoples. Children and youth played their part. Each of us could recount a goodly number of these exploits.

Then, "when the fullness of the time was come," Christ came to fulfill and to promote the plan. He set the pattern for a more enlightened, aggressive evangelism. The salvation of all men was His supreme thought. He called this His Father's business, and He

made it His one occupation. He set out with His little band along the dusty roads of Palestine to save men. As He went, He evangelized and instructed His disciples in the way of His witnesses.

In the midst of a successful evangelistic trip through Samaria, Jesus called the attention of His disciples to the ripening fields about them. In four months the harvest would be upon the Samaritans. Any Palestinian could understand that. But the gospel task must suffer no such delay. No delay, in fact. Said Jesus: "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35.

Christ invited His disciples to make two things foremost in their minds: The field and the harvest." The field," explained the Master, "is the world." He added, "The harvest is the end of the world." (Matthew 13:38, 39)

These two statements were to be the pillars of the Christian program. They enabled the apostles to sharpen their vision and to bring their thinking into focus. They mark out the highway of the gospel dispensation along which the church must travel, and indicate the terminal point. They imply several fundamental considerations, very important for the church of God. To these we now turn our attention. Let

us consider, first, those that arise from the declaration, The field is the world." Brethren, a world field lays upon the church the obligation of proclaiming a truly world message by truly world-minded messengers.

The apostolic believers came early to this conception of the task. They came to it in the teeth of opposition and despite bitter dissension born of a native chauvinism. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) was the high-water mark of the crisis and set the course of the Christian institution. The church would not be sectarian; it would not be provincial, national, not even continental. It would be a world undertaking. It would have a universal message.

In this respect, too, there came a falling away. The church finally busied itself with building up the ecclesiastical institution and with codifying its requirements. Church dogma had to be buttressed against renovation. The salvation of the church institution finally superseded the salvation of the soul. The highest spiritual benefits were jealously reserved for ascetics, the initiated Jew. This brought sectarianism of the purest type. The church outlook was limited to the confines of a politico-religious world. They called it for a time, the empire, and then the Holy Roman Empire, which, of course, was neither holy, Roman, nor empire! But within the confines of this limited perspective the true world evangelistic urge was lost.

Centuries went by. Then came the time of the end, and the complete revival of apostolic faith and practice. God lifted the scales from off the eyes of His men. In response to the prophetic call a people set out upon a world task.

We are that people. We are to go to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." We go with God's last message. We must address ourselves to all faiths, to all religious bodies, to all national entities, to all races, to all men. Must we not, then, in every section of the world field, disentangle ourselves, or, to say the least, preserve ourselves from all ecclesiastical and national commitments and affiliations, from all regional philosophies of religion, economics, or government, and stand firmly on the platform of God's world organization and message?

Our thinking, our planning, our preaching, must stem from this fundamental conception. We must follow the universal Master to the ends of His domain. We go out to convert men, not to Protestantism, nor to any special brand of Christianity. We must bring them to God's "everlasting gospel." We will cooperate, to be sure, with all men of good will and purpose. But we will dedicate ourselves undividedly to the mandated trust. We shall wear the garb of divine revelation, and carry with us the atmosphere, not of this land or some other land, not of this culture or any other culture, but of heavenly places.

We will go to all men with God's message for all men. That is what it means to encompass the world in thought and action. And it is most pertinent that there should come to this council a yet better realization of this divine order of procedure. A world field implies, further, acceptance of the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man." I bow my knees," said the apostle to the nations, "unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Ephesians 3:14,15.

This sublime truth caused a new day to dawn upon our earth. It broke down the partition wall between adversaries, between races, between men. The enemy was to be loved; even the Samaritan was to be a neighbor. Christ, from heaven, sent Paul to evangelize the Gentiles. The elect of earth became a universal race, a new humanity. The Christian would be "a new creature," said Paul. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

No more was there to be a distinction of race or caste or people. The consequences of this were far reaching. The implication was love and pity toward all men-total love, unrestricted duty. The most attractive spots on earth became those crowded with the densest masses of human beings. Christians, moved with compassion, looked upon a dying world with deep concern, for God is the Father of mankind and all men are their brothers.

Yes, something of this universal family love will reach out from Christ's disciples, will tug at the heartstrings of the unsaved. The prodigal may be a good way off, in language, in race, or in color, but this love in the lives of the disciples will draw him up the steep path from the miry pit. With the father of the parable they will look for him, gaze often with unspeakable yearnings, far down the road which the lost wanderer must travel homeward. Every lost brother will be found for the Father's sake.

Brethren, a denial in any form of this universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man will eat the heart out of a world movement, and will stifle, as nothing else can, the spirit of "Abba, Father." Another implication of this world field conception is that Christ's disciples shall not be prompted in their action alone by feelings of pity and commiseration, nor by considerations of expediency.

The church will not evangelize simply because certain populations are in great physical or spiritual distress. Who can judge the degree of suffering and perdition? Are they the peculiar lot of backward peoples? Moreover, the pity motive would wax and wane as physical and spiritual needs increase or decrease. Sudden sorrow or distress at home might extinguish the evangelistic urge. The improvement of situations afar could lessen our concern for missionary undertakings. The Christian responsibility, the Advent responsibility, is tied to something more stable, less fickle. It is part and parcel of our faith. We go forth to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people- because the world is our field, because God has entrusted us with the responsibility of saving all men. The love of God will kindle in our hearts the fires of a universal passion for all men. With the great apostle we shall say, "The love of Christ constrains us." 2 Corinthians 5:14. There can be no obstruction. We will go.

Then, this world conception of the task will eliminate any distinction between "home" and "foreign" missions." Go you," reads the commission, "into all the world" simply that.

To be sure, lands differ, people vary. This must be taken into account in our world planning. The work must be organized in such a way that the task can be prosecuted successfully and quickly. Men must be called and sent; funds must be gathered and allocated; organizations must be effected; achievement must be the goal. However, there is one field-it is the world. The evangelistic appeal and the missionary undertaking will be one and the same thing. The love of Christ will direct us toward the man across the street and the man across the seas simultaneously.

Jesus did not put a time lock on His great commission, to be released for the man afar after the home base had been converted and the work built up. He knew that such near sightedness would prove the end of the Christian religion. He was almost impatient with His disciples in their narrow and overzealous thought of the kingdom of "Israel." "You shall be witnesses unto me," said He, "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost Part of the earth." Acts 1:8. This was a bifocal utterance. The "both" and the "uttermost part" were not accidental, and they are not the antithesis of "first" and "then," which is often the false reading. The matter of geographic difference is irrelevant." The field is the world."

We find in our midst sometimes a few long-vision but impractical souls who are moved by the needs of distant peoples, but who remain listless about conversions next door. There are others with a strong evangelistic fervency for those they can see, who are not interested in the winning of people obscured to them by the veil of distance.

Both are wrong. In the Advent cause each believer, each worker, each church, each institution, is responsible for the evangelization of the whole world." The world is my parish," must be our inalterable vision. The Spirit of prophecy makes a vital statement in this connection, that we do well to ponder:

"To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working to supply the necessities of others that we bring our souls into touch with the Source of all power. The Lord has marked every phase of missionary zeal that has been shown by His people in behalf of foreign fields. He desires that in every home, in every church, and in all the centers of the work, a spirit of liberality shall be shown in sending help to foreign fields, where the workers are struggling against great odds to give the light to those who sit in darkness. That which is given to start the work in one field will result in the strengthening of the work in other places." [1]

This statement sets forth a close, interlocked relationship that we must recognize, and which when accepted will bring strength and power to the achievements of all sections of the world field. The work will never be finished in our sector, be it church, district, conference, or continent, or in any other sector, until it has been finished among all them "that dwell on the earth." Our resources must be pooled and directed to the world field.

Have we geared our thinking, our planning, our finance, to this fundamental consideration? I think we have in principle. Each section of the world field feels a close tie with, and definite responsibility for, every other geographical or racial area. I have seen instances of this that cheer the heart. You all have.

I was visiting some time ago an evangelistic station deep in the equatorial forest. I had been telling the brethren of the progress of the work. They love that, you know. I mentioned the recent dedication of a union headquarters and evangelistic center in Rome, on the Tiber. I explained to our believers that this was a real victory, and a subject of rejoicing for the Advent church. My listeners sensed the importance of the news item. At the close of the service the worker led the people in earnest prayer.

“O Lord,” he prayed, “how good Thou art to Thy people. We thank Thee for our new center in Rome. Help us to use it to Thy glory and the finishing of Thy work in all the world. Amen.”

That’s it. That’s the spirit. And this spirit is wonderful. We recognize it, we revel in, its beauty. It warms our hearts. But how about practical implications? Have we achieved, in reality, the best, the most effective balance in the distribution of our resources? One question cannot be avoided. It is this: How shall the legitimate desire to expand and strengthen the work at home be related to the needs, the desperate needs and meager resources, of lands afar and of unentered fields?

The question is one of particular interest for this fair land of America, upon which God has laid so bountifully His hand of blessing. It must be answered, however, in every section of the world. Every unit is at the same time a home base and a mission enterprise. There always is, there always must be, a foreign field. This is the result of Christ’s bifocal commission-at “Jerusalem, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” It arises from a truly world conception of the field. A correct answer, therefore, should, it appears, take into account the following:

1. The total resources of the Advent movement must be contributed and pooled.
2. These accumulated resources must be allocated according to the requirements of the great commission summoning us to the evangelization of all lands.
3. Our contributions and allocations will be inspired by sacrifice. just voting resolutions and fixing ratios, perhaps, will not get us very far.” Others, Lord, others” must be the motive. Our greatest efforts, our largest gifts, our most prodigious exploits, must be for others. This spirit will lead us along the fragrant paths of sacrificial living to unprecedented heights of achievement. Unrestrained sharing of God’s favors, says the Spirit of prophecy text just quoted, will generate irresistible power, divine power, for the accomplishment of the task. The spirit of sacrifice is the spirit of love-this is the law of the kingdom.
4. The example of the more favored lands will be decisive out to the four corners of the earth. Let us not forget that. How great, therefore, is the responsibility! It grows with our privileges, our favors. How easily in one or another part of the world we can become the self-appointed pallbearers in burying an extinguished mission giving.

Brethren, let us build up the work at home and abroad in the light of these considerations. We have one message, one field. We must never cut this universal purpose and appeal out of our belief and work. Should we do so, the Advent movement would bleed to death. Further, this world conception of the gospel task means unity in world results.

5. Seventh-day Adventists around the circle of the globe profess the same faith and identical Christian practices. They serve one God, hold one doctrine, constitute one people, are one field. For some, this is, I suppose, the most astonishing achievement of Seventh-day Adventists. A Seventh-day Adventist is always the same Seventh-day Adventist, whatever his race, language, or nationality. This is a modern religious phenomenon.

This is because of the message. It is universal. We proclaim it to all peoples. The same message produces the same results. The preacher on the highlands of Imerina, in Madagascar, our evangelist in the Land of the Midnight Sun, tell the same story, announce the same faith, proclaim the same religious practices as the pastor of the Sligo church and the missionary to the cannibals of the South Sea Islands. When the converts of these representatives come together, as at this Bible Conference, they need not ask, “Brother, what do you think? What do you believe? What is your work?” One God, one doctrine, one people, one work. And so it must ever remain if we are to pursue a world task to final success and prepare a people “without spot, and blameless” at the Lord’s appearing.

6. I would make bold to note a sixth point. It pertains to what might be considered a very critical phase of the mission program.

We hear a great deal of discussion today in mission circles of the problem of the old-and the “young” churches. The time has come, it is said, to place more responsibility upon the young native churches. They must be led into self-support as well as self propagation. The native churches, it is added, must become autonomous. The leadership must be national.

These problems are crucial. Mission leaders feel that nothing short of the future of the mission program is at stake. Solutions are put forward according to circumstances and possibilities. Expediency regularly appears as the determining factor.

Is it not remarkable, brethren, to find that the Advent movement parries this crisis? It precludes, in fact, the inception of such a crisis.

We have no conflict between the old and the young churches. This is due primarily to our world conception. Why, every unit of the Advent church is self-propagating and self-governing within the framework of a world church. Every part is responsible for the whole. The whole is responsible for every part. The weaker units find assistance in associating themselves with the whole. The stronger gather inspiration in this same association. The French say, "One hand washes the other, and together both wash the face."

This movement is one body with many members. These members organize and direct their labors, build up the house of God and extend His work, in counsel with one another through a general leadership which itself is the sum total and expression of the component parts.

These are fundamentals upon which can be built the edifice of a world church. They are the large basis of normalcy in our organization. The foreshadowing or emergency of a crisis should not be a determining factor. Without thought of a crisis or of the forced departure of missionaries, the leadership of the church will be appointed as the projection, the natural projection, of our world conception. Qualifications for this leadership will not be the special gifts of a race or a people or a school.

Experience teaches that the work of God is best fostered in any section of the world by a cosmopolitan working force. Such a group brings into action gifts sufficiently varied to counterbalance weaknesses and to enhance qualities, and constitutes the constant reminder of a movement embracing "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Then, the normal play of circumstances, the carrying out of the fundamental principles, will bring into specific positions of leadership the men and women whose preparation, whose spiritual, moral, and mental powers, whose experience, authority, and ability to get the work done, indicate that they are the best qualified for these positions.

In this way we can hope to lead a world church. Thus can we maintain the miracle of a truly world church with a truly world mission. Onlookers will continue to marvel at it, while the cause of God advances triumphantly to the four corners of the earth.

Now we come to a group of considerations arising from Christ's second declaration. Said He, "The harvest is the end of the world."

This statement caused astonishment among the disciples. Only gradually did they come to understand it. As their comprehension developed, God's plan of salvation, the future of the world, moved into a correct focus. The disciples began to think in terms of a universal achievement and ultimate goal. There would be a conclusion, an end.

The disciples made inquiries regarding the time and the circumstances of this end. Thus, in the shadow of the cross, they approached the Master with this question: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:1 Jesus answered in a long discourse replete with instruction.

For the disciples, much remained a dim outline. But the ultimate goal toward which history and the church were marching, emerged clear and glorious." This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14. After the Master's departure the disciples continued their investigations in Holy Writ and looked forward to the consummation of the centuries. With Peter they awaited those things "which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21. A time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19) would prepare abundant harvest. Jesus, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things," would be released to return to earth. Sheaves would be gathered in from every land in the midst of the greatest manifestation of power ever witnessed.

Such was to be the setting of a world task. The apostles gave the lead. And since their day the true church has ever looked forward to "the end of all things." The task was therefore to be limited in time. A sense of urgency was to accompany the work of evangelism. Today, down in the last hours of the harvest time, this sense of urgency is sharper, is greater. The church no longer has centuries before her." The night comes, when no man can work." John 9:4.

God's summons is imperative. This is the harvest time. There can be no relaxation, there can be no letting down. There must be more men, more funds, more missionaries, more members, more work until the last trump shall sound.

Yes, brethren, this is the harvest time. This is the favorable time to do God's bidding. Heaven's providence have prepared the earth for this time. Keen opposition often times thwarts the efforts of the heralds of the gospel. But this is only opposition; it cannot be obstruction. There can never be more than apparent failure or withdrawal. Doors cannot remain closed before God's messengers. I could give plenty of evidence to support this statement, and I shall explain it later.

Far and wide, brethren, this is our day of opportunity. Just look upon the field. Here is one land. People who accepted the message there thirty years ago were martyred for their faith. Until recent times one was considered an outcast, a scourge of society, because he

became a Christian. Today all is changed. Not only is an Adventist hailed a good citizen, but having changed his religion, he actually raises his social status. In that country the Spirit of God is calling hundreds out for His cause.

Brethren, the world picture is clear. The harvest time is here. Portentous omens, to be sure, overcast the horizon. Curtains of separation, elements of discord, and factors of opposition and conflict are everywhere. Ominous rumblings sound up and down the frontiers of the nations. But this shock of hopes and despairs is fraught with harvest day possibilities. It is bringing the Biblical viewpoint and solution to the forefront in countless lands today.

This statement is quoted from a Paris daily: "We are traveling on an open sea. We know not whither we go, much less how soon we shall get there. The trackless maze of events offers nothing by which we might hope to set our course. Could it be that our condemned world is carrying us along to inescapable perdition?"

This is not from the Signs of the Times. It is not from the New York Times. It is from a Paris daily.

Then, in one of Europe's religious weeklies, this appeared: "Eschatological studies must now occupy a greater place in the church's activities. Groups of the faithful must be organized as numerous as possible to inquire with their directors of conscience into the paths of providence and the destiny of our world. The prophecies of the Holy Book must be examined, lest we miss the directions of God."

Do we realize the far-reaching implications of like statements? Men and women are reaching out and searching for a "Thus said the Lord." Walls of opposition and prejudice to Biblical truth are crumbling in countless lands. Catholic leaders on a high level are among the most ardent inquirers. Some are coming into our ranks, among them graduates of the highest institutions of learning, including the Gregorian Institute of Rome. Men who have associated with popes and bishops are breaking their church ties and joining the people of God.

Look too at the Moslem world. Mohammed's millions are preparing for the harvest of the nations. I believe that with all my heart. Closed Moslem cities are today the hotbeds of revolutionary religious unrest. Sheiks and Arabs are peering out of their encircling gloom. One of them said to our brethren in North Africa, "Why, the Lord Jesus will come, and when He does, all Moslems will be made followers of Jesus Christ, and He will set up Allah's kingdom."

It is astonishing. There is a sound of a going in the Moslem world. That does not mean that Mohammedans are ready en masse to accept the Advent faith. But it does indicate, in this case as in others, that God is watering the earth for the harvest time. The most barren places are preparing under God to render a hundred fold. Indeed, the whole world is looking for a message. Never were Paul's words so appropriate, for all creation is yearning, longing to see "the manifestation of the sons of God." (Romans 8:19)

The field is white, ready for harvest." In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness." [2]

Today this "firmament of chosen ones" shines brightly in the gloom of world's end. Thousands from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" are marching into the saving light of the Advent message. The "gleams of the golden morning fall gloriously upon this assembled throng. This is the time of earth's harvest. This is God's supreme hour. This is our day. This is the time of the Advent triumph.

But here we must rest our presentation. Essential questions still beckon for a hearing. We must get a vision of the magnitude of a world task. We must understand the significance of God's message to the world. These questions overshadow all others: Will the work be finished? Has God made provision for a triumphant conclusion? How shall it come?

We shall come to these problems and to others. We shall come face to face with imperative needs. Very evidently, dear brethren and sisters, we have met the first today. It is to yield ourselves to God and to His world plan.

Part 2

No one I think, can ever forget a first visit to the Library of Congress. Mine was twenty-six years ago. What a marvelous collection of books, documents, and papers, and what a magnificent setting in which to consult them!

When I had finished the reading I had come to do, I sat back and began to contemplate one after the other those mural paintings at the very top of the great dome. They represent, you know, symbolic

figures of the world's great civilizations: Egypt, Greece, Rome, Europe, Russia, and America. My gaze was arrested and my interest quickened by the fact that Judea, symbolized by a beautiful maiden with a scroll of Scriptures across her knees, occupies the

commanding position in the circle. There in the midst of great civilizations that have conquered the world through philosophy, military prowess, and commercial acumen, sits the figure representing a little speck of desert hill country that was destined to conquer the world through religion.

Then I thought of the lonely Nazarene surrounded by a handful of humble followers, calmly bidding them to carry His teachings to the end of the earth.

The tragic events of Calvary were but of yesterday. The echo of a roaring, murderous multitude had barely been silenced in the stillness of the tomb. To face the ancient Roman world of militarism and Greek culture with the story of the crucified and risen Savior could appear to ill prepared fishermen as a hopeless task.

But it did not. The disciples were not overawed by their Master's injunction. To "teach all nations" soon became their marching orders. Mantled with His power and authority, they broke forth from, the sandstone fastness of Judea, conquering, and to conquer." (Revelation 6:2.)

Now we have come to earth's harvest. The church of the remnant is upon the scene of action. The work of God has entered its concluding phase. This final gospel program, as has been previously pointed out, embraces "all nations." A world must be warned.

We today are in the midst of this gigantic undertaking. God has led His people a great way toward the ultimate goal. Many of the principal areas of earth are studded with beacons of light. Many lands have been inundated with the printed page. The air is being saturated with the spoken word, the graphic picture. The achievements of the past century cheer our hearts. They must not blind us, however, to what remains to be done.

Brethren, so much is yet ahead. In city and country, in forest, desert, and plain, millions still wander in the deep death shade of sin. And each year further millions are added to earth's teeming population.

It is well that in our thinking we encompass this formidable challenge. Nor should we forget tonight the black array of earthly powers that hold their sway over the lives and bodies of these millions of men. Materialistic, selfish philosophies have engulfed imposing sections of the globe. Men have been regimented into combat against God. Deeply entrenched religions hold people in the grip of gross idolatry. Populous centers are sated with extremes of sensual pleasures.

Heathen darkness is still a tragic sight. These lands are still draped in deepest night. Their awful gloom is filled with hopeless, hungry, sad-faced men, with sorrow-driven women and children. Yes, from yet thousands of African villages the smoke of paganism mounts to heaven.

However, the secular, godless, materialistic challenge no doubt has become the most formidable challenge to the remnant church. It has, I say, engulfed great areas of earth, and has dethroned God in countless hearts.

This is the field. This is the task. And the span allotted for its accomplishment is limited by God's timetable. Truly the gospel summons brings this last people of God face to face with a colossal undertaking. There is no point in belittling it, dear friends.

I make bold to state, however, that the immensity of the task is not the chief problem. The problem is the measure of our faith, the insufficiency of our spiritual vision and experience. We think and work too often on the scale of a human enterprise. For us the Advent movement is too often the End of the World, Inc., or Ltd. The challenge requires faith and experience on the high plane of a divine task.

Brethren, we must lift our sights; we must step upward, as it were, into a supernatural realm, into a heavenly experience. Then we shall see this world task in a correct perspective. We will recognize that God is in charge of the evangelization of the world. Ultimate success will appear as His responsibility, His achievement. We will go with Him; we will be coworkers with Him. The apostle Paul rose to this viewpoint. Quoting from Isaiah, he wrote this:

"A remnant shall be saved: for he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:27,28. (See Isaiah 28:22)

Let us never lose sight of this great fact. It clears vision. It imparts confidence. It gives faith, bright as the noonday sun, that God is proceeding according to His plan, in His time, with His message. Our great need, brethren, is to identify ourselves with God. The must of the Advent movement is to fall in step with God and to advance with Him to the ends of the world.

Now, this brings us to a number of fundamental observations. Let us consider them in orderly sequence. The first is that God has a last message for every creature and that His remnant church must proclaim this message. This message and its proclamation alone will accomplish God's work.

What is God's message? Simply this: the gospel, the "everlasting gospel." The word in the original Greek was created for the Christian cause. The "evangelist" was "good news."

Leaders in human thought had lighted many bright stars along the path of earth's night. They thrilled practically every age and clime with genial ideas. Their programs were often constructive, helpful. We cannot gainsay this. But only Jesus of Nazareth was the "Sun of righteousness." Only He brought "good news" to the world. His message was different. It proclaimed to men precisely what they needed, what they were seeking for.

What, then, was this "good news"? We must ask this question, for it discovers the power of attraction in Heaven's message. The "good news" was God's three-point proclamation to a lost world. First, the gospel was the good news of pardon for sin.

The apostle John stated this point most beautifully when he wrote: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

We could hardly exaggerate the import to men of this announcement." All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and face the death penalty, for "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Sin brought in its dreadful train the evil, sorrow, and death that have come to be part and parcel of human existence. But there is a way out." I, even I", says God, "am he that blots out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43:25. Through Christ our Savior He removes "our transgressions from us" "as far as the east is from the west." Psalm 103:12. He casts all our sins "into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19." Eternal life," which is the "gift of God." (Romans 6:23), is the fruit of this pardon. Therefore, the poignant need of mankind is to come to God and confess sin, simply that. This frightful thing He calls sin He pardons and remembers no more, and causes His elect to live eternally.

This, dear friends, is good news. It is great news. This news finds ready hearts, open minds. But the gospel is yet more. It is not only forgiveness of sin, but it is freedom from the power of sin. This is a tremendous fact for men. The apostle Paul sets it forth in these striking words:

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you." Romans 6:12-14.

The apostle sets forth in this remarkable chapter the nature of Christian liberty. True liberty, he explains, is freedom from the slavery of sin. Indeed, the most powerful chains are those forged in the fires of sinful passion. These ugly fetters hold the human being in abject bondage. There can be no liberty without freedom from the power of sin, for the sinner is a shackled slave, bound down in despair.

No philosophy of liberty outside this can bring freedom; and, my dear friends, men want freedom today. I think of a man who for some thirty years sought freedom in a political credo." Now I am free," he exclaimed. He had found that freedom in the power of God to set men free from the dominion of sin. His was the triumphant cry of an enlightened mind.

Millions today, in many parts of the world, aspire to a like revelation. Men are stirred for liberty. The gospel alone brings them hope of true deliverance. The gospel announces a further step: protection from the judgments of sin. The apostle Paul writes about this to the Thessalonians. We read:

"You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivers [original] us from the wrath to come." 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10.

God Is love. Mercy is the guiding star of His plan of salvation. There is, however, the "wrath to come." The most hardened sinner feels at one time or another a creeping fear for the day of judgment. Felix felt the pangs of this fear as the apostle Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts 24:25.

Yes, "the wrath of God" has a definite place in the divine program. The revelator fits this wrath into the last scenes of earth's history.

"And I saw," he writes, "another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." Revelation 15: 1. Then in chapter sixteen he describes in detail these plagues in which the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth.

God's message announces full security on this day of wrath. His message is one of pardon, one of freedom and protection. It is indeed for mankind "good news." And we must proclaim it to the world. Then we need not philosophize and reason at great pains in an effort to conjure up a message adapted to the world's need. God's message fits that need. We must give that message, none other. Only thus can He use us and fulfill His great purpose toward this last generation. Only thus can our voice be heard to the ends of the earth. Only then can the power and the authority of heaven and earth be mobilized to ensure success and to warn the inhabitants of the earth.

Then, too, the setting of this three-point proclamation is essential. We have pointed out that the task of the remnant church, the completion of the great commission, coincides with the harvest time. This is true. And we have emphasized the urgency that this background lends to world evangelism. The lengthening shadows of earth's history must never escape our attention. They must quicken our pace as we advance to the ends of the earth.

But let us look closer at this last-day picture. The "wrath" of the enemy is influenced by the shortness of time. (Revelation 12:12) Satan has perfected his weapons and added to his store of beguilements. However, his array of strength is dominated in these last days by the impact of rationalistic materialism. This philosophy has swept across science and secular thought into the field of religion and piety. The Creator of the universe has been dethroned in millions of minds.

The apostle Paul foretold this time when he wrote that men would adopt "a form of godliness," but deny "the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:5. This has come to pass. Not only have worldly people fallen into the snares of materialism; churchmen charged with the sacred trust of the Divine Oracles have opened the doors of their organizations to materialistic evolution and its dire train of apostasies.

It appeared for decades on end that this reproach could only be leveled at certain Protestant circles. Those in charge of enunciating Roman Catholic faith and practice seemed to steer clear of rationalism's shoals. This was only a surface impression. The struggle came into the open with the encyclical published by Pius XII, entitled, "Humani Genesis." Despite the piety and the spiritual force of the terms employed, this document actually provided a place for evolutionist study and theory. A widening circle of Catholic investigators and clergy recognize this today.

We do not say this with evil motive. We only want to make it clear that God's message in the setting of Revelation 14:6-12 is Heaven's response to the spiritual and religious needs of the hour. The angel that carried "the everlasting gospel to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him. For the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:6, 7. Only this setting and the remnant people that fit into it can meet the assaults of materialism today.

And conformity to the prophetic preview will meet these assaults. It will meet the challenge on a world scale, leading the Advent movement to a universal achievement. Yes, the stage is being set for this achievement. Great vistas of evangelistic possibility spread out before us today. This is because we can meet the challenge of men's desperate needs. And as we put the message in its setting before the world, thousands in religious and non religious circles will respond to clear-cut preaching.

We must be heartened in our endeavors as, with the passing of the years, we are able to understand more fully and appreciate in a clearer light the appropriateness of the Advent message and work. We are heartened too by a sharper comprehension of God's purpose in the prophetic background and outlook. Some have been prone, in the past, to shear our message of what they considered unnecessary prophetic trappings. They felt a burden to purge our teachings of its "heads and hoofs and horns." But thank God for these prophetic trappings. You cannot improve on the heads, horns, and hoofs of the prophetic picture to ensure a swift proclamation of God's message.

Certainly we must never forget the three-point program mentioned above. The good news is essential. But, my dear brethren, it is the prophetic setting and outlook of this gospel that will provide the wings of timeliness and swiftness in its dissemination. This distinctiveness of the message will constitute a unique appeal to the masses. Let us not forget this as we reaffirm our message and focus our thinking in this great council.

Yet another group of observations beckon for our consideration. They are elemental. These concern the methods that God proposes to put into action through His remnant people. The way of evangelism is evident in the apostolic pattern. That church went forward on a program of witnessing. Jesus had given definite instructions. Said He: "You shall be my witnesses." Acts 1:8. And the entire church set out to witness.

The believers were to begin with the man next door and encircle the known world with the good news. They were not to be separated from their race or their citizenship or their occupation. These were to be dedicated to the work of witnessing. True, men were set apart for the distinctive ministry of the word. In Ephesians 4:11, 12 we find the several facets of that great ministry.

Some were ordained to travel into new countries with their witness. In Antioch, Barnabas and Saul were separated for the work to which the Holy Spirit had called them. (Acts 13:2.) The church was perfectly sure that God meant for these men to set out for lands afar. That is evident.

But the church went with them. At home and abroad the appointed ministry led the faithful in a vast spiritual trek to the ends of the earth. All went out under the pressure of the divine hand. They had to go. They couldn't stay. Something had happened to them that demanded witnessing. The Acts of the Apostles is the chronicle of this witnessing. The church went forth to testify to the mighty acts and purposes of God.

This apostolic pattern was never changed. It must not be changed. Every member must carry the torch of soul winning in the remnant church." He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. [3] "Every soul whom Christ has rescued is called to work in His name for the saving of the lost." "He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost. [4]

It's wonderful, brethren. Today, as in apostolic times, the elect are to go "every where preaching the word." Acts 8:4. This preaching will be by word of mouth and of life. With such a program, today as yesterday, the world will be turned upside down. There is no hidden secret to the apostolic achievement. God did a quick work upon the earth; He could do a quick work because the "called according to his purpose" fitted perfectly into His program.

In short, the apostolic church conformed its program to the example of the Master. Jesus accepted the divine mission and accomplished it. Lifting His eyes to heaven one day, He said, "I have finished the work which thou gave me to do." This statement was preceded by another: "I have glorified thee on the earth." John 17:4.

I believe we have in these words the clue to evangelistic success, to missionary expansion. Of His disciples He said further: "As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John 17:18." And the glory which thou gave me I have given them." Verse 22." I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Verse 23.

Thus the fundamental conception of evangelism is to glorify God upon the earth. This is marked in a special way for the remnant church. The call in the Revelation is to "fear God, and give glory to him." Revelation 14:7. Farther on the revelator unveils the last great fresco of a finished work." After these things," he writes, "I saw another angel come down from heaven' having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Revelation 18: 1.

"Let the whole earth be filled with his glory," entreated the psalmist. Psalm 72:19. At long last this will be achieved.

But what does it mean to glorify God? To Moses God revealed that His glory was His character. (Exodus 33:19.) To glorify God is therefore to reveal His character, to "show forth" His "virtues." (See 1 Peter 2:9, margin.) In the light of this we can understand the call of the apostle Paul: "For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:20. In writing to the Thessalonians, he mentions the sanctification of "spirit and soul and body." 1 Thessalonians 5:23." Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10: 3 1.

The apostle Peter had the same vision, for he wrote: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles. That, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." 1 Peter 2:11, 12.

This program makes two points completely clear. First, God's witnesses will show forth the character of God and thus glorify their Maker. They receive from Christ the glory (character) of God (John 17:22) and set it before men in the regeneration of their lives. To state it in other words, the work of God will be finished in their lives.

Second, the influence of such a life is irresistible. Even the heathen will be won by it. Indeed, the Godlike life has at its command "all power [authority] . . . in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18.

I think, brethren, this lesson from the life of Christ and the apostolic church places the world task of the remnant church in the triumphant setting. This is so for two reasons:

1. A world need is met. Men will receive a revelation of God's character today.
2. Very simply, this is God's way.

“The followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God’s word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory-His character-is to shine forth in His followers. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom’s home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb. . . .

“It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.” [6]

Brethren, that is the revelation of God for this day. Evangelism becomes thus the fruit of a life. The evangelist, the missionary, be he layman or one chosen by the church for a special mission, is not just a zealot seeking out proselytes. He is not just a recruiting sergeant exerting his talents to enroll soldiers under the banner of the cross. He will not just organize an effort or a campaign. He will do all that, but he will bear fruit from the abundance of his doctrine and of his life. He will finish the work in his field because the work of God has been finished in him. His message will go with swift feet. Through him God will do “a short work” in revealing His character to the world and in enlightening the earth with His glory.

The Lord of the harvest has placed countless means and methods at our disposal. The promise to the remnant church is that He has a “thousand ways” to finish His work. Many of them have been discovered and put into use. They are the marvel of the nations. They represent a concentration of incalculable possibilities. True, the efficiency ratio of these means is still just a fraction of their possibility. Let us recognize this. Our constant and daily care must be to develop them and to increase their efficiency.

Then we must make yet further discoveries. We are only at the beginning of these wonderful things. May the Lord save us from ruts and routine and complacency. And may He give us ready minds, ever fired with vision, ever ready to snatch up the least indication that He is bidding us to march into some new opening, into some new path of service. Let us not forget, however, that witnessing and glorifying God must be at the basis of every evangelistic and missionary plan in this last hour.

This was the basis for the apostolic achievement. A like experience will bring ultimate victory in this harvest time of the gospel dispensation. It is bringing victory. It explains, in fact, what is taking place in many “closed fields.” There, in some instances, the work has been well-nigh impossible. Often times the situation has looked like retreat as doors seemed to close about us. But, despite disappointing appearances, the remnant church has prospered. Memberships even have been doubled, without considering the thousands we cannot count, and who are preparing to glorify God through the example of our people.

I could mention several lands. I am thinking of one great country, great for the Advent movement. It is Rumania. We there have a multitude of churches. They now count more than 40,000 baptized members. Someone has reported 75,000 Sabbath school members. The secret of all this? Lives dedicated to the glory of God, the witness of true piety. A Rumanian official said to me, “Your people are a good people.” That is all. A good people-that is all it takes. And entire groups-numbering hundreds are marching into the circle of Advent fellowship. Oh, the power of a life that bears witness day after day to the character of God!

This gives the pattern for finishing the work. It is, moreover, in harmony with the prophetic forecast. The apostle Peter predicts a vast spiritual “refreshing from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19-21) This will take place immediately prior to the “restitution of all things” and the return of Jesus Christ. We think of this great flash of divine power as the latter-rain experience. It will follow the work of the former rain. True, the expressions latter rain” and “former rain” are applicable to dispensations of the church. The former rain recalls apostolic days, the seed-sowing time. The latter rain is applied to the gospel harvest.

But these expressions have a definite application to the individual experience of the child of God. All must know the experience of the former rain, so that they can enter into, and experience, the blessing of the latter rain. The testimony of the Lord’s messenger is clear. It bears definitely, too, on the glorification of God on earth. We read:

“Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge, must be continually going forward. The heart must be emptied of every defilement, and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. There must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former

rain. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues [the work of the former rain], we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” [7]

My dear brethren, the former rain prepares us to glorify God in our own lives. The Spirit, said Jesus, “shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” John 16:14. When this work has been done, God will add the power of the latter rain to glorify His name in “all nations,” that the whole earth may be filled with His glory.

And God is adding His power. He is giving the power of the latter rain. According to His promise, He is pouring out His Spirit “upon all flesh.” Joel 2:28. There can be no mistaking this. Some perhaps do not discern it or experience it. But thousands of our people are proclaiming the “virtues” of God today. Thousands are revealing, according to the pattern, the intense sacrificial giving and going of Pentecost. Oh, we will yet see greater manifestations of the Spirit’s fruits. At Pentecost, everything of everybody was thrown into the cause. The time is coming when we will throw everything, including ourselves and our children, into God’s work. A great time is coming.

Brethren, millions are turning their eyes beseechingly toward heaven. Hundreds are being led by the Spirit to messengers in whose lives God has been glorified. I could speak a great while about that.

I think of that good brother from Macedonia. I met him at Belgrade just a few months ago. He told how he came to this truth. His eyes almost frozen shut, he walked along the way, seeking truth. He wasn’t then a Seventh-day Adventist. He lifted his heart to God, and he heard the voice that said, “Get the book.” So he went to the priest in the village. The priest was a good man and gave him a New Testament. He read the “book,” and found instruction. He learned to keep the Sabbath. He learned to believe in the Second Coming of Christ and to prepare for it.

Then he met one of our colporteurs. This colporteur, who had the character of God within, became the messenger of salvation. Another child was born into God’s kingdom. Hundreds today are seeking such messengers of God’s truth, messengers in whose lives God has been glorified. Everything, even the wrath of man, can be turned to glorifying God when God is revealed in the lives of His people.

God is baring His arm to shape up events quickly for the last great act.” Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.” [8] So wrote the servant of the Lord many years ago. Since then the tempo of earth’s happenings has been stepped up. At the same time the dimensions of our world have shrunk considerably. Events come in concentrated packages. My belief is that suddenly, on a stage set for the final scene, God’s Spirit could bring all humanity face to face with our last warning message.

Such is the situation today. Yes, brethren, we are to see stupendous things. The triumph of the work is tied to factors that escape our knowledge or control. Why, we cannot measure in denominational statistics, however thrilling their story, the expansion and limits of God’s achievements.

Think of the billions of printed words that have been scattered like the leaves of autumn. They have done their work. They are doing their work. Think of the spoken word, the acts of mercy, the missionary visits, the radio, and all the circumstances that this Advent movement has brought into play to present the character of God to the world.

In one field it is reported that 60 per cent of the people visited by our Ingathering workers were acquainted with one or the other of our radio programs. Think of it! Sixty per cent of the people had heard something!

Over in Casablanca, French Morocco, the president of the mission handed me an envelope. It carried an incomplete address: Oeuvre de l’Evangile (Work of the Gospel), Casablanca. The city counts more than half a million inhabitants. Many churches and missions have representatives there. But the postman brought the letter to our mission. It contained five thousand francs for the “work of the gospel.”

The brethren asked the postman, “Why did you bring the envelope to the Seventh-day Adventist Mission?” “Why,” he said, “everyone knows that the Adventists are the people that are doing the work of the gospel today.” Everyone knows! I’m sure millions do, and are convinced in their hearts that this people proclaim the message of God to the world.

In west France we had a typical experience a few years ago. At the time we had just a small beginning work. The brethren had to go to the bishop to get certain authorizations, or, rather, recommendations. He said lie could not consent.

“This is the only request,” said our brethren; “We shall not be back often. We’re just a small people.” “Oh, no,” replied the bishop.” You will be back again. I know your numbers. Adventists already number more than one hundred thousand in this area.”

We then had in that area one preacher, two Ingathering workers, four colporteurs, and seventy-five members! That was all. Why, perhaps a hundred thousand people have been stirred in their hearts and may someday march into the light of God’s glory. On the

island of Mauritius, baptized Adventists number a little more than eight hundred. The recent government count gave us over three thousand.

Think of that great country of Russia. That is a wonderful people. In Russia we used to count seven thousand, then fifteen thousand members. Today we have more than three hundred certified churches. A certified church is one that has been accepted by the government. It has to have at least one hundred members. In another country, where we have eighteen certified churches, the total baptized membership is actually more than seven thousand. This could mean, in the great and beautiful country Russia, seventy-five to one hundred thousand baptized members. We are preparing in that land, and in those other lands of Slavic peoples, a great spiritual revival. This could be the greatest upsurge of evangelistic achievement since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit launched the Christian church on its world mission.

Great days are here. We are much farther along the way than we think, and can know. A thousand factors are combining in supernatural accomplishments. God works in mysterious ways.

Who could have foreseen the future course of God's cause in the days of Jeremiah? His people had been crushed by a cruel invader. Calamity after calamity had struck at Israel's door. Who could have thought that these very events were to ensure the success of God's program, that the king whose armies had devastated the countryside and sacked the cities would one day recognize the supremacy of Jehovah and send an official document to the peoples of his vast domain calling them to the worship of the true God? Who could have ever imagined that? Truth was stranger than fiction. And history can repeat itself.

Yes, the tragedy of the ages will close with a dramatic scene. A decree will be promulgated that will bring the inhabitants of the earth face to face with God and His truth. This final scene will come as a conclusion to stupendous events. According to Revelation 13:14, "another beast" will deceive "them that dwell on the Earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This maneuvering and associated events and circumstances and factors will prepare the stage for the decree and the final scene.

In Nebuchadnezzar's day, official documents took considerable time to reach the extremities of the empire. Today, radio and television can communicate events with the rapidity of light. In a few short days the entire world could be confronted with a final choice for or against truth. Who can appraise fully those underlying, permeating factors and events that have prepared thousands, perhaps millions, to understand truth and to be able to make an enlightened choice?

God will do a short work upon the earth. He is doing such a work. Divine power is combining with human effort. Then, wrote God's messenger, "The work will spread like fire in the stubble. God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern; angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God." [9]

We see the wonderful working of divine providence as was promised: "Mountains of difficulty will be removed and cast into the sea. The message that means so much to the dwellers upon the earth will be heard and understood. Men will know what is truth. Onward and still onward the work will advance, until the whole earth shall have been warned, and then shall the end come." [10]

Wonderful promises! Wonderful days! We are marching right on to the great, supernatural stage from which God is preparing to give the knowledge of truth to the world. Why, the prospects of the present hour are thrilling. We have not been following "cunningly devised fables." 2 Peter 1: 16. The millions of earth will be warned. God will do it in His way, at His time, through His provision of power.

God will do it through the remnant church, according to the prophetic preview. We, the members of that church, must play our part in preparing the stage for the last act. We must follow the paths of divine witnessing. That is all. We, like the first disciples, must come to the cross, penitent, then leave its shadow exultant witnesses.

This has been the way of all witnessing. It is strikingly portrayed by the brothers Van Eyck. I once sat before their picture in St. Bavon's cathedral, at Ghent, Belgium. I am thinking of the Adoration of the Lamb.

From all sides, popes, bishops, cardinals, kings and captains, knights and scholars, men and women of every state, press in to gaze upon the Lamb of God. There is great beauty in the painting. The worshipers in blue and scarlet, the castles in the distance, the flowers—every detail lends majesty to the experience. The throng cry with one voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." The tableau is marvelously impressive.

Then there must follow the other picture: the return of the redeemed from their adoration. They behold the Lamb; they adore the Lord, who for their sakes was crucified on the tree, laid in the tomb, and resurrected to glory, and whose life is imparted to them. They see and they worship; then they go forth "into all the world." They hasten away with a new light in their eyes, a new song on their lips. They carry a message of good news.

This is the divine pattern. It is for the remnant church at this glorious hour. It is for us. It must be my experience. It must be your experience. Like Raymond Lully, the faithful witness who met martyrdom at Bougie, North Africa, we must be able to say: "But Jesus Christ of His great clemency Five times upon the cross appeared to me. That I might think upon Him lovingly And cause His name proclaimed to be Throughout the world."

Every day, brethren, we must contemplate the Lamb. From such a vision will spring a faith and a power to finish the work in a flash of glory.

20. World Evangelism Our Basic Task

R. A. ANDERSON

The Setting of the Stage for World Evangelism

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world," declared the Savior. Yet when Jesus uttered those words, nothing could have seemed farther from possibility. He was the leader of a cause that had aroused the bitter antagonism of the ruling parties of His own people. His handful of followers represented a cross section of an insignificant nation. They had no money, no institutions, and no organization; yet here was their Leader setting before them a goal of world evangelism. The miracle is that they accomplished it in a single generation. Thirty-five years after the cross that gospel had been "Preached to every creature under heaven." Colossians 1:23.

Two things made this possible: (1) the political setting of the world stage, and (2) the divine empowering of the church. The Roman Empire, which stole the liberties of the nations, which made Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and a score of others mere vassal states, really linked the then-known world together by language and culture and by the building of roads. This made it possible for those evangelists to hasten from place to place in comparative safety, carrying the good news. The giant political octopus bent on world domination actually provided the conditions for the successful prosecution of their task. The various methods of the emperors, designed by the enemy of truth as a devilish opposition, proved in the end to be a divine opportunity. The setting of the world stage provided the circumstances for world evangelism.

Apostolic Conditions Paralleled by Our Own Day

The heralding of the gospel during the fast-changing political scene of the apostles' day is exactly paralleled by the heralding of the everlasting gospel to all the world in our day. And for the accomplishment of this special work the Advent movement has been divinely appointed. That is our basic task. We too are witnessing the breaking and remaking of the international scene, but on a far wider scale than did those first Christians. Transportation and communication have made different peoples conscious of one another. In fact, the nations are on one another's doorsteps. Age-old patterns of thought have been swept away by the fresh winds of an awakening world.

The Occident, which for centuries had been a synonym for cultural stability and commercial security, has during recent decades been rent by the storms of revolution and war; but the Orient, having slumbered for millenniums in undisturbed apathy, is now awake and alert and marching. The feudal system, which so effectively bound together men of different ranks by a sense of mutual responsibilities, loyalties, and obligations, but which disappeared so completely from Western Europe around the period of the Reformation' has now been almost obliterated from Asia. But with this difference-what it took two or three centuries to accomplish in a comparatively small area of Europe has been achieved in two or three decades over an area involving whole continents and affecting more than two thirds of the world's population.

New Challenges to the Church

But more important still, it is not the democratic concept of the West that is so rapidly replacing the old, but rather the totalitarian concept of the East. The new society emerging from the upheavals of our day is not so much that of groups linked together by mutual obligations and loyalties as that of groups, irrespective of race or rank, being forced together by common antipathies and common dreads. A profound distrust of Western ideals has been awakened in the hearts, not of a few, but rather of literally hundreds of millions. To them the name of Christ and the church stand for aggressive imperialism and are regarded as merely myths of a declining civilization. The result is that doors which, a few years ago, were wide open to the gospel have been in recent times slammed shut in our faces or at least fast closed behind the backs of retreating missionaries.

A restricted view of this situation might easily bring discouragement to the church. But we must recognize that God is never taken by surprise. Let us take courage, knowing that He has made provision for this very situation. Not only has He foreseen the confused

pattern of our time, but He has divinely ordained that the Advent church should be matched with the most desperate hour of history. No age has ever been so darkened by tragedy as ours. Surely the words spoken in the days of Hezekiah are true today: "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy." Isaiah 37:3.

Yet in spite of the colossal difficulties of our time the outstanding and striking fact is this, that the very upheavals which have broken down the feudal barriers of the East have at the same time hurled aside the walls of racial prejudice and economic independence that have kept Europe divided for so long. Nationalism, in the old sense of the word, is rapidly giving way before the rising tide of a new internationalism, and the total effect of all this is that the whole world is now open and eager for new ideas as never before.

Age-old barriers have broken down under the impact of new thought patterns, and now every nation under heaven is being swept by concepts that are bewitching and captivating. The questions before us are these: Can the church of Jesus Christ match these new ideologies? Can she offer anything comparable in sweep of thought and drawing power? Some way must be found to arrest the attention of the enormous populations of our day. This requires that our preaching be infused with that sense of apostolic wonder and awe that made those first evangelists cry to the shaken world about them, "Now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be." 1 John 3:2.

The Problem of Evangelizing Great Cities

Nothing less than this will enable the church to bring the realities of grace to the consciousness of a rent world. And here is a real difficulty. Among those whose ideals have so vitally changed are millions of Americans, Britons, Germans, Frenchmen, Dutch, Italians, who comprise part of that alert and rapidly growing industrial community which, conscious of its own unity, is intensely eager to alienate itself from everything outside of itself. This is aggravated by the recent shift of whole populations and the crowding together of vast masses into the modern cities. Millions of rural dwellers have left their childhood environment and have moved into the great urban centers. It is claimed that the number of cities in the world with more than a million population has trebled in the last half century, the most rapid growth being witnessed during World War II.

That in itself poses a tremendous problem for the leadership of the Advent cause, for although city evangelism was never easy, today it is harder than ever. In 1908 this message came to us: "It is harder to reach the hearts of men today than it was twenty years ago." [1] But how much harder is the task today! Yet the message of God must be heard in these great centers. It must sound out above the rush and din of the conflicting voices of confused loyalties. Political affinities must be overmatched by higher and larger imperatives. The free-thinking peoples of the West as well as the pagan peoples of the East must hear the message of salvation.

The Problem of Pagan Populations

It is tragic but true that in many areas of the Western world the great mass of the populace seems almost as ignorant of the glories of the gospel as are the primitives of Central Africa. This is both humbling and challenging. But the greatest need is still in the non-Christian world. Take India, for example. Only 2 per cent of the populace are Christian. And that counts in all the regular and the irregular, the faithful and the unfaithful, the half-converted and the nominal church members. Moreover, the great majority of these are simple village or mountain folk. God loves them, but the Christian church has yet to make its full impact on the intellectuals of that land. That which has been already accomplished is truly marvelous, but when we realize what yet remains to be done, we can but look on aghast.

Then what about the great massed millions of China, where for the time being at least the church is definitely outlawed? Add to this the almost two hundred million in the Dark Continent, and then the hundreds of millions of Moslems in North Africa and the Middle East. Ponder the great populations in Roman Catholic countries, such as Southern Europe and South and Central America. Then truly we can say in the words of another:

"Sudden before my inward open vision Millions of faces crowded up to view, Sad eyes that said:

'For us is no provision; Give us your Savior too!'"

"Give us, they cry, your cup of consolation; Never to our outreaching hands is passed. We long for the Desire of every nation, And, oh, we die so fast!"

Author Unknown.

Need of New Awakening

During the days of this conference we have once again been made aware of the imminence of our Lord's return. Evidence piles on evidence telling us that His coming is near, even at the doors. If it is true that the world is having its last chance, then it is also true that

the church is having her last chance. We sometimes speak of ourselves as a judgment bound people, but the world to which we are sent, the confused, bewildered world of our day, is also judgment bound. To talk of His coming is not enough. We need a new awakening to our responsibility and a clearer understanding of God's mighty provision. To carry God's last message to the world in such a garish day as ours is a colossal task, calling for big thinking, courageous planning, and a faith that can pierce the fog of muddled ideas and discern a harvest where outwardly there seems but a desert.

We need to build bigger budgets, but our greatest need is to build bigger faith. This is a day of advance, and restrictive planning is not in the divine program. Dr. Frank Laubach stated a tragic truth when, speaking before a group of Protestant leaders in Pennsylvania in January, 1950, he said:

"Heaven trembles lest we may prove too small, our deeds too small and too late, lest we be bound by our weak habits when God summons us to great deeds. I'm afraid of some who have neither fire nor vision who begin to see why this might be hard, or unprecedented, or premature if not properly surveyed, or too informal, or too big. The put-on-the-brakes type, the go-slow type can ruin God's program. O you of little faith, keep your foot off the brake. Who ever heard of God holding us back? He is impatient. He weeps over us as He did over Jerusalem. We have nothing to fear but fear; we shall not fail when God is pushing us. I tell you what we need to fear, fear the way we are now, for we aren't good enough, hot enough, high enough, daring enough, far-vision enough, for this splendid hour." [2]

Church Needs New Concept

The reshaping of the world program must be matched by the refashioning of the church's concept. God is eager, waiting, longing to pour out upon His people the power of His Holy Spirit. The hour has come for the great climactic close of His work in the earth. For many decades the heralds of the Advent message have been hastening out to every country and island in every part of the globe, laying down a cable, as it were, ready for that moment when God will release the power. Through radio and literature and personal witness we can say with the apostle Paul, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Romans 10: 18. But the dramatic moment is yet to come when the divine hand will move the lever and the whole world will be lightened with His glory.

"During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interposition of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation so abundantly that light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere." [3]

The greatest things of this movement are just ahead of us. And the agencies with which God will finish His work and cut it short in righteousness are already in His hands. We may not discern all the ways in which He will do it, but we have His own promise that His work will close in triumph and that what men have failed to do will be consummated by heavenly beings. Listen!

"When divine power is combined with human effort, the work will spread like fire in the stubble. God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern; angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God." [4]

Despite the confusion of the international scene and the worldwide apostasy of professing Christendom, God has a faithful people through whom He will finish His work. Eliakim, in another day of crisis, declared that it was "a day of trouble, a day of rebukes, and of blasphemy." And it truly was, for had not the king of Assyria come with an army of 200,000 men, a conquering host, determined to destroy the kingdom of Judah? A day of trouble indeed! A crisis hour in the history of the nation! Breaking forth into the lament of the king, that royal representative and his associates spoke from full hearts when they said, "For the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." Isaiah 37:1 Could there be anything more pathetic? The time had come for the issuing forth of new life and power among the ancient people of God, but there was no spiritual strength to match the crisis through which they were passing. In the agony of their souls they cried to Isaiah, "Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." Verse 4.

The doctrine of the remnant is central in the faith of Israel. And that word is familiar to us. It is a vital part of the vocabulary of Advent believers. But what is a remnant? When my wife makes a garment there is always a remnant or two left over. A remnant is the minority that is left after the majority has been used up or destroyed. Many times in his prophecies Isaiah speaks of the remnant. In the eleventh chapter he pictures God gathering out a people from the scattered nations of earth. These he calls the remnant.

Vision of Isaiah Keeps Him Confident

Those truly were evil days when Isaiah preached and wrote. It seemed that the whole nation had gone into apostasy. But see him standing there, a true optimist. He faces the future with hope, and the basis of his hope is this, that he knows God and knows His plan for His people. He plainly declares that the great majority of the professed people of Jehovah are going into exile, but a remnant will

be spared, he says—a chosen few, a hopeful minority. His conviction is put to the test over and over again, but his confidence is unshaken. And at no time does he rise to greater heights of spiritual perception than when Hezekiah sends the messengers to him. Sennacherib, that predatory and ruthless dictator, whose war tread had humbled so many nations, is almost at the gates of Jerusalem, yet the eyes of the prophet are upon One whom he had beheld years before. That vision of the King—high and lifted up,” had never faded, and now as the somber shadow of Assyria falls athwart the nation, the prophet sees a greater ruler than ruthless Sennacherib—he sees One whose power upholds the heavens, and as His ambassador, he steadies the hearts of his distracted people.

The world of Isaiah’s day was divided between two great powers: Assyria in the north and Egypt in the south. Between the hammer and the anvil of these great despots was a group of smaller nations trying to take shelter under the wings of first one, then the other. Despite the protest of the prophet, Israel allied herself with Assyria, and Hezekiah, king of Judah, had joined with Egypt. The results were disastrous. The Assyrian army defeated Egypt and her weaker allies, and this left Judah at the mercy of the foe. All her cities had been broken down except Jerusalem, and now the conqueror was but thirty-five miles from the capital. Defense seemed impossible. A delegation was sent to ask for terms. And with what result? Sennacherib demanded all the wealth of ivory, silver, and gold—in fact, everything that was worth while in the palace and the Temple; all came into his greedy hands. Still he was not satisfied. He demanded nothing less than the surrender of the city.

As we set the scene again, we see Rabshakeh, that boastful pedant, that ruthless officer of the Assyrian army, who has come in the name of the conqueror to demand the complete surrender of Judah. He is a perfect symbol of material self sufficiency. Hear his strident, mocking words as he struts before the wall—a blatant, flaming force. He taunts the people. They are but a handful and their wealth is gone. He cries, “Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?”

His courage is drawn from the vision of burning crops, from blackened, smoking cities, from fleeing refugees and mutilated captives. Such scenes of carnage are the songs of Assyrian success. With the nations destroyed and the armies cut to pieces, what can Judah hope for? (Read Isaiah 36:19, 20.)

A Remnant to Be Left

It truly is a desperate hour. But over against this defiant foe we see the calm, confident figure of Isaiah. While all hearts are quailing in fear, this man of vision turns their eyes from the king of Assyria to the King of heaven. In spite of the dismal outlook, in spite of the terrible oncoming tempest, a remnant will be left, he declares.” Do not despair nor be afraid, but trust to the living God.” This is his message. Then to give added assurance, he pictures God dealing with this dictator as one would deal with a horse or an ox. God will put a bit in this dictator’s mouth and a ring through his nose and turn him about. Thus will He deliver His people all of which must have sounded incredible, even fantastic.

But what happened? The story is thrilling. Those 200,000 soldiers, poised and waiting only for the command to attack, were suddenly seized with consternation, for the angel of the Lord went forth and destroyed 185,000 of them, and the stragglers that remained made a hurried escape from the land of death. Judah was invaded, but not utterly destroyed. A remnant was left.

There was no mistaking the message of this man of God. But back of his confident ministry was an experience into which he had entered in the very beginning of his prophetic call. He had seen the Lord, he had heard the songs of the seraphim, he had gazed upon the throne high and lifted up. His eyes had beheld the King robed in light and glory. He had looked on things that it was impossible for Rabshakeh to see. His vision was not restricted to the horizons of his day. With spiritual perception he looked down through the centuries to the final scenes of earth’s history, when in the closing drama God’s final remnant would be victorious.

These Things Written for Our Admonition

Why were these things written? Let us set the scene again, but on a vaster stage. Not only one nation but the whole world seems to stand in defiance of the living God. Many a modern Rabshakeh struts in disdain, hurling anathemas at the church. Having put confidence in purely material things, these Rabshakehs ridicule religion as a vestige of bygone days.” What can come from your abstract ideas?” they say.” It’s dollars and cents that count. These are the causative factors in world progress. And who is this God that will deliver?” But as in the olden time God has His remnant—a chosen few, a mighty minority—through whom He will carry out His purpose. And the lesson of history is that no matter how distracting the situation or how formidable the adversary, God’s work has never been completely destroyed. On the contrary, it has risen to its greatest power in days of somber tragedy.

It is not difficult for us to detect the arrogant materialistic spirit of Rabshakeh, but do we measure up to the issues? Have we as leaders the spiritual perception of an Isaiah? It is not the size of the remnant, not the bigness of the organization, not the efficiency of the machinery; no, these are not the things with which God accomplishes His mightiest work. It is rather the spirit of that minority that assures victory. That remnant may be a mere group of scattered outcasts, unlettered, unknown, unwanted, but through them God will fulfill His purpose.

Isaiah was not the only one who wrote about the remnant. Amos, Micah, Zephaniah, all used the same word, but not all in the same way. When Amos wrote, for instance, he was describing the scenes after the destruction of Samaria. He pictured that invasion in graphic language. He likened those that escaped to the fragments of a lamb that had been taken from the jaws of a lion. There was nothing left but the lifeless remnant of the slaughter. But Isaiah's remnant was different. It was a living, vital thing, like a green shoot springing from a tree that had been cut down, not as large as the parent tree, but a living, growing plant. In fact, he wove his philosophy into his very family life, for he named his eldest son Shearjashub, which means "a remnant shall return." Thus constantly before him was a symbol of his faith that towered high above the wrecks of his day.

How pitifully small was that remnant! How hopelessly unjustified seemed the prophet's vision! So it has ever been. Fifty years after the cross only one tenth of one per cent of the Roman Empire was Christian. Yet the hope of the future was bound up with that small but strong minority. It was that one tenth of one per cent that conquered, not the ninety-nine and nine-tenths per cent, although against that remnant was hurled all the irresistible might of the empire. It is spiritual vitality that counts.

It has always been the signal glory of God that He has been able to do His greatest work in hours of greatest crisis, and has accomplished it by insignificant minorities. And with such a minority He will climax His work on the earth. A faithful remnant will defy the united power of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. There will be battle, but "the Lord will be the hope of his people." Joel 3:16. This is the vision that dominated both the Old and the New Testament writers. Take Elisha, for instance. In the midst of another crisis his eyes discovered that the hosts of God were mightier than the enemy." Open the young man's eyes!" was the prophet's prayer.

"Lo, to faith's enlightened sight All the mountains flamed with light. Hell is nigh but God is higher, Circling us with hosts of fire."

The Prophets Were Evangelists

Those prophets of Israel were really the preachers, the evangelists of their day. They were a dynamic group of men, all intensely individualistic. Some were rugged and blunt, others spoke the language of poetry. Some were truly men of genius, others were not so gifted. But each saw clearly the purpose of God for His people. They knew they were Godsent men. And while they lived in days of national and international upheaval, they stood as the messengers of Heaven declaring that only "righteousness exalts a nation." They heard the clash of great despots battling for power. They beheld empires falling to pieces. And although they courageously pointed out the sins of the rulers and the people, yet they revealed the way of salvation. The messages they gave to the world were not only timely; they were timeless. Those truths they uttered are just as (Tripping today as when they were first spoken.

They were not men of the cloister, not spiritual hermits; they lived where crossed the crowded ways of life. They were acquainted with the needs of the multitudes. And although they often spoke with fiery earnestness, hurling their messages like thunderbolts against the wickedness of their day, yet above the denunciation of iniquity could always be heard the pleadings of the voice of love. They were sure of the truth that God had given them, and they had the courage to proclaim it. With clear insight they held the plumb line of the divine will against the crooked structures of men and nations; and although they did not hesitate to expose political and spiritual corruption, yet they were the only ones who could offer any sure hope. Above the black clouds they discerned the sun of God's love shining in benediction. They foretold a brighter day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." In the highest sense of the word they were truly evangelists.

When we come to the New Testament we recognize a change in the pattern. The Old Testament evangelist was concerned mainly for his own people. He was sent to call his nation back to God. But the New Testament evangelists were commissioned to carry the gospel to all the world. Every man, woman, and child, irrespective of color, race, or rank, came within their evangelistic orbit. And how gloriously they fulfilled their commission! The rider on the white horse in Revelation 6 was a fitting symbol of the apostolic church. As he rode forth in majesty, conquering and to conquer, the arrows of truth, barbed with love, pierced the heart of the unbelieving world, and the King's enemies, captured by His grace, were made citizens of His kingdom. We must recapture that vision, and experience that power, if we would accomplish our task of world evangelism.

Our Great Peril

No people ever faced a greater challenge than do the messengers of the Advent hope. The problems are legion, yet despite all the difficulties the words of the Master are being fulfilled; the gospel today is reaching the very ends of the earth. In a few places it is going with power. Some believers can be found in every land of earth, and it is impossible to say just how far the message has actually spread. While we rejoice in all this, we must beware lest, with our rapidly increasing membership, and the accompanying sense of security it brings, we settle down now to become another denomination-a movement perhaps, in some senses of the word-but so concerned about carrying out our precise programs and having everything bend to a particular pattern that we lose sight of our original objective. Enlarging and strengthening our organization, building up our material securities, assuring ourselves that all is on a firm financial footing and that our institutions are really representative, backed up by ample cash reserves, are all good. But if we fail to accomplish our God-given task of world evangelism, then we, of all people, are surely the most pathetic. Unthinkable, you say?

Perhaps, but far from impossible. While lengthening our material cords, let us be sure there is a compensating strengthening of our spiritual stakes.

Responsibility of the Advent Church

The Lord called this movement into existence for a very specific task. We are to give the message of grace to every nation, every city, every town, every village, every home, and every individual in every part of the world. And this must be accomplished in a single generation and in the most difficult times—a colossal task indeed, and one that requires that every asset be channeled into the cause of aggressive evangelism. Every minister in our ranks, every department in the organization, every teacher in our schools, every dollar in our treasuries, must be evangelistic.

Ours is the greatest task of the ages. No other people has ever faced such responsibility. Recognizing that God has called us to finish His work in this very generation, let us ask ourselves the question: Are we sure we are doing His work in the way that will bring the greatest results? Could we know that probation would close before the next General Conference session—of course we cannot know that, but if we could, if we really had the assurance that by the middle of that year our ministry would be at an end, our Bibles would be closed, and the Holy Spirit would have been withdrawn—would it not drive us to restudy our methods to discover whether we are actually doing the work of God in the way that will bring the greatest success? Then why not let us study the program just as if we knew we had but a year or two in which to work. Let me make it even more personal. Brother, have you ever asked yourself this question: When my lifework is ended and I see the record, will I have any sad regrets that I did not do more to warn the wicked and turn these hearts from sin to righteousness?

An old warrior in the leadership of our work in Australia was on his deathbed, and looking back across the years. I had known him all my life, and at the time he passed to his rest I was preaching in London. My mother called to see him, and he began to ask her about me, and then he left this parting word with her for me. “Tell Roy,” he said, “to spend all the time he possibly can talking directly to lost men and women about their souls. All too much of my life has been spent in committees, in board meetings, and in other kinds of work. How I wish I had spent more time preaching the message of grace!” Those words I have never forgotten. We all need to spend more time giving the message of grace to lost men and women.

Too often in our evangelism we hear the expression “the honest in heart,” as if they were the only ones the Lord wanted to save. But His love takes in the dishonest in heart, even those who hate His holy name. He is not willing that any should perish. And so He sends His message of love and forgiveness to the whole world. What a privilege it is to be the carriers of that message!

Looking back over the way the Lord has led us, we see much to encourage us. This year marks the centenary of our Sabbath school work. Celebrating our centenaries has its place and brings some real inspiration. It is good to remind ourselves that for a hundred years we have been studying our Sabbath school lessons, that for a hundred years truth-filled books have been coming from our presses, that during a whole century we have been sowing the seeds of truth by tracts and periodicals. We say it is wonderful, and it is. But I wonder whether God is congratulating us as much as we are congratulating ourselves. Facing these things realistically, we do not find it difficult to find cause for some discouragement. Who among our pioneers ever dreamed that in 1952 the heralds of the Advent truth would still be in this sin-cursed earth? Why are we still here? We all know the answer.

To garnish the sepulchers of the prophets, to rejoice in all the evidences of our growth and present strength, is not sufficient. Other denominations have traveled, and still are traveling, that road. Our primary work, our only work, is to carry the gospel to all the world, and to preach it with such power that men and women will sense by our very earnestness that we are God-sent, that we are men with a message. The conviction that the Lord is coming soon was so real to our pioneers that the very urgency of their demeanor pressed that conviction upon their fellows.

In Revelation, chapter seven, John pictured the rise of this message. He likened it to the first streaks of dawn, which wax brighter and yet brighter until the whole earth is bathed in the glory of the sunlight. So will the clear rays of the Sun of Righteousness illumine the whole world and the earth will be ablaze with the glory of God. (Revelation 18:1.) And as the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, bringing light and blessing to all, so this message is to reach out and embrace all, bringing the claims of God to every soul on earth. [5]

Broader Plans to Be Laid

Did ever a people face such a responsibility? Many years ago this counsel came to us from the messenger of the Lord: “A great work is to be accomplished; broader plans must be laid; a voice must go forth to arouse the nations.” [6] Has that ever been accomplished? Where are the nations today that are actually being stirred by our message? True, we are preaching to most countries, and we are gathering out a few people, but where can it be said that any particular nation is being aroused by the voice of the Lord’s messengers?

John the Baptist was a type of the Advent movement. When he preached, multitudes came to hear him. His message condemned sin in all its forms. He touched upon political, social, and economic corruption. He faced the real issues of his day, and there was such a power in his ministry that the hearts of all classes were stirred. His work was short in point of time, but it was mighty in its effect. And what he did is what we are to do.

The Scripture says, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching," and preaching is our main business. Preaching and salvation are related throughout the Bible, as cause and effect." How shall they hear without a preacher?" Whatever else a minister is called to do, his major work is preaching, and preaching to the unsaved. Are we placing the emphasis where it rightly belongs? Ministers are generally a hardworking group—in fact, some are breaking under their load. But each of us might well ask himself: Am I trying to do such a multitude of things that it is impossible for me to do what God expects me to do?

As evangelists, teachers, executives, and promoters we can all be so overburdened with other things that our time is absorbed and we are diverted from our main work. God pictures us as a preaching people. The everlasting gospel is to be preached. But all too often ministers are so burdened with other types of work that it seems impossible to do that for which they are ordained. Today a minister has to be an organizer, an executive, a financier, a promoter, a specialist in religious education, and on top of it all a pastor, endeavoring to care for all the needs of the flock, including being judge in the court of domestic relations. How, then, can he be a soul winner?

This same problem confronted the apostles. They were staggering beneath the load of multitudinous tasks. But they reached a very wise decision." It is not reason," they said, "that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:2-4. So they chose others, laymen, and appointed them to care for the detailed business of the church, but the preachers went on preaching. The result was marvelous." The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Verse 7.

Why are these things not being repeated today? Where is that great company of ministers that should be taking their places with us as heralds of the Advent message? Is it because we lack the courage to put into effect the full apostolic program? Are we majoring on minor tasks? If we were honest with ourselves, we would admit that the things which absorb so much of our time are more congenial, sometimes more spectacular, and they certainly do not cost the anxiety of soul that preaching does. It is always easier to put our emphasis on programs than to expound the Word of God. Could that be a reason why we are inclined to neglect preaching? Yet there is nothing the world needs so much today as the right kind of preaching, for it is still by preaching that God undertakes to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21.)

Preaching Is Still God's Plan for Evangelism

In God's plan preaching is the minister's main business. There are many ways of spreading the gospel today, and we hail with joy every God-given agency that helps us proclaim the good news. Radio, television, literature, medical work, all these are wonderful handmaids of the preacher. They must not and cannot take the place of his public ministry.

Speaking about the relationship existing between medical missionary work and the gospel ministry, the messenger of the Lord says: "It has been presented to me that every department of the work is to be united in one great whole. The work of God is to prepare a people to stand before the Son of man at His coming, and this work should be a unit. . . .

"The medical missionary work has never been presented to me in any other way than as bearing the same relation to the work as a whole as the arm does to the body. The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth and the carrying forward of the work for sick and well. This is the body,

the medical missionary work is the arm, and Christ is the head over all." [7]

"If ever we permit departmentalism to be a substitute for real evangelism we will fail in the accomplishment of God's purpose," declared W. H. Branson years ago in a workers' meeting.

It is the firsthand gripping of men's souls by appeals in public and personal evangelism that really brings them face to face with the claims of God. Every means possible must be utilized, but we must be careful that we do not accept these aids because they are easier. The entire program of the church is important, but our main emphasis must always be the preaching and teaching of the Word. A Protestant leader facetiously reminded his fellow ministers recently that "God managed for 1700 years without a Sunday school, important as that is, and He managed 1850 years without a Boy Scout. But He has never been able to manage without a preacher."

Although every department of our work is necessary for the building up of the whole, yet the main objective of the ministry must always be, wherever possible, the public preaching of the gospel. There is sometimes a willingness to leave this work to laymen, while the minister keeps the machinery of the church well oiled and functioning properly. But are we not duty bound under God to preach?

And everyone who has health and strength should find some way of carrying out his God-ordained work. Although every minister will naturally encourage and train the laymen for their work, he does his strongest work, however, when he rallies his members and leads them out in a program of public evangelism. When the light goes out in the pulpit it soon goes out in the world.

Jesus Was a Preacher

The Master set us a wonderful example. We read that after having “made an end of commanding his twelve disciples,” that is, having outlined their work for them, He “departed thence . . . to preach in their cities.” Matthew 11:1. Jesus was a great evangelist. He drew thousands to Him by His preaching power. True He was a great teacher and a wonderful personal worker, but it was His public evangelism that stirred the country.

Paul the Preacher

And Paul, the great organizer, was also a powerful preacher. He was a great executive; the burden of all the churches rested upon him, but in spite of that, he was all the time pushing out into new territory, raising up churches in new sections, visiting the old churches, appointing elders and training workers, getting leaders together for counsel, showing them how to carry on the work, planning a larger program for them; then he was off again in some other direction to preach. And his preaching was not just once a week, but every day, as we find him in Ephesus. He says, “I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God. . . . Unto me, . . . is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles.” Ephesians 3:7,8. And nothing will help a minister so much to keep his vital experience with God as the preaching of “the unsearchable riches of Christ” to the Gentiles.

Let us go with this great leader and see him in action. Here he is in Ephesus, spending three months unfolding the gospel in the synagogue. And now, because of the opposition of the Jews, he is moving into the school of Tyrannus. This is his evangelistic center. Here he trains his workers and every day conducts Bible classes, until after two years the influence of his ministry has spread so far that all Asia has heard the word, and the enemies of truth are desperate. To follow this great evangelist in his preaching program is to catch the inspiration of a great life. Now he moves on, evangelizing city after city. Sometimes he is among friends, but often in the hands of bitter enemies, yet all the while preaching. When the church can support him he rejoices because it enables him to do a larger work. But if there is no appropriation, he goes on as a self-supporting preacher. Evangelism is his very life. See him clinging to a broken spar in the mid-Mediterranean. Now he is washed up on some unfamiliar shore, only to begin all over again preaching.

That spirit he infuses into his associate workers. No wonder they have turned the world upside down! They capitalize on every circumstance and turn defeat into victory. Every move is an evangelistic move. The fact that the hearts of men in all walks of life are open for new ideas provides a unique opportunity for these evangelists, and they come with news which kindles hope in the hearts of a disillusioned generation. Realizing that they hold the answer to the problems of the day, they hasten to proclaim it anywhere, any time, and by any means, in season and out of season.

By comparison, however, the world of that day was small. News traveled slowly, being exchanged by travelers who tramped the highways. Some was picked up from the gossip of the women who came to draw water in the late afternoon. Yet even by these slow methods the message of salvation spread to all the then-known world.

Ours Is a Greater Task Than Faced the Apostles

How different is the task that faces us! Those parochial customs have given place to an unparalleled expansion. Men today look out on large horizons. They become impatient with small thinking, and the preacher of today must move in the atmosphere of great issues. The happenings of this hour are portentous. A future, vast in magnitude, looms before the eyes of every nation. Therefore the stupendous scope of our mission is bewildering. It should fill our perspective and overwhelm our senses. Our vision must be lifted up to grasp the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of God’s great program for this cataclysmic age.

Scott’s first expedition to the South Pole was unsuccessful, but his discoveries made success possible at a later time. Till then, no man knew the extent of that great unexplored land of the Antarctic. Strange and varied were the emotions evoked by the first vision of that vast unknown. One member of the expedition tells his impressions as he stood looking over that great white silence, that vista of awful loveliness. As he surveyed range after range of white serrated peaks glistening in the land of far distances, his soul was gripped, and beholding this scene, he confessed it was too grand, too remote to comprehend.” Yet it was so compelling,” he said, “that it shut out everything I had ever seen before.

During this Bible Conference we have been surveying the vastness of God’s last message to the world. We have seen the Lord high and lifted up. We have been contemplating the serene grandeur of His unchanging purpose. We have felt His presence as we have beheld His glory. But it is not sufficient for us to have seen Him; we must help others to see Him. Service for God is always two dimensional—the vertical and the horizontal. As our vertical vision is raised, our horizontal service is widened. Having caught the inspiration, we now hasten back to the fields of sacrificial service. It is the height of our vision that determines the breadth of our

endeavor. Let us go back to our conferences, our communities, and our churches, and seek the lost. Some may be next door. It is strange, but true, that often it seems easier to travel one thousand miles to attend such a meeting as this than it is to go one mile or even one block to visit a family and unfold the Word of truth that will kindle in their hearts the vision of our returning Lord.

Having been in the mountain with God, we now descend to the plain, where men wrestle and work. There we will meet the powers of evil that are grappling for the souls of men. We must plead to God for that grace to relate the vision of the mountain to the stark realities of life. If we want to build tabernacles, let us erect them in the valleys, where needy men work and weep. Evangelism is our basic task and our only task. Having caught the apostolic vision, let us move forward under apostolic power.

The Cost of Evangelism

We are reconciled to God not by an idea but by an event, and that event followed a night of horror and insult, a mock trial and an unjust scourging. Then for three hours that could have been measured by a clock, nerves and flesh were wrenched in the final agony of a crucifixion when even the face of the sun was veiled from the shame of its dying Author. It cost all that and more to redeem us.

It required another's life, the shedding of another's blood to bring us back into filial relation with the Father. That sacrifice was the climax to three years of slander and rejection. But it was also the culmination and ratification of an eternal purpose made before the world was. From the day that Adam sinned, on down through all the millenniums of human history, events had been shaping themselves to this focal point.

Yesterday we studied the setting for world evangelism; today we shall ponder the cost of evangelism, for sacrifice lies at the very heart of the gospel. The cost of our redemption to God is beyond our power to compute. Peter says, "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

Now let us think of the subject under three headings:

1. The cost to God Himself.
2. The cost to God's messenger.
3. The cost to the church.

At the mention of the word "cost" the thought of money comes to our mind. But some things in evangelism are bigger than cash. A cynical politician recently remarked, "Things have come to a pretty pass if religion is to be allowed to interfere with private life." It is deeply significant that a national leader in this enlightened age could know so little about real religion. It is easy to talk about religion, even about the Christian religion, and yet know nothing of it by experience. At Calvary many stood afar off beholding the things that were done. But the Scripture says they "smote their breasts, and returned." Luke 23:48. They returned to their old ways, to their old customs, to their old sins. The death of Jesus made no impact on their lives. They went back to the old habits because they did not want to be disturbed. They resented having their private lives interfered with.

When Jesus preached, He stirred men's souls. He intended His messages to interfere with private life. Only in that way could He redirect men's thinking. This the religious leaders of His day resented. That is why they rejected Him. The rich young ruler who turned away from Him became a symbol of his nation. But religion to be worth anything must have its effect in real life. It is easy, even today, to stand emotionally at the salute when someone tells the story of the cross, and then go back to the old habits and the old ambitions. But real Christianity touches personality, it interferes with private life, and that is what makes it real. Even God Himself had to interrupt His work to save a lost race. Creation itself was stayed while the element of sacrifice was geared into the divine program. When the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, the cost of it was burned into the heart of the Eternal. The ransom price was indeed high.

Christ did not come just to introduce another religion. There was plenty of religion in the pagan world when Jesus appeared, but those religions were largely systems of unrelated ideas. When Christianity came it was not something built around a few new ideas, not just a fresh philosophy. It was life in action.

When God entered human history He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He took His full part in the life of His time. He entered real life. We read He was born a king. That announcement touched off the most explosive problem of the day. Already there were two rival royalties represented in Palestine. This our Lord well knew. But He had come to rule in the hearts of men. Watch Him as He steers His way through the whirlpool of human greed, passion, fear, and pride. It was in the experience of real life that sin made its havoc. So it had to be in real life that God wrought out., our salvation. His ministry, His death, His resurrection, His ascension- these all occurred in the realm of real life. That is the only way that salvation could come to us. Having shared our limited life, God is

now able to offer us His eternal life. And the life that He imparts is His crucified, risen, ascended, and glorified life-that is the message we must bring home to the hearts of our hearers.

The Cost to God's Messenger

As preachers we cannot bring to the world anything that we ourselves do not possess. Salvation must be a real experience with us if we would bring it to the people. Self with self-worship is just as big a threat to the minister as to the lay member, and wherever it appears it must be crucified. No other person in this world is in greater danger of self assertion than the minister. The very nature of our work places us in the center of things, and the natural heart loves the spotlight. The tendency is to think of ourselves as the center of the circle of existence and everything else and everybody else as out on the circumference. As human beings we tend to evaluate a situation in relation to ourselves. What will it profit me? Is the big question. We may be tempted even to choose our friends on the basis of the advantages that will accrue to us through their association, and even build our boards and choose our committee personnel in relation to personal preference. More than that, we can even treat God that way and regard Him chiefly as One who is able to look after our affairs, to keep things running smoothly for us. We accept or reject a call or a transfer of work as we evaluate it in respect to personal consideration. Position, prestige, power, salary, comforts, furlough-these are the things that influence our decisions. Analyzed, this is the very principle that lies behind all the hatred, greed, lust, and treachery in the world. Self-centeredness is man's chief sin. No man whose interests are centered in himself can be either happy or holy. Neither can he be of any service to God or man. It was to lift man away from that self-centeredness and bring him into the true relationship of the universe that God died in Christ. It was to alter the center of our lives that He paid such a price.

The Jews Looked for a Messiah

When Christ came and preached, many of the Jews fully believed that He was going to bring in the kingdom of God, for no man ever spoke as He spoke. They were thrilled at the prospect that Christ would end all the disbelief of the rest of the world and reveal again that God had chosen Israel to be His special people. They longed for someone to come and rid them of all foreign rulers and make them the supreme power in the world. When Jesus came He did indeed proclaim the kingdom of God. He revealed its invincible opposition to evil, but He began with the evil that He saw in His own people, the evil that was part of the very nature of the kingdom's first subjects. Failing to understand His message, they rejected Him. As a nation the Jews were the finest spiritual product of the ancient world. But, like many today, although they wanted to be delivered from the evil outside, they resisted being changed from the evil inside. Their hope was that God would destroy all evil except that which was in them. In fact, it was a tremendous shock when it was revealed that they needed any cleansing from sin themselves. When Jesus spoke about truth making them free, they shouted in self-confidence, "We be Abraham's seed"! John 8:33. They resented the implication of His words. As a nation they felt they should be the center of things and all other people on the circumference. Racial and religious pride can deceive as verily as lust and riches. Those religious leaders longed for power, fame, wealth, and ease. Why? That they might rule the world. Power is the most corrupting of all temptations.

Think you that it was not a temptation when those people wanted to put power in the hands of Jesus, when they wanted to take Him forcibly and make Him King? No man ever met a more subtle temptation. But what did He do with it? He took it all-the longing for power, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life-and deliberately, mercilessly, ruthlessly crucified it. At a later time, when, amid the shouts and acclamations of the excited populace, He rode into Jerusalem as their anticipated king, He still did not accept the honor. Why? Because the kingdom of God could not be brought in that way. If He were going to alter the center of man's affections, it must be done through sacrifice. The simple record is that when He had entered the Temple and looked around on the things, "he went out into Bethany with the twelve." Mark 11:11.

The root of all sin is self-regardingness, or self-centeredness. The great truth is that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification. He rose to become goodness in us. When we enter into a new relationship through Christ, the center of our life's affections is changed. No longer are we in the center of the circle; God becomes the center, and we ourselves, along with everything else, become just part of the circumference. To know the way of God more perfectly, we as workers must enter into that relationship with God. Then life becomes different, and as we go out to preach the gospel of the kingdom we will then lift men away from their self-centeredness and help them to make Christ the center around which their lives, their affections, their successes, revolve. Any religion that does not lead men to experience this has missed the mark altogether. A man may claim to be a Christian, even an Adventist, but unless self is crucified and God is made the center of his life, then he is not a real Christian, for the Christian religion most definitely interferes with our private lives. It is this aspect of Christianity that lifts it far above the realm of ordinary religious philosophies and makes it the only religion worth having.

What Occurred at Calvary

Something drastic happened at Calvary, something man had nothing to do with. It came wholly from God. Something had to be done about sin and goodness. And God did it. He acted for us. It is this that makes the story permanently worth telling. But let us pause and ponder that expression "our sins." Christ died not only for sins in general but for our sins. I do not have a private salvation. Jesus died

not for my sins only, not even for my big sins or my many little sins, not even for merely the confessed sins of the good people, nor for your sins only, but for the sins of the whole world the sins of my father, my mother, my uncle, my aunt, my son, my daughter, the sins of my next-door neighbor. the sins of all men and women everywhere—the sins of the people in China, in Russia, in England, in America; the sins of the milling mass that crowd our city streets; not for the lump sum of the world's sin, but rather for sins individually, one by one.

He died for the sin of that jealous man in Texas who shot another man last week; the sin of that workman over there in Baltimore, a man I never knew, but who yesterday took pay for work he did not do.

The sin of that wealthy man in London who defrauded another wealthy man in Paris on a particular business deal; the sin of the farmer, the miner, the builder; the sin of the charwoman, the railroad engineer. The sin of the newspaper editor. The sin of that boy who struck another lad just because he wanted to be in the center of things. The sins of Napoleon, of George Washington, of Henry VIII. The sins of Luther, Wycliffe, Ambrose; the sins of the saints of all the ages; Nero's sins, Pilate's sins, Moses' sins, Abraham's sins, even the sins of Enoch, right back to the very morning of the world. He died for all the sins that were ever committed from the beginning of history right on down until now, and on until sin shall be no more and the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. (See Habakkuk 2:14.)

That is a staggering truth. No wonder it rocked the Roman world! This mighty concept was etched into the mind and heart of those first Christian evangelists as they went forth to declare it to every class, party, sect, and nation. John declares, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2. Notice how Paul emphasizes this truth in Romans 5:10. Two expressions here are important. We were reconciled. (That is past.) We shall be saved. (That is future, and it also embraces the present.) Reconciliation is an act on God's part, for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. Acceptance is an act on man's part, and both these make salvation effective.

"Christ has for sin atonement made, What a wonderful Savior!

We are redeemed! the price is paid! What a wonderful Savior!"

God has paid the price in order that He might bring us back to fellowship with Himself. Brief reference was made at this conference to the story of a man who was supposed to have said, "I was saved two thousand years ago, but it is only two years ago that I found out." This was stated to be wrong. And it is both theologically and factually. What the man actually said was, "I was redeemed nineteen hundred years ago, but it is only two years ago that I found out." That was altogether different. He was redeemed that is, the price was paid nineteen hundred years ago, but it was only two years ago that he had found it out. And the tragedy is that so many never find it out.

That which the apostles declared to the world was not merely a grand intellectual concept; it was a living, personal experience. They knew the power of the message they proclaimed, for their own self-centered and personal ambitions had been crucified. They themselves were free. They had become the living embodiment of the truth they preached. They faced the most bitter opposition, but gloried in their tribulations. They did not appeal to public opinion, but they went straight to the heart of the human problem. They did not begin on the philosophical level and talk about the teachings of Christ, that they were true and that it would be very good for the minds and personalities of the people if they would study those teachings without prejudice. They did not say that the death of Christ was a pitiable mistake on the part of certain authorities and that something ought to be done about it.

No, these were not their claims. Notice Peter on the day of Pentecost. He charged the death of Jesus to the rulers, revealing it as a dastardly crime; but, he further declared, it was "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." It was a plan of God. But note, His resurrection was the climax of that divine plan. The grave could not hold Him, and now at the right hand of God, Jesus is both Lord and Christ. There was not a word from start to finish concerning the teachings of Jesus. These truths are emphasized in other portions of the Scripture. No, it was not His teachings; it was He Himself, His person, His office, His Lordship, that Peter emphasized. It was Christ's new relationship to all men that gave authority to His teachings. This was the dominating, driving center of apostolic evangelism.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," is the truth that quivers and flames behind every sermon of those first evangelists. And what was the effect of that preaching? Three thousand who gladly received Peter's message were baptized.

The Scope of Apostolic Preaching

The message they proclaimed embraced not only the present but the future. It included everybody from Adam to the very last child born. It could not apply to anybody unless it applied to everybody. God has no special group that He has selected for salvation. He did not call me and exclude others. He did not call others and exclude me. He calls all men. I might be the worst sinner in the world, but I am included still in the eternal purpose of God.

Now, when those apostles preached that message, the religious leaders of that day opposed it. Why? Because it pointed out their sins. But to those who did accept it, it was the power of God unto salvation, whether they were Greeks or Jews, barbarians or Scythians, bond or free. There was power in their message because behind it there was this dominating experience. Christ's disciples knew they had been crucified with Him. Personal ambition, the desire to be first, had been crushed.

When He sent those first evangelists with His message He said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John 20:21. He was not talking so much about a method as about an attitude.

Although we naturally apply Isaiah 53 to the Lord Jesus, yet the principles in that chapter apply equally to us. The picture of the suffering servant of Jehovah is so tremendous in its contrast with the previous chapters of Isaiah that many have thought there must be two Isaiahs. In the earlier chapters in the book we see a forceful power banishing the wicked and proclaiming the edicts of a righteous God. But this fifty-third chapter is a tremendous contrast. It is not the stem of Jesse that is bursting forth in fruitfulness and strength, gathering the nations unto itself, as we read earlier in the book, but a lowly root that grows slowly and tenuously out of the dry and sterile soil. And then follow those litanies of sorrow that represent the very limit of sacrifice. He whose visage was "marred more than any man" was now "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. On Him was laid the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, afflicted, rejected, betrayed. He was put to grief, and in the travail of that hour of agony He poured out His soul unto death.

A more perfect picture of our Savior could not be given. But "the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." If we would bring men into peace and obedient relationship with God, we too must enter into His travail and know something of His sorrow. In the path of every real evangelist stands a cross, but from that Calvary springs forth the new life of power.

The Cost to Paul

Study the lives of the spiritual leaders of the past, and you are arrested by the same truth. I was "in labors more abundant," says the apostle, "in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness." 2 Corinthians 11:23-27. It reads just like an encyclopedia of tragedies. And these were not to cease until that day outside the city of Rome when his aching head rolled from his tired body.

The mighty victories in the program of those first evangelists cost something altogether beyond our poor powers to calculate. And the higher the office they carried in the church, the greater seemed their role of suffering. Are we experiencing anything like that today? Or has civilization developed to that place where we no longer expect to face such experiences? But more important—has our organization been so perfected and our security so well established that faith and personal sacrifice are scarcely any longer vital factors? If the form of the cost has changed with the years, the fact of the cost certainly remains.

In the light of these observations I ask myself, Am I willing to pay the price of evangelism? Brother, are you willing? All true evangelism is costly, but when we avoid that personal cost we elude the secret of power.

The cross was, in a strange way, identified with our Lord's Savior hood. It was hard for the disciples to realize this at first, but when they returned from the scene of the ascension and began to restudy their evangelistic program, they did so in the light of that cross, and it was then they made some startling discoveries - discoveries we today need to make. They began to understand something of what Jesus had in mind when He said, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matthew 20:26-28. Those words began to have new meaning for them, and they sought to enter into the experience of their Lord. True success cannot be measured by how far one goes up in the world, not even by the position one might hold in the church, for there was Jesus, the Creator, the Sustainer, the judge of all the earth, going down, down, down to die at last a felon's death.

At Calvary two great spiritual forces met in hand-to-hand combat. The cross was a place of terrific conflict. Here we find God at His best and man at his worst. The battle raged on, and then God met the issue by a mighty manifesto of inexhaustible love. Across the gulf that separated Christ from His crucifiers, He threw a bridge of reconciliation. That was God's answer to the dreadful deed. He could have reached up and grasped the sword of the omnipotent God and tumbled those persecutors into perdition. With a word He could have crushed them, but instead He speaks a word of pardon, full, free, and eternal.

It is not sufficient that we study the cross in the light of history; we must understand it in the light of experience, because in that scene we are not spectators—we are participants. It was our sins that crucified Him. It was our sins that held Him to the tree. Truly the Roman soldiers drove the nails, but it was our sins that held Him fast. And in that sacrifice He paid the penalty for the sins and shames of all the ages. He bore the iniquity of us all.

Caiaphas declared it was better for one man to die rather than that the whole nation should perish. Thus he tried to justify judicial murder. But the Scripture says that Christ died for our sins, not merely to help Caiaphas out of a difficulty. His was a substitutionary death. The words of the high priest and the words of God sound very much alike, but between the earthly meaning and the heavenly meaning is a chasm, wide, deep, and awful. Hurling insult at the suffering Savior, those religious leaders said, “He saved others, himself he cannot save.” Mark 15:31. Truer words were never spoken. The slogan of the railers becomes the maxim of the truth. And no man who is seeking to save himself can at the same time be saving others.

Let us emphasize it again that in the background of every true crusade for God there looms a cross, not as a decoration or a reward, but as an instrument of suffering and death. For us to be evangelists in the apostolic sense is no light thing. It may cost us our reputation, our comfort, or even our lives. But only he who is willing to pay the price can expect to reap the harvest. It is he who goes forth and weeps who comes again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalm 126:6)

A Burden for Souls

The great apostle speaks of his converts as having been “begotten” in his bonds. Let the intensity of that metaphor take hold upon us. Every worker in God’s cause should know what it means to bear the burden of souls. Our spiritual fathers pleaded for that burden. They looked upon it as the gift of God. They prayed for anxious hearts. Then carelessness and indifference alarmed them. They sought to enter their Gethsemanes. They rebuked themselves if they discerned that they were putting tiny interests above the one true interest of all ministry—the winning of men for God. They longed for the pangs of travail, knowing that travail was the only way that men could be born into the kingdom of Christ. That kind of evangelistic intensity, that passion for souls, must take hold of each of us, irrespective of the particular type of work we are called to do. Only then will God be able to finish His work through us. Slogans, sales talk, and self-congratulation are powerless to finish His work.

We need something of the spirit that moved Moody. He took his concordance one day and studied all the verses that contain the word grace. As he read those verses and permitted the Spirit of God to open his mind to the majesty of that revelation, it seemed too much. He got down on his knees, and soon he was prostrate on the floor of his study, shedding tears of joy that God so loved sinners. But he must do more than weep; he must help others to know of God’s grace. So, rising, he hastily put on his coat and started down the street. The first man he met he stopped, and placing his hand on his shoulder, said with an earnestness born out of that new soul experience, - Friend, do you know what the grace of God is?”

Fanaticism, you say? Perhaps. But it was that kind of Spirit-urged evangelism that enabled him to reach one hundred million people with his message, and there were no radios in those days. On the day of Pentecost even the apostles were charged with being drunk. But they moved the world. The world will always be moved when the church is moved. For this revelation of the sons of God the world is waiting and groaning, said Paul. (Romans 8:19,22,23.) We must individually become partakers with Christ in His anxious search for the lost. If we would follow His steps, we must go to more than the carpenter’s shop, or the Temple, or the seaside, or the marriage feast; we must be willing to ascend the hill of suffering and be accounted fools for His sake. Self and self interest must be sacrificed.

The Law of the Abundant Life

It is sometimes said that self-preservation is the first law of life. But what life? Certainly not the Christian life, and certainly not the evangelist’s life. For not until self has been crucified are we able to enter into that abundant life that our Lord so clearly revealed to us. The self-preservation idea is that which destroys the very spirit of service. Not self preservation but self-investment lies at the basis of real evangelism. Prestige, position, power, and place make no appeal to one who is a true follower of Him who knew not where to lay His head.” A man’s life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” Luke 12:15. It is impossible for the natural man to comprehend this truth, for he is urged forward by the love of power. On the contrary, the crucified man is inspired by the power of love. An egotist may elbow his way to the front, and having attained his aims, then begin to lord it over his fellows; but this is the very antithesis of the spirit of Christ. Divine love revealed itself by stepping aside and making way for others.” There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for self, to seek the highest place.” But in the kingdom of Christ “the principle of preference and supremacy has no place. The only greatness is the greatness of humility. The only distinction is found in devotion to the service of others.” [8] (Italics supplied.) To walk with our God, we must be willing to humble ourselves.

Science has lavished upon us her inventions. We live in a labor-saving age, and the cry of the church is that we might match the spirit of the age. Rose-water religions are found on every hand. It is easy to know them by the place they give to the cross. Drenched in sentiment, they are dry of sacrifice. To them the cross is but an emblem of mistaken virtue. If it has any place at all, it is merely a

decoration, something to be suspended from the neck of vanity, or to adorn the steeple of a church, for it has no place in personal experience.

But the cross must be more than sentiment; it is an ugly beam that is thrust up in the midst of a man's pleasures or even his successes. And when it appears it sounds the death knell of personal ambition and vainglory. No man can give the impression that he is clever, and at the same time reveal that Christ is all in all to him. If we have the mind of Jesus, we will constantly remind ourselves that He performed no miracle on His own behalf, pulled no wires, worked no schemes to better His position." He saved others; himself he cannot save."

Any man who ever did anything great for God in evangelism has known the bitter experience of a crucifixion. Moses suffered affliction while he bore the reproach of Christ, Isaiah knew the agonies of being rejected of men, Jeremiah suffered the tortures of a dungeon, Paul was accounted mad for Christ, and the Lord Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself of no reputation.

Are we willing to be made of no reputation? A few years ago one who had been an evangelist confessed that in recent times he had made no public invitations for fear of embarrassing the finer people of his church! He had become too much of a coward to risk apparent failure in the presence of certain of his congregation. What if no one responded? To stand in the pulpit appearing a defeated man would be terrible. At an earlier period in his ministry he would have expected to do just that, but now, like the man in the parable, he was burying his treasure in a napkin because he was afraid. Perhaps some of us are like that. We are not hostile to public evangelism, but all too many are afraid of it. It might cost us our reputation. So, rather than run the risk of ridicule, we just avoid it.

Unity Essential

Lord Beaverbrook, British statesman, once said, "I would rather be an evangelist than a cabinet minister or millionaire, because the evangelist is the man who has the greatest capacity for doing good." And that is true. But his capacity for doing good is in proportion to the sacrifice he makes. The evangelist himself, however, is not the only one who must sacrifice. The church itself has a vital responsibility.

We read that on the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up with the eleven." That is really significant. It reveals a unity of mind and purpose that ensures success. When an evangelist day after day and night after night battles with the enemy of souls for those under his care, he needs all the spiritual support we can give him." Those who are engaged in the difficult and trying work in the cities should receive every encouragement possible. Let them not be subjected to unkind criticism from their brethren." [9] That counsel would not have been given had there not been some occasion for it. It is so easy to become critical of one another, but of all the different types of workers in God's cause none is making a more valuable contribution of service than the public and personal soul winner.

Evangelism is always hard, but it is also rewarding-the most rewarding of all work for God. It is rewarding to the worker himself. We remember the promise that "they that turn many to righteousness [shall shine] as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:1

The greatest financial asset we have is a good, faithful, tithe-paying membership. If we look at it from a purely mercenary angle, successful evangelism pays. When an evangelist raises up a church of fifty or a hundred or two hundred members, then these new recruits soon become a vital part of the organization. They begin to support the cause by their tithe, and they continue right on as supporters of the cause year after year until their earthly work is done. Not only are they paying tithe and giving of their offerings, but they give freely of their service. Therefore, if we look at it in the most mercenary way as far as the financial support of the work is concerned, that worker or that group of workers who, under God, in firsthand combat with the enemy brings these dear people to decision and organizes them into a church is second to none in importance to this cause. And if there is any group among us who should be encouraged and strengthened and inspired, it is the public and personal evangelists, who keep building the constituency.

Years ago we were told that in the cities, "where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by no ordinary efforts. Ministers of God's appointment will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes." [10] It calls for sacrifice and diligent service if we would arouse the interest of the multitude. It costs a great deal these days to conduct evangelistic work in our large cities. Not only the conference but the evangelist himself is often obliged to lay out large sums of money to provide for this work that other workers are not called upon to meet. To do a strong work, one must have the right kind of equipment. And all too often the conference is not able to help very much in this way, so the evangelist himself has to assemble his own equipment, and this is often considerable.

But greater than all these material needs is the need of us as leaders to surround these front-line workers with our prayers and our confidence. The apostle Paul wrote this simple request: "Brethren, pray for us." He coveted the prayers of the church more than anything else. And those of our workers, who today stand at the very front of the battle, and who are meeting the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, need our prayers." Do the work of an evangelist," cries the apostle. And this we must do, both as conferences and as individuals. Whatever it costs in money or personal sacrifice, we must unseal the lips of everyone who can go forth and tell the story of redemption.

A Guard of the Sepulcher

“I was a Roman soldier in my prime; Now age is on me and the yoke of time. I saw your Risen Christ, for I am he who reached the hyssop to Him on the tree; And I am one of two who watched beside The Sepulcher of Him we crucified. All that last night I watched with sleepless eyes; Great stars arose and

crept across the skies. The world was all too still for mortal rest. For pitiless thoughts were busy in my breast. The night was long, so long, it seemed at last I had grown old and a long life had passed. Far off the hills of Moab, touched with light, Were swimming in the hollow of the night. I saw Jerusalem all wrapped in cloud, Stretched like a dead thing folded in a shroud.

“Once in the pauses of our whispered talk I heard a something on the garden walk. Perhaps it was a crisp leaf lightly stirred. Perhaps the dream-note of a waking bird. Then suddenly an angel burning white Came down with earthquake in the breaking light, And rolled the great stone from the Sepulcher, Mixing the morning with a scent of myrrh. And lo, the Dead had risen with the day; The Man of Mystery had gone His way!

“Years have I wandered carrying my shame; Now let the Tooth of Time cat out my name. For we, who all the Wonder might have told, Kept silence, for our mouths were stopped with gold.”

EDWIN MARKHAM.

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The church moves onward to victory on the feet of evangelism. Moreover, we are about to enter the greatest era of evangelism in all history. There will be an ingathering of souls beyond anything we have

yet seen. The manifestation of spiritual power in the former rain that marked the opening of the Christian crusade is to be eclipsed by an even greater outpouring of the latter rain. That thought has inspired us through all our history. We have talked about it, but talking about it is not enough; we each must enter into the experience of it. Not in any competitive sense should we gird ourselves for service, for competition is the very antithesis of the gospel. In the church of Jesus Christ there is no competition. We are all doing one work. And we are all members one of another. Every department in our church organization is important, but that importance is not something bound up with itself but rather because it is part of the whole. It may be the Radio Department or the Medical Department, the Publishing Department or the Educational Department that does the sowing, and then some other department will do the watering, but it is God alone who can give the increase. And 11 except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” Let us draw inspiration from whatever success the Lord is pleased to give us-through the labors of any department or any worker. just as we individually must know the experience of being crucified, so we as groups need to enter into that experience. Every department needs to die to self glory. And if someone or some group is doing a particularly strong work, let us thank God, take courage, and “rejoice with them that rejoice.” (This is not always easy to do.) Not by slogans, or by budgets, but by the outpouring of the Spirit will this work be finished. But God can never anoint a worker who has the least spirit of pride or self-assertion. Pride is the greatest sin, whereas humility is the greatest virtue. These words are well known to us:

“As the time comes for it [the message of the third angel] to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions.” [11]

That statement was not written to discount the importance of a thorough training or to slight our literary institutions, but only to show that God can, by His Spirit, do something that outward training and literary institutions cannot do. For too many years philosophers, teachers, sages, learned men, have claimed that in mere knowledge and understanding is the answer to the riddle of the universe. But soon God is going to demonstrate what He can do through a humble and outwardly insignificant people. The remnant church will do a mighty work for God, not because they are small and insignificant, but in spite of it.

The Prophetic Vision

The prophets of old discerned this grand work afar off. They caught the vision and traced wonderful descriptions of things yet to come when multitudes will step out into the light in a single day. Heavenly intelligence will combine with human agencies, and the church will indeed arise and shine, throwing all her sanctified energy into the contest.” The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit.” [12]

But it cost the apostles something to receive the Holy Spirit. Before Pentecost they were very much concerned about the particular place they were going to have, whether they would get the credit for what they were doing. But after Pentecost that whole picture

changed. The book of Acts is the most inspiring literature in the world. It is called the Acts of the Apostles, but it is really the acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. When they were willing to pay the price God gave them the power.

We read the story and our hearts are thrilled, but had we been with them and been through it all, we might well have wondered at times just how things were going. The forces of opposition were tremendous. All but one suffered martyrdom.

We call them heroes and they were, but one of the characteristics of a hero is that he never chases the spotlight; what he does, he does almost unconsciously. No hero ever stops to ask himself, "How much publicity will I get from this, and will it help my prestige?" In fact, he is usually completely unaware of the importance of what he is doing until somebody begins to laud it as a great deed. Only then is he conscious of its significance. And often he is as much surprised as anybody. In the great climax of His work God will use men and women, institutions and departments that are willing to be nothing, that Christ might be all and in all." A great work is to be accomplished. We need the courage of heroes and the faith of martyrs." [13]

Following the Lamb

Of the 144,000 we read, "They . . . follow the Lamb whither so ever he goes." Revelation 14:4.

That has great meaning for us in the future. It will be wonderful to follow the Lamb through all His mighty universe, to behold the glories of His marvelous creation. But if we would follow the Lamb then, we must learn to follow Him now. We must go with Him to Gethsemane, to Calvary. We must follow Him in self-surrender and sacrifice. The first time our Lord is called "the Lamb" in the book of Revelation, He is pictured as having been slain or in the act of being slain. He is not revealed as a lamb in unblemished beauty and innocence, but as a lamb in the actual experience of being sacrificed. What a symbol for One who created all things! But under this symbol Christ reaches forth and takes the book from the One seated on the throne. As He does so, first the living creatures, then the elders, then angels, and then the whole universe bow in worship and adoration crying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"!

This is one of the most sublime pictures in all the Bible. Only the Lamb of God could break the binding seals and open the fast-closed book. There would have been no opened book had not the Lamb been there. It is the Man from the cross and not the man from the classroom; the dying Savior not the prudent sage that brings the revelation of God to men. No wonder every creature in heaven and earth and all that are under the earth join in a great paean of praise. Death made our redemption possible. And only through our death to self can we bring that revelation to men. It cost Heaven everything to redeem us, and it will cost us everything to have a part in bringing that redemptive work to the world. To us comes the call, "Arise; shine, for thy light is come." But how can we shine? John the Baptist was "a burning and a shining light." John 5:35. He shone because he burned. Burning is always the price of shining. Only those who are willing to be consumed can become the light of God to the world.

When the whole church will arise and shine, then the "Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isaiah 60:1 Not just a few great preachers but a whole preaching church is what God is waiting for—men and women who, filled with the love of the Lord, will hasten to carry the good news to their neighbors, their friends, and even their enemies.

When Jesus sent forth those first evangelists, He told them to begin their work in Jerusalem, in the very camp of the enemy. It was a real challenge. We can almost hear Peter say, "Lord, you surely do not mean that we must stay in Jerusalem and preach in the very place where they murdered you?"

"Yes," says Jesus, "go to those men and give them My gospel. You hunt up that man who scourged Me, Peter, and tell him I have a place for him in My kingdom. Andrew, find that man who made the crown of thorns to place on My brow. Tell him that in My kingdom a crown awaits him, and there are no thorns in it. Matthew, search for that man who struck Me with the reed, driving those cruel thorns into My brow. Tell him I have a scepter to place in his hand, and he can be a ruler with Me in My kingdom. James, find that soldier who drove the spear into My side. Make him understand that there is a nearer way to My heart than that. Tell him I have freely forgiven him, and that he too can enter with glory into My kingdom, if he will only accept My grace. But, brethren, be sure to tell them in love, for love is the power by which you will conquer." Yes, love is the real power of evangelism. But love is always costly.

And as we today hasten out amid the bewilderment of the international scene of our time, we too are to tell sinners the simple story of His love. Evangelistic power can spring only from the ashes of a consumed self-glory. When the glory of the Lord is seen upon His people, the Gentiles will come to the light of His truth.

Carlyle tells of a certain insect in the South Sea Islands which when wounded, gives off in its agony a kind of light. The natives sometimes thrust these insects through with a spear and hold them above their heads to light their way through the jungles. Truth might be impaled upon a spear and held up to ignominy, the messengers of the Lord might be called to suffer, but in the agony of that dark hour, amid the jungles of confused thinking, the light of God will break forth to illumine the world.

“The world is against us,” declared one with undue concern. But was there ever a time when the world was on our side? The world that clamored for the blood of our Lord and hanged Him on a tree will never be the friend of His servant. The dragon had determined to destroy the remnant church. All the armies of hell are mobilized for the final battle. But He who preserved a faithful remnant in the days of Isaiah will do it again in the climax of human history. Let us gird ourselves for the battle, and if suffering is the price of shining, then God help us to go forth bearing His reproach as we meet the challenge of world evangelism.

The Climax of World Evangelism

Many years ago a brilliant young minister with his congregation was captured and led away into exile. He was a war casualty, and as he made his long trek to the concentration camp he passed through a valley where years before a battle had been fought. The armies had hastily withdrawn without taking time to bury their dead. The scene was ghastly. As far as the eye could see the valley was white with human bones -a thoroughly depressing scene indeed, but no more depressing than that which this young preacher faced when he reached his destination. A congregation of captives presented a pretty hopeless situation. What could he do to help? Were they not all exiles in an alien land? Well, he prayed, and as he prayed he mused on the scene of death in the valley through which he had passed. Then out of the silence the Spirit of God spoke, summoning him to action.

You know the story, and you know the man. It was Ezekiel. Those bones he saw represented the whole house of Israel. There they were, scattered in the open valley and very dry. Could anything be done with them? Well, he could have gathered them together into heaps; he might have polished them; he might have even organized them; but God told him to do something altogether different, and God’s remedy is always best. What he was told to do was about the last thing anyone would ever think of doing. He was told to preach to those bones.

Let us read the words in Ezekiel 37:3-6: “Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O you dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Behold I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

And Ezekiel says, “I prophesied as I was commanded.” Verse 7. In other words, he preached the message God gave him, and there was a noise. It is a hopeful sign when one even hears a noise, but there was more than a noise. There was a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

The people must be brought together in proper relationship. Organization is important. But that is only the beginning. The prophet watches as the bones begin to be covered with flesh, then skin. Now they are men again. By that time most of us would have stopped with a feeling of justifiable pride. That was surely miracle enough. But that was not God’s full message. The Lord wants more than a dead church. So the prophet is commanded again: Prophesy again and say, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” Verse 9. He speaks, and, lo, “breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” Verse 10.

How dramatically the situation was changed! Of course, it was the power of God, but it was the power of preaching. That desert of death was transformed into a parade ground for the living army of the Lord. Only a picture, you say? True, but a picture of reality. And though this scripture has its primary application to the literal resurrection at the Second Advent, yet its spiritual lesson is nonetheless real and important. Through the centuries apostasy and sin have too often left the church little more than a valley of dry bones. Yet whenever the power of God has been proclaimed by Spirit filled men, revival and reformation have resulted. Was ever a valley more thickly strewn with the bones of a bankrupt faith than that in which Peter stood up to preach on the day of Pentecost? Only a few days earlier, the leaders of the nation had crucified the Lord of glory; yet as the wind of God swept across that withered residue there again was a noise and a moving, and three thousand stood up in one day to praise the Life-giver. The message of truth was preached that day in the power of the Spirit as tongues of fire from the throne of God leaped upon messengers. But soon those three thousand converts were eclipsed as five thousand joined the marching hosts of God. Then we read that multitudes began to pour into the church, so many that the statisticians lost count.

Now let us scan the highway of the centuries. Europe is enveloped in darkness and superstition. The light of truth has well-nigh been extinguished, but, lo! a new day is breaking. Not by a program, not by mere organization, but through the preaching of the Word of God. Luther and the other great Reformers begin to proclaim the life-giving message; and again the bones come together; again the army of the Lord stands to its feet and begins to march.

The centuries pass and the spiritual life of England is a valley of dry bones. Another preacher appears, and the day of resurrection comes again to the church of God---a church that has a name that it lives, but in reality is dead. John Wesley and his associates herald a positive, hopeful message. In the words of the ancient prophet, he declares, “You shall live!” And what happens? Skepticism and rationalism that have robbed Christianity of its vital message are soon shorn of their power. Mysticism and rituals that have well-nigh swallowed up what is left of religion no longer appeal to the people, and the corruption so natural to the unsanctified heart give way

before the advance of the truth of God. Immorality and vice, which for years have been stalking unabashed through the land, are arrested. And London, where every sixth shop is said to be a saloon, is responding to the clear, simple call of God.

The Wesleys speak with authority, but always hopefully. In the words of Ezekiel, they could say,

“The hand of the Lord was upon me.” In fact, that is their equipment, and their only equipment, as it must be the equipment of every true preacher. Every spokesman for God must know that the hand of the Lord is upon him.

See those early Methodists mounting their horses and setting out on their great preaching missions. Watch them as they literally stir the country. Icicles of indifference are melted in the warm rays of the Sun of Righteousness. The Lord has truly come with healing in His wings. The winter stripped trees in the garden of the Lord begin to put on verdant foliage, the flowers of grace are blooming again, and the human heart leaps in the glad consciousness that God is again visiting His people. The spiritually dead once more stand upon their feet, an exceedingly great host, as civilization moves into a new day.

Our Modern Valley

And now another birth hour in history has struck. But we face greater issues today than were ever faced by the Wesleys or Luther. The movements we see are those that will bring the climax of the ages. As in every such hour, there is a longing in the hearts of men for reality. Men are cringing in fear as iron hands threaten the freedom of the world. They cry out for deliverance. If ever the church needed a positive, heartening, inspiring message, it needs such a message today. But what do we find? In all too many Christian churches the very structure of the Christian faith is riddled with modernism, intellectualism, and science falsely so called. The remains of a dead or dying Christianity are strewn everywhere. Embittered, desperate, and cynical, many are saying, “Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.” Ezekiel 37:11. Unable to face the future, they long for the dawn of hope.

God’s method for meeting their need is still the same. He will do it by preaching. When we see the confidence that God has in preaching, it should lead us to renew our confidence in this all-important work. Men today are in trouble. They need comfort, but they need more than comfort. They need to awaken to a sense of the impending judgments of God. The Lord is calling us to tell our boasted civilization that it is about to be swept away in the seven last plagues. Great cities, the centers of commerce, amusement, and idolatry, are about to fall under the scourge of divine retribution.

If Jesus wept over Jerusalem, knowing the unpreparedness of her people and what was to befall that city, what should be our attitude as we behold the great modern centers of our day where sin stalks crude and cruel? It was the indifference of His professed people that broke the Savior’s heart. Can we be indifferent in this great hour?

Listen to these words! “My heart is filled with anguish when I think of the tame messages borne by some of our ministers, when they have a message of life and death to bear. The ministers are asleep; the lay members are asleep; and a world is perishing in sin. May God help His people to arouse and walk and work as men and women on the borders of the eternal world. Soon an awful surprise is coming upon the inhabitants of the world. Suddenly, with power and great glory, Christ will come.” [14]

Is it possible for us to spend our time discussing matters of little importance? Should we not be studying ways of doing a larger and speedier work for God? Listen again!

“Men are needed who move under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The sermons preached by some of our ministers will have to be much more powerful than they are now. The message of truth is to be proclaimed by lips touched with a live coal from the divine altar.” “Make up, wake up, my brethren and sisters, and enter the fields.” “There is a work to be done in foreign fields, but there is a work to be done in America that is just as important. A special message is now to be borne, a message that will pierce the spiritual darkness and convict and convert souls. We must now be terribly in earnest. We have not a moment to spend in criticism and accusation.” [15]

“O that God’s people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry.” [16]

But how can we meet the challenge of these great cities? About a century ago the pioneers of this movement began to lay their plans for world evangelism. None realized the immensity of the task, but they did know that the hand of the Lord was upon them. The religious world was being torn by conflicting ideas. Evolution was appealing to the intellects of men and threatening to undermine the whole structure of Biblical understanding. To those more ritualistically inclined the Tractarian movement was making its appeal. Fanaticism, such as that manifested in the doctrines and practices of the Shakers and the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, were attracting other groups.

The historic background out of which this message arose is colorful. Elder Nichol and Elder Froom have each presented sonic of these issues, and we have been stimulated. We need to understand the problems our pioneers faced.

Those were great days when our message began. Soon after the pioneers began to herald the Advent message in the setting of the sanctuary and the judgment, it was borne in upon them that their great task could not be done by the mere calling together of great mass meetings. They must build up. So, little by little, the great structure of this movement began to take shape. Bone came to his bone. Mighty truths that had been lost for ages began to shine from the Word of God, and those truths that had united the believers and separated them from the popular churches were brought together and related each to the other. It was no small undertaking to unite these great doctrines and mold them into a message. But it was done, and the result is a system of theology that in its unity and scope is a wonder to behold. What other Christian group possesses the scintillating glory of this message? Prophecy and precept unite in a clarity that is amazing.

Think of the truth of the Godhead and the atonement, of righteousness by faith, of the sanctuary and the judgment, or of the nature of man and the resurrection. See how it all relates to the Second Advent, the millennium, and the final home of the saved. Notice the place of the law of God in the life of the Christian and the truth concerning the Sabbath. Then take the message of healthful living and Christian standards, sanctification, and stewardship. See how the great prophecies take their place in the great message God has committed to us. But to relate all these mighty truths and to bring them to-ether required much prayerful study.

The Wheel of Evangelism

I sometimes envision these great truths as spokes in a wheel. Let the sanctuary truth become the hub of the wheel where all the great doctrines are integrated. Now place this wheel on an axle, for no wheel can generate power unless it is on an axle. Let us think of the axle as representing Christ and the great doctrine of righteousness by faith. That message must be central in everything we preach. I know we realize that especially as we read such statements as this:

“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. I present before you the great, grand movement of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption, the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.” [17]

A wheel without an axle is only a hoop, a plaything for boys; but as we put it on an axle it becomes at once a thing of power. But more. Let the rim that, supported by the spokes, holds the wheel together represent our great program of evangelism. And now what do we see here? God’s full message is now able to be carried to the ends of the earth. But one thing more—the wheel needs to be guided. And that called for some central counsel and organization, and so the conference organization came into being. And with that growth the various departments began to develop—first the publishing work, then the Sabbath school work. Later on our home missionary and Missionary Volunteer activities came into being. Then others began to form part of the organized work.

Eleven years after the first General Conference session it became evident that God was leading His people into a very definite foreign mission program. And the message has spread since the departure of our first foreign missionary! Today our workers can be found in almost every country and island of the globe. And wherever they have gone they have carried the pattern of the organization. Every department of our work is vital to the whole, and every section of our great program has been God led. In more recent years we have been thrilled as we have seen the development of the radio work spreading out into all the world. More recently the television has come to make its wonderful and unique contribution to the preaching of this truth. We thank God for the many doors opened by our medical work. Then our great temperance program is beginning to sweep around the world. No, there is no organization in the world just like this movement. Considering it all, we might easily become self satisfied.

But let us not look only at what we have done. It is what yet remains to be done that staggers us. In some places our work has made strong development. In a few cities we are very well established with many churches and large institutions. But this is not sufficient. God plans that this message should reach into every corner of the globe. We thank God for the big lights, but the world will be illumined by many little jets of light. God calls us to enlarge our thinking. This counsel might apply to us today:

“We are altogether too narrow in our plans. We need to be broader minded. His work is to go forward in cities and towns and villages. We must get away from our smallness and make larger plans. There must be a wider reaching forth to work for those who are nigh and those who are afar off.” [18] Notice these words, “cities and towns and villages.” “Jesus did not neglect the villages. He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.” [19]

City and Village Evangelism

By comparison that was a slow-moving age. But the results of their work were marvelous. The Scripture gives in simplicity the pattern of our Savior’s work. We read “Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Matthew 9:35. This is the work to be done in our day. Not only every city but every village is to hear the glad news of our Savior’s soon coming. The message must go to the byways as well as the highways.

Let us take a glance at a scene that is familiar in the homeland, at least. The conference committee sends a pastor into a district. Three or four churches are placed under his care. There are a number of cities and towns in the area, and one of them immediately becomes a center for his work. The conference office itself may be there. About twenty-five miles distant is another city, and about forty miles away in the other direction is still another, and eighty miles farther west is quite a large city of seventy thousand. Now with four churches to care for, and a total membership of 350, and with all the goals to be reached and all the sick to be visited and all the domestic problems to be solved, then add to this the oversight of two church schools and maybe a youth camp, and this man faces quite a program. He could well spend all his time just visiting those members and keeping things running. But that would not evangelize his district. In that district not only are there the three or four cities in which we already have churches, but there are a number of other small cities and towns, and many little villages tucked away in the valleys where people have heard little or nothing of the message. Some of these little settlements may have only two hundred or five hundred people. Not far from two of these churches there is a town of two thousand and another with five thousand inhabitants. Then hundreds of farmers are scattered between those towns. Now, how can all these people be reached with the message?

Well, we hope they all have radios and that they tune in to our programs. And we hope many of them will enroll in the Bible correspondence courses. Then, of course, our faithful colporteurs might sometime go to some of these homes with papers. Yet these towns and villages need more than just an occasional visit of a colporteur. Some plan must be devised to bring the truth more definitely to them. All of those little settlements should hear the voice of the living messenger. It is obvious that the pastor cannot do it all, but he can organize and inspire his church members to go out into those thousands of homes-not just to leave a radio log or a tract, but to undertake a definite program of visitation. Many of those people are longing for someone to lead them to the throne of grace in prayer. And many will respond to regular Bible studies if classes were organized. Remember Jesus visited all the towns and villages. He preached to the people and healed the sick. And we must do that if we would follow His steps. From these little settlements many of our strongest members will come if we can only organize ourselves to evangelize them. In a village of but five hundred we might find four or five or perhaps a dozen people who will become interested and ultimately take their stand for the truth. But too often these little pockets of civilization are just passed by.

In a town of five thousand the pastor himself might well begin public meetings. Of course, he does not have any other conference workers with him, but by training and organizing some of his good, strong laymen from the nearest churches, he can build up an evangelistic team. What about the expense? Well, halls in these smaller places are not usually expensive, and I have found that the churches are glad to meet all the expenses above the offerings. When a church begins to feel the urge to do something great for God, the members can always find a way. Those whose interest has been aroused through radio or by the colporteur can well become the nucleus for an audience, and soon there may be twenty or thirty people studying the message and planning to be baptized. In a year or so a small church can be organized. Thus the old church becomes the mother of this infant church. In fact, it should be the ambition of every church to be the mother of at least one other church. And we have all found that in these out-of-the-way places people are often easier to impress.

“The people who live in the country places are often more easily reached than those who dwell in the thickly populated cities. When the truth takes hold of the hearts of the simple hearted, and the Spirit of God works upon their minds, leading them to respond to the proclamation of the word, there will be some raised up to help support the cause of God both by their means and their labors.” [20]

No minister is really doing a complete work when the pastoring of the existing churches takes up all the time and there is no definite program planned for evangelizing all these little towns and villages within the area. Our evangelistic program must aim to reach every family and every individual in both the homeland and the mission field.

As we face this task of world evangelism, we need to do some down-to-earth, practical thinking. It is good to catch a vision, and that evangelist is wise who hitches his wagon to a star, provided he keeps his wheels on the ground and his axles well oiled. If a five-year program of visitation evangelism could begin in those areas where we already have churches, and if every family in those sections could have an intelligent visit during that five-year period, we would soon see these great unworked areas ablaze with the light of God's truth.

But what is the usual pattern? A pastor is struggling with three or four churches, and weighted down with a tremendous burden of details. He is almost discouraged because he is unable to meet his responsibilities. Before long his work instead of being evangelistic and vital becomes just mechanical.

In the apostolic church things were different. The apostles reached the whole of the then-known world, not by a few high-powered preachers, not even by a highly organized and well-financed program, but by feeling their responsibility to give the message to their friends and their neighbors. Without radios, literature, automobiles, telephones, railroads, or airplanes, those early Christians carried the good news of salvation to all the world in a single generation. While the apostles inspired and guided the program, the details were carried out by well-trained laymen.” Ordain elders in every city,” was the counsel of Paul, and those elders were not just to offer prayer in the Sabbath morning service or to preside occasionally at the church officers' meeting; these men became the spiritual

leaders of the churches. They were trained to inspire the churches for aggressive evangelism. Many of those local elders died martyrs' deaths, but their churches were aflame with a passion for souls, and men were compelled to take notice of them.

Surely the time has come when our pastors, our conference leaders, our institutional leaders, all of us, should be able to free ourselves from much detail. We have thousands of strong, loyal laymen who will be glad to bear the burdens of the churches so that we ourselves can be free to give much of our time to the definite preaching of the message.

Although metropolitan evangelism is a tremendous challenge, yet these little pockets of civilization must also be reached. Rural evangelism is as much in God's program as city evangelism. The apostles opened up their work in the great centers, making the cities their headquarters. But, following the pattern of their Master, they found ways of getting their message into all the tiny villages. The church members, not the apostles, carried the message to these smaller places.

"The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers." How well we know those words! But too often we as ministers go on carrying the burdens which our lay members could and would carry.

For a hundred years we have been building up our program and our organization. It is not perfect yet. It is growing all the time. Sometimes we hear someone say with a note of irony, "All that we are doing is adding wheels to the machinery." Well, thank God for the wheels. We need them all. Not fewer wheels, but more active, soul-winning wheels is what we need. Ezekiel saw the Spirit of God moving in the wheels. It was after he saw the vision of the wheels that he was told to preach to the bones. With his first preaching the bones came together, and the flesh and skin appeared, but all was lifeless. Then he preached again, and something more dynamic occurred. The Lord said, "Prophecy . . . and say to the wind [or the Spirit], . . . Come from the four winds [or from the very ends of the earth], O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." When the Spirit came they lived.

The Work of Elisha

We speak of the Elijah message, and rejoice in having a part in it. What an interesting character Elijah was, a truly volcanic personality! Not only did he reprove error, but he organized or reorganized Israel. He certainly was a great leader. Associated with him was Elisha, a younger man and quite a different type. Elisha was more of a pastoral prophet, but he too was a wonderful man of God. We get just a little peep into his character as we read a simple but moving story in Second Kings. A little family of some

standing in the community lived in a home hard by the road; and as this prophet Elisha passed by that home day after day, the mother observed him, and she summed up his character in these words: "I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passes by us continually." As he carried out his daily routine duties, his life was a sermon. He was not so spectacular as Elijah, but there was a depth to his character that was apparent to all.

At the time that Elijah was taken away this younger man, Elisha, was called to assume the responsibilities of leadership. Sensing that he was about to enter upon a larger sphere of service, he sought for divine guidance. He prayed that a double portion of the Spirit of God might rest upon him. What strange emotions must have surged through the hearts of those two men as they came to the last few days of their association! No doubt Elijah gave much instruction to the younger man. Then the day came for their separation. They visited briefly with the young men of the schools of the prophets, and then they set out together on their last earthly journey. As they came to the rolling waters of the Jordan Elijah stripped off his mantle and smote the river. The waters parted, and they went over on dry ground. As they continued their journey they were in fellowship, when all at once they were interrupted. Suddenly the chariots of God swept down from the skies and Elisha was caught up as it were in a whirlwind. Elisha, seeing it, cried out, "My father! my father!" Then Elijah, as a final gesture of love, flung his mantle from the flaming chariot. As it floated back to earth, Elisha caught it, and it became a token of his divine power. Then he left the scene, for he must go back to the schools of the prophets. These younger workers had been awaiting his return. They wondered whether he would be as great as Elijah. As Elisha came to the Jordan, the waters were again rolling at his feet. Just across on the other bank were the young prophets, the preachers from the Bethel school. Sensing the importance of the occasion, and knowing that the Lord had called him to leadership, he took the mantle of Elijah, and rolling it up, smote the waters and cried out with confidence, "Where is the Lord God of Elisha?" He did not say, "Where is Elisha?" for Elijah had gone, but, "Where is Elijah's God?" for only Elijah's God could give the demonstration that was needed. The Lord heard, the waters were parted, and again he went over on dry ground. It was a secondhand mantle, but a firsthand demonstration. Behind that miracle lay not only the long association with a great leader but the daily consistent life of a holy man. When a man knows he is divinely called, it gives him confidence, but he still needs a personal experience with God. The message we are carrying to the world is not something this present generation has discovered. We inherited it from our spiritual fathers. In that sense it too is a secondhand mantle. But like Elisha we must have a firsthand demonstration of power. And that demonstration must stem from a life of prayer and consecration.

I was reading a statement the other day by John R. Mott. He was recounting the time when D. L. Moody was the inspiration at the annual Bible conference." Our conferences lasted for twenty-eight days," he says. Then he comments on the difficulty of getting

people now to give up even a week end for the study of purely spiritual themes.” We had only one meeting a day, and the rest of the day was spent in small groups, or dedication meetings, or simply in thinking out what we had heard,” is the way he describes it. Then he says, “As the spirit of the conference deepened we spent our time in thought and prayer into the watches of the night.” “I miss something of that earnest seeking in our modern conferences,” he adds.” There are so many meetings, such pressure to get documents written and resolutions passed, such weariness of body and spirit that sometimes human activity seems to have been made a substitute for the working of the Spirit of God. I sometimes wonder how in the Christian world of today anyone finds time to say his prayers. Sometimes I have an uncomfortable feeling that I know the answer.”

It sounds all too familiar to us. The remnant church seems to have been ensnared with the spirit of the age. So much of our time seems to be taken up on useful but trivial things. We scarcely have time to pray. What we need is a mighty visitation of God’s power. In these last days of this Bible Conference, with the challenge of world evangelism staring us in the face, let us enter into a new consecration.

Some time ago I heard of a minister who went to take a Turkish bath. The attendant waiting upon him. said, “Excuse me, sir, but I think you are a clergyman.” The minister seemed a little surprised. There was nothing, at that moment at least, that would make him particularly recognizable. So he said to the attendant, “Why do you ask that?”

“Ah, sir,” was the reply, “it is always the knees that give you away.”

Oh, that it could be truly said of all of us that our knees betray our habits of prayer! “That man is not at home on his knees,” was the tragic but true remark concerning one who for years had been looked upon as leader.

When Elisha crossed over on dry land to the other bank of the river, his crossing became a fitting figure of the passing of one era and the commencement of another. Both Elisha and Elijah were great

leaders, but it is hard to compare them. When we think of Elijah we picture a dynamic, forthright reformer who could split the skies with his prayers. But Elisha was different. He was quieter, yet he so inspired his workers and his church members that even the least likely of them began to witness for the truth.

That captive maid away up there in the home of Naaman, one of the enemies of God’s people, began to tell about the great God of Israel. Although a little slave, separated doubtless from her loved ones, she nevertheless loved her master and her mistress, and she wanted them to understand something of the love of her God. Naaman stood high in rank. He was next to the king. But there was in his heart an awakening desire to know something about the true God. His leprosy became the occasion of his visit to Israel. But in it all was something bigger than leprosy. He needed to know about God, and it was the testimony of that girl that brought the saving message to his home. Thus the Gentile world began to be reached.

A Praying Church

Now let us make the parallel. The true symbol of this message and this organization is Elijah. In fact, this is the Elijah message. How splendidly our pioneers laid the foundations of this movement! But they have all now gone to their rest. Those of us who are left are like Elisha, whose reaching out into the great Gentile world could be a type of the advance of this worldwide message. And like Elisha it is for us to inspire our young men and maidens, who though they be separated from home and dear ones, yet like that little maid, they too carry the news of God’s love to all those with whom they associate.

A few years ago up in the Northwest one of our pastors was leading out in a prayer week in his own church. It was not the regular time of the Week of Prayer. There were no readings that had come from the General Conference, but this pastor was burdened for his people. He wanted them to catch a new vision of evangelism, and so he organized this special week of consecration. He told his members that if they could not go out and preach, or visit their neighbors, they could at least pray for the unsaved in their own homes. He laid the burden of prayer upon them all.

One of his members, a young woman, was housemaid in a home of wealth. She could not go out and give Bible studies, but she could pray. And she did. The one for whom she felt the burden of prayer was the mistress in the home where she worked, a lovely woman, but a woman of the world. One night this wealthy woman awakened with a strange feeling of fear. It was already after midnight, but she felt afraid. She could not sleep. She awakened her husband, crying, “Oh, I must have help! I feel terrible!”

“What is the matter?” he asked.

“Oh, I don’t know, but I must have help. Maybe I need a doctor. No, what I need is a minister. Get a minister for me.” The husband tried to calm her, saying, “Well, honey, we don’t know any ministers. This is pretty late at night. Why not try to get some sleep, and I will find a minister for you in the morning?” He tried to console her, and she said she would try to go to sleep.

He dozed off, but in less than an hour she awakened him again." I can't sleep; I must have help," she said." Do get a minister for me." Again he reminded her that they were not religious people." I don't know where to find a minister," he said." I don't know any ministers." Then a thought occurred to him." What about our maid? She is a Christian girl, you know. She belongs to those Adventists. Maybe she would know how to get a minister. Perhaps her own minister will come. Let us go down and talk with her."

So they went down to her room. Of course the maid had retired long before. This was two o'clock in the morning, but they threw their robes around them and walked down to the maid's room. The door was ajar. They heard someone talking. It was the maid; she was praying. They heard words like these: "O God, my mistress is such a good woman. She is so kind. I want to see her in the kingdom. O God, save my mistress!"

As they stood there in the dark, the husband whispered to his wife, "Honey, that's why you can't sleep. This girl is praying for you. You'd better go in there." The wife slipped in and knelt down beside this praying girl, and in a moment their arms were locked around each other, and they wept together. That woman of wealth found the Lord Jesus Christ that night and later found the beauty of His truth.

If every one of our church members would take that burden upon his heart, would pray for his loved ones and his neighbors, pray for his friends and even his enemies, we would soon see such a revival in the church as has never been witnessed since apostolic times. We know the Lord is coming soon, but we need a revival of true godliness to enable us to evangelize the world. We have no time to lose. The forces of the enemy are arrayed against the church. Evil is pressing closer and closer. Every soldier in the army of the Lord must sense his individual obligation to God.

"Hold the Fort"

In 1864 near Altoona Pass, in the days of the American Civil War, something happened that became the inspiration for one of the best-loved gospel songs. An important post was being attacked. A million and a half rations were stored there. A garrison of fifteen hundred men was trying to defend this post against six thousand trained troops. One by one the outer breastworks were captured, and the defenders were gradually being driven back. Surrender seemed imminent when all at once one of the officers, anxiously looking for help from somewhere, noticed that on a nearby hill a flag was moving. A signaler was spelling out a message. It read, "Hold the fort, I am coming. W. T. Sherman." That message so thrilled those tired soldiers that every man redoubled his efforts. Three hours later the general arrived, and they were saved.

In the valley of time the church is waging a terrific warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Could we only lift our eyes to the eternal hills, we would read the words of our triumphant Lord: "Behold, I come quickly"! "Hold the fort, for I am coming." That is the call to the church of God. And not only must we hold, but we must march on to victory. In this great hour every evangelist, every administrator, every institutional worker, every church member, every boy and girl is to take his place in the greatest evangelism program of all time. God is counting on us to redouble our efforts. The enemy knows that his time is short, and he is building barriers against the progress of the truth of God. We have been called by the Lord to match the powers of evil. In this very time the greatest battle of all the ages is reaching its climax. Wars are won by men, munitions, and maps.

Take a look at this map of the world. Here are four hundred million Indian people. For centuries India's people have been shut away by the barriers of the caste system and pagan philosophy. Down in South America is the great barrier of Roman Catholicism. Over in Europe are the barriers of intellectualism, militarism, and nationalism. Down in the great continent of Africa we find the barriers of paganism in all its stark and brutal reality. Over in the great country of China a new barrier has arisen to impede our progress giving way before a new internationalism. Other peoples of the world are also being swept into this new concept. But God is able to break through any barrier. In North America we encounter the barrier of commercialism and intellectualism. Other great barriers have been erected in the islands of the sea. But by the miracle-working power of God those obstacles are being swept away, for, God says, "who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together." Isaiah 27:4. Divine power will break and burn these barriers. O for the burning flame of the Spirit of God!

When Ezekiel preached the second time his soul cried out for the empowering Spirit, the life-giving breath, and the Spirit came like the wind. A rising wind begins slowly. Just a little breeze first-a little eddy here and a whirl of dust in the distance. But soon the nearer trees begin to bend in the rising current. Then comes the great gust, and soon the roar of the hurricane is excluding every other noise as it breaks and smashes its way through. Come, O Wind! And come not from just one quarter. But come from the earth's far ends. The church of the living God awaits Thy life-giving breath! Come quickly! O Spirit of God, and move the wheels that a new power may possess our evangelism.

The first wheel that was ever made was doubtless crude, perhaps a piece of round log. But at once it was a revolution in progress, as it was placed under a rude cart. Since then the wheel has gone through many cycles: the wheelbarrow, the rickshaw, the horse and buggy, the railroad train, the automobile, the airplane. But despite those many transformations, the wheel itself remains. It is basic.

Just so evangelism has gone through many cycles. Methods have changed with the changing times, but like the wheels evangelism still is basic. And on the wheels of evangelism God is going to finish His work and take His people through to the kingdom. What we need is what Ezekiel saw – “the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.” “Take fire from between the wheels,” was the command of God. It is the fire between the wheels that caught the prophet’s eye. When the wheels of organization are ablaze with the Spirit of God, when the tongues of fire leap again upon the preachers of His Word, then the world will know that this is God’s last message. And those who have hesitated to heed the call will then press in. This will be the climax of evangelism.

“Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,

With all Thy quickening powers;

Kindle a flame of sacred love

In these cold hearts of ours.”

ISAAC WATTS

21. The Place Of Prophecy In Our Preaching

A. V. OLSON

Part 1

In order correctly to evaluate the place prophecy should occupy in our preaching, it is necessary that we discover God’s purposes in prophecy. These purposes we find revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. Let us consider some of them.

1. God’s purpose in prophecy is to reveal Himself to mankind. Speaking through Moses to the children of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, God said, “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” Numbers 12:6. This promise God has abundantly fulfilled. When we open the books of the prophets we catch visions of God. There He stands revealed as the beginning of all things, as the very fountain of life and light, of wisdom and power. We behold Him as the creator of the heavens and the earth, the one who---has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.” Isaiah 40:12. With the prophet Isaiah we see Him in glory and majesty seated upon a throne high and lifted up, calmly ruling the universe. (Isaiah 6: 1.)

Standing by the side of Moses on Mount Sinai’s rugged peaks, we hear the Lord as He passes by proclaim, “The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Exodus 34:6,7.

Again and again as we turn the prophetic page we behold our God as a being of love and tender compassion. We hear Him profess, “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” Jeremiah 31:1

In the midst of the raging storm and the darkness we hear His assuring and fatherly voice saying, “Tear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” Isaiah 41:10.

With the prophet Daniel we behold our God as the Ancient of days, robed in garments of white, seated on a throne “like the fiery flame,” surrounded by a vast multitude of ministering angels as the judgment is set and the books are opened.

Then as we stand with John the revelator on the lonely Isle of Patmos, we see the mighty God casting Satan, his angels, and all his wicked host into the lake of fire, which consumes them and puts an end forever to sin and sorrow, suffering and death. From the ruins of the old we behold our God bringing forth a new earth, clad in Edenic beauty, to be throughout eternal ages the home of the redeemed, with God Himself dwelling in their midst.

If our preaching is to be complete and fruitful, it must present the God of the prophecies to our audiences. We must make Him pass before our hearers in all His loveliness, majesty, and power.

2. The purpose of prophecy is to establish faith in God and in His Word. Speaking to His disciples of old, Jesus said, "I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, you might believe." John 14:29. No human being can tell what the morrow will bring forth. In the words of the wise men of Babylon, as they stood trembling before the king, "There is none other that can show it except the gods, whose dwelling, is not with flesh." Daniel 2:11.

God Himself points to the fact that He alone can foretell the future as evidence that He is God. Here are His own words: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46:9, 10.

In the prophecies of the Old and the New Testament we have much of the history of the world written in advance. The rise and fall of nations were clearly foretold long before they came on the stage of action. Likewise the birth of kings and their deeds were accurately described decades and even centuries before these men were born. Secular history testifies that these divine predictions have been fulfilled. These facts bear positive witness that there is a God—a God who does know the end from the beginning—and that the Bible is indeed His inspired word.

Speaking of this, Alexander Keith, the well-known writer on prophecy, says: "Of all the attributes of the God of the universe, his prescience has bewildered and baffled the most all the powers of human perception. And an evidence of the exercise of this perfection in the revelation of what the infinite Mind alone could make known, is the seal of God, which can never be counterfeited, affixed to the truth which it attests. If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine. If they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted; if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man; and if the history itself corresponds with the prediction. Then the evidence which the prophecies impart is a sign and a wonder to every age: no clearer testimony or greater assurance of the truth can be given; and if men do not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." [1]

No sincere thinking person who is acquainted with ancient history can read the prophecies of Daniel and note the accuracy with which the prophet foretold the fall of Babylon and the rise and fall in succession of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, without being profoundly impressed with the thought that back of Daniel stood the eternal and the all-wise God, instructing and guiding him.

One of the most remarkable examples of fulfilled prophecy is found in the history of Babylon and its haughty rulers. This proud city, one of the greatest and most glorious that ever adorned the face of the earth, the center from which all of the then-known world was ruled with an iron rod, the prophets declared would be conquered and laid in ruins.

Long before its downfall Isaiah wrote:

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there." Isaiah 13:19-21.

Moreover, through the same prophet, a hundred years or more before the conquest took place, God gave the name of the king who would take the city and told how it would be overcome.

"Thus said the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two hinged gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. I have surnamed thee, though thou has not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else." Isaiah 45:1-5.

At a later date Jeremiah predicted the very time when Babylon would be overthrown. He wrote:

"And it shall come to pass, when the seventy years are accomplished [the seventy years of Jewish captivity], that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, said the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolation." Jeremiah 25:12.

These divine predictions were literally fulfilled. As these seventy years were drawing to a close during the reign of the weak, voluptuous, and pleasure-loving King Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, "Babylon was besieged by Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Medes and Persians." [2]

Unable either to scale or to penetrate the mighty walls surrounding the proud city, Cyrus turned out of their course the waters of the Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city, thus making it possible for the army to enter in under the walls. This huge undertaking would, however, have been in vain had the gates in the massive walls lining the two banks of the river been locked, but according to predictions, they were open. Without opposition Cyrus marched his conquering host through these river gates and on toward the palace.

That very night, while this was taking place, King Belshazzar and his friends, his wives, his concubines, and a thousand of his lords were feasting and carousing as though utterly oblivious of any danger. Suddenly their revelry ceased. A sleeveless hand was writing on the palace wall the awful doom, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," which being interpreted means, "Mene; God has numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Daniel 5:25-28.

While the king and his guests were still trembling with fear and terror, the soldiers of Cyrus swept into the banquet hall and slaughtered them." In that night," says Daniel, "was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." Verse 30.

Cyrus did not at once raze the city of Babylon. It continued to exist for several centuries, but with ever-diminishing glory and power. Again and again it became the prey of ambitious and blood-thirsty kings and generals. Its destruction was progressive. Finally nothing remained of the once proud and magnificent city but heaps of deserted ruins.

As the decades and centuries rolled by, these ruins became buried under the shifting sands of the desert, but in more recent times man has removed the sand and uncovered the battered ruins. There they stand today in the valley of the Euphrates, bearing their silent but mighty and convincing testimony that there is a God in heaven who spoke through ancient prophets. [3]

The history of the children of Israel is a striking example of fulfilled prophecy. While they were on their way from Egypt to Canaan, God made known to them that if they would faithfully obey Him, He would bless them and make them the head of all the nations of earth. On the other hand, He warned them that if they disobeyed and followed the evil ways and practices of the heathen nations around them, they would finally be removed from their beloved land and be scattered into all the kingdoms of earth. Said the prophet Moses:

"The Lord shall scatter thee among all the people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. And among these nations shall thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest. But the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shall say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shall say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of your heart wherewith thou shall fear, and for the sight of your eyes which thou shall see." Deuteronomy 28:64-67.

These predictions of the hardships and sore trials that would come to the children of Israel if they departed from God we know have been fulfilled to the letter. They have indeed been uprooted and scattered into all the world. The harrowing experiences that have come to them in our own days are vivid reminders of the solemn warning uttered by ancient prophets.

Israel was not the only nation whose fate was told in advance. Through the major and minor prophets, God made known what would happen to all the idolatrous nations around them. History testifies that these prophecies have been fulfilled. On this point there is no room for doubt or quibbling

The testimony of fulfilled prophecy constitutes an evidence that the enemy cannot meet or overthrow. Before it the infidel, the agnostic, and the atheist all stand bewildered, dumfounded, and speechless. Confronted with this unanswerable argument, many an unbeliever has cast away his doubts and has cried out as did the man of old, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Mark 9:24.

We conclude, therefore, that if as ministers we wish to confound those who declare there is no God and who maintain that the Bible is not a divinely inspired book, and if we desire to establish in every honest heart a firm, unwavering faith in God and in His blessed Word, we must give ample room to fulfilled prophecy in our preaching.

3. The purpose of prophecy is to lay a firm foundation for faith in the divinity of Christ. When Jesus overtook the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and found them troubled and perplexed, their faith trembling in the balance, He did not, in His effort to re-establish faith, begin by calling their attention to the miracles He had wrought in their midst, wonderful and convincing though they were, but "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27.

As He did so, faith was rekindled and their hearts burned within them. Referring to this experience Ellen G. White writes: "It was necessary for them to understand the witness borne to Him by the types and the prophecies of the Old Testament. Upon these their faith must be established. Christ performed no miracle to convince them, but it was His first work to explain the Scriptures. They had

looked upon His death as the destruction of all their hopes. Now He showed from the prophets that this was the very strongest evidence for their faith.” [4]

When later the apostles went forth to preach Christ they employed this same method. Standing before King Agrippa and his royal retinue, the apostle Paul declared:

“I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” Acts 26:22, 23.

Again, when the Roman Jews crowded into his rented lodging in the imperial city, Paul “expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.” Acts 28:23.

There is convincing and converting power in sermons that present Christ as the Messiah foreshadowed in the prophetic types and in the prophecies of the Old Testament. It was such a sermon Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. This sermon has gone down in sacred history as the most fruitful sermon that ever came forth from human lips. When we examine this sermon we discover that except for a brief introduction in which he mentions that what they were witnessing was a literal fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, Peter devoted his entire sermon to prove that Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among them “by miracles and wonders and signs,” was indeed the Christ foretold by the prophets of their sacred Scriptures. As he piled argument on argument showing how Jesus had met the prophetic predictions, their minds were convinced of the truth. Under the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit conviction gripped their hearts, and by faith three thousand of them accepted Jesus as their Savior that day.

If we, in these days of skepticism and doubt, are to be successful in our efforts to lead men and women to believe in Jesus as the Sent of God, we must follow the example of Paul and Peter. We must show our hearers that Jesus met the predictions of the prophets in every detail. We must give them a basis for faith in Christ. When we do, faith will be kindled and results will follow. The truth that made the hearts of the men on the Emmaus road burn within them, will also make the hearts of men and women in our day burn within them. The message that brought conviction and conversion on the day of Pentecost will bring conviction and conversion now.

Through His inspired messenger the Lord has told us plainly: “It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time. The Savior is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. It is the light from the prophetic past that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty. The miracles of Christ are proof of His divinity; but a stronger proof that He is the world’s Redeemer is found in comparing the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New.” [5]

4. The purpose of God in prophecy is to make known in advance His plans and His intentions in His dealings with man. He has assured us that He “will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7. That is, He will do nothing that vitally concerns the inhabitants of earth without first revealing it to them through His servants the prophets. This is the way He has dealt with man all down through the ages.

In the days of Noah, when men and women had sunken to the very lowest depths of sin and degradation and the land was continually polluted with their abominations, God sent Noah, His faithful prophet and preacher of righteousness, to them with the startling message that He would destroy the earth with a flood. When they failed to heed the warning, the Flood came as predicted, and swept away all mankind except Noah and his family.

Later, when God had called Abraham to leave his country for Canaan, where he was to become the father of a great nation, He revealed to him that his posterity would go into a strange land where they would become servants and would suffer affliction for a stated period of time and then come out with great substance to re-enter the Promised Land.

Numerous other occasions could be cited showing how God, down through Old and New Testament times, informed His people through the prophets of His plans and purposes for them.

5. The purpose of prophecy is to give light. The apostle Peter declares, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” 2 Peter 1: 19.

Glorious is the light that shines from the prophetic page. It is out of the prophecies of the Old and the New Testament that light is thrown for us on the past, the present, and the future. Says the servant of the Lord:

“In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the

curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counter play of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. In the history of nations the student of God's word may behold the literal fulfillment of divine prophecy."

"To understand that 'righteousness exalts a nation;' that 'the throne is established by righteousness,' and 'upheld by mercy;' to recognize the outworking of these principles in the manifestation of His power who 'removes kings, and sets up kings,' this is to understand the philosophy of history." [6]

No sooner had the night of sin cast its dark, gloomy shadows across the Garden of Eden than God caused beams of prophetic light to penetrate the darkness to bring new hope and joy to the lost and forlorn pair. Ever since then the prophetic lamp has shone with ever-increasing luster as prophets of God's own choosing have brought new revelations of His plans and purposes for man. Added light has also come as prophets and saints have searched "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11.

Our age has been especially favored. The accumulated prophetic light of the ages is focused upon its. We have the benefit of the light that shone upon all the generations of the past and of all the light peculiar to our own day. From Enoch, the seventh from Adam, down through the long line of divinely inspired prophets they have spoken of our day. Were it not for this, the present would be dark and mysterious and the future would be darker still. But, thank God, He has not left us in darkness. Through His prophets He has caused great light to shine upon us. By this means He has revealed to us the meaning of things that are past, of things that are now taking place around us, and of things to Come.

"The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are to-day in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. Today the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,-that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.

"The Bible and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble, and men's hearts to fail them for fear." [7]

It is the end of the world that is upon us: "We hear the footsteps of an approaching God to punish the world for their iniquity." [8] For the unprepared it is a terrifying picture that the prophets have painted." A day of darkness and of gloominess." A day when the Lord shall arise "to shake terribly the earth." It is the last act in the great drama of sin. The hour is about to strike for the complete annihilation of sin and sinners. The author of evil and all his wicked host are to be blotted out in the fires that are soon to cleanse the earth from the miasma of sin and death.

But thank God, the prophecies not only reveal the fact that our old world is hastening on to its final doom; they also reveal the glorious truth that Christ, our Redeemer and our King, is soon coming to gather His saints and to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace, which shall stand forever. Soon, yes, very soon, according to the prophetic word, will dawn that golden morning which the saints of all ages have longed and prayed for, when we shall enter the Promised Land, where sickness, suffering, and death shall be no more. There we shall see our Savior face to face and dwell with God forevermore. What a glorious climax to the drama of the ages!

Let us summarize. The purpose of prophecy is (1) to give to mankind a revelation of God, (2) to establish in human hearts an unwavering faith in God and in His Word, (3) to lay a foundation for an abiding, unshakable faith in Christ as the divine Savior from sin and death, (4) to make known in advance God's plans and purposes in His dealings with man, (5) to throw light on the past, present, and future.

If the foregoing is correct, as I believe it is, then it must be evident to us all that prophecy should occupy an important place in our preaching. I see no other way for us to meet God's purpose in prophecy and His purpose in our preaching. Without the prophetic word we cannot hope to bring to the world as complete a revelation of God as we should. Without this word we will find it well-nigh impossible, in this age of doubt and skepticism, to establish in the hearts of men and women a firm, abiding faith in God, in His Word, and in His Son, Jesus, our divine Lord and Savior. Moreover, without the blessed word of prophecy, how can we, as ministers, hope to answer the question that is haunting men and women everywhere: "What do these things mean?" As the shadows of the long dark night of sin are thickening around us, filling men's hearts with anguish and evil foreboding, how can we throw light for them on the present and the future without the prophetic lamp?

We must ever bear in mind that God has raised up the Advent movement for the express purpose of proclaiming a prophetic message to the world. We are here at this late hour to expound the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. We are here to give voice to the messages of the prophets-messages of vital concern to every soul on earth.

While we are thus stressing the importance of giving prophecy a large place in our preaching, it may not be out of place to sound a note of warning against the danger of yielding to the temptation of indulging in fanciful, private interpretations or personal predictions. Consciously or unconsciously many of us may have erred on this point.

Years ago I overheard one of our ministers, who had frequently written articles for the newspapers of his city on the Turkish question, say to a group of workers, "I will never write another article on this subject for the public press, because every time I tell what the Turk is going to do he makes a fool of me by doing something entirely different." By his erroneous interpretations and his unwarranted predictions, this good brother had created embarrassment both for himself and for the church.

This man has not been the only one to make such mistakes. Well do I recall how during the first world war we were assured, on the basis of a fanciful interpretation of an obscure text, that at the end of the war, when the peace conference would assemble, the pope of Rome would be found sitting at the head of the council table as chairman. But lo, and behold, when the peace conference met there was no pope in the chair. He was not even present. Since the outbreak of the last world war I have heard a number of sermons on "Russia in Prophecy." All of them have been disappointing. They have savored too much of fanciful speculations and interpretations of obscure texts. Some go beyond the bounds of divine revelation when describing the future state of the redeemed. On the basis of nothing more than their own vivid imaginations they make some rather fantastic predictions. Such presentations should find no place in our preaching. Our role is not to prophesy, but to expound prophecy. In our eagerness to capture and hold the attention of the people, we should never indulge in fanciful interpretations. Sooner or later the hearers will discover that the interpretations were false; then the preacher will be regarded as a false prophet and the people whom he represents will be discredited.

Against this type of preaching the Lord has cautioned us through His messenger. We read: "There is to be no levity, no trifling, no fanciful interpretation; the minister must speak in sincerity and deep earnestness, as a voice from God expounding the Sacred Scriptures." [9]

There are some who seem to be of the opinion that all prophecy relating to the past is clear and can be easily explained. This is a mistake. There are prophetic passages relating to matters or events that are now in the past that are dim to us for the simple reason that the historical data available regarding the events involved in the prophecy are fragmentary or altogether lacking. For the correct understanding of such prophecies we shall have to wait until the necessary data are available, which in certain cases may not be until we sit at the feet of Jesus in the kingdom to come. Needless to say, prophecies of this character should be given no place in our preaching.

Students of prophecy should also bear in mind the fact that certain prophetic predictions are conditional. This principle is clearly stated in the Word of God: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jeremiah 18:7-10.

Sometimes, as in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, the condition is stated. At other times it is not stated. The prediction of Jonah against Nineveh is a good example. Because the people of that wicked city repented, the predicted judgment was not executed.

In the Word of God there are also certain lines of prophecy regarding the application of which there may be divergent views among us. One school of earnest, devoted men may hold tenaciously to one view, whereas another school of equally sincere and conscientious men may hold a different view. Feeling convinced that they are right in their conclusions, both sides will feel a strong urge to press their views upon the church and possibly upon the world. Should this be done, it would endanger the peace and harmony of the church. It could lead to strife and confusion. As ministers in the cause of God, we have no right to engage in the presentation of views on the prophecies-or on any other subject -that will cause divisions and conflicts in the church.

Years ago, when able and well-meaning men among us were creating misunderstanding, conflicts, and sorrow by vigorously proclaiming their opposing views on "the daily," the Lord sent very clear and positive instruction for both sides to lay down their arms and to stop the agitation. From a letter addressed

To My Brethren in the Ministry, we quote as follows:

"I have words to speak to . . . all who have been active in urging their views in regard to the meaning of 'the daily' of Daniel 8. This is not to be made a test question, and the agitation that has resulted from its being treated as such has been very unfortunate. . . . The light given me is that nothing should be done to increase the agitation upon this question. Let it not be brought into our discourses, and

dwelt upon as a matter of great importance. . . . The subject of 'the daily' should not call forth such movements as have been made. As a result of the way this subject has been handled by men on both sides of the question, controversy has arisen and confusion has resulted. . . . While the present condition of difference of opinion regarding this subject exists, let it not be made prominent. Let all contention cease. At such a time silence is eloquence." [10]

At another time, when agitation over "who is to compose the one hundred and forty-four thousand" was causing considerable disturbance and conflict, Mrs. White wrote:

"It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty four thousand?" [11]

From the foregoing quotations we must not conclude that no more thought or study is to be given to prophecies that for the present may seem dim and hard to understand. Neither does it necessarily mean that the time will never come when they can be presented in public. If in the providence of God light breaks through the mists removing the differences of opinions that have existed, thus uniting hearts and minds, there will be no reason for further silence. As the messenger of the Lord has said: "Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God." [12]

When we think our search has been rewarded with new light, we should not rush into the pulpit to publish it abroad. God's plan is for us to take our findings first to God-fearing men of experience.

"The only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for 'in the multitude of counselors there is safety.'" [13]

When a brother minister or layman comes to us with what to him seems to be new light, let us not treat him as a heretic. Instead, we should sit down with him and with brethren of experience and prayerfully consider the matter. It may be our brother has found a ray that if followed will lead us to an effulgence of glorious light and truth. This is the way our pioneers worked. It was thus they built up much of the wonderful system of prophetic truth that we hold so dear today.

Notice the following lines from the pen of Mrs. White:

"In 1844, when anything came to our attention that we did not understand, we kneeled down and asked God to help us take the right position; and then we were able to come to a right understanding and see eye to eye. There was no dissention, no enmity, no evil-surmising, no misjudging of our brethren. We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance." [14]

All who undertake this deeper and more thorough study of the prophecies, the same as of any other Bible subject, must do so with an open mind. They must be ready and willing to accept any new light that God reveals to them, be it in the form of additional evidence in support of a prophetic doctrine already known and cherished or the revelation of an entirely new topic. This does not mean that the former light and truth must be abandoned. All truth springs from God. It is as eternal and abiding as God. New light does not eclipse or extinguish the old. It simply merges with the old, thus producing a greater, more powerful, and more glorious light.

Prophetic doctrines that are firmly established on the eternal rock of Bible truth can never be moved or overthrown. The prophecies regarding the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the restoration of Paradise lost, for instance, the same as the doctrines concerning the existence of God, the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, life only in Christ, et cetera, are not to be tampered with. This includes the threefold message." I was shown three steps," writes Mrs. White, "the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages." [15]

Although we must hold firmly to all the light that God has revealed to us and always be ready to accept new revelations from Him, we must not conclude that we shall never have to abandon any views that we may have held regarding some prophetic passage. The entrance of new light may reveal that we have held views that were not in harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures. If so, we must be willing to surrender these views. Error, though hoary with age, is error still and should be rejected. This thought is clearly stated in the following lines from the inspired pen:

"Some have feared that if in even a single point they acknowledge themselves in error, other minds would be led to doubt the whole theory of truth. Therefore they have felt that investigation should not be permitted; that it would tend to dissension and disunion. But if

such is to be the result of investigation, the sooner it comes the better. If there are those whose faith in God's word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We can not hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but one who is infallible. He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life." [16]

Although it is eternally true that we must ever keep our hearts and minds open for the reception of new light and truth, it is equally true that we must give no place in our preaching to human speculations, fanciful interpretations, and self-made predictions. As men chosen by God to proclaim His last warning message to the world, we must, as previously pointed out, keep our preaching free from these things.

Another danger to be guarded against is the idea now current in many quarters that unfulfilled prophecy must find no place in modern preaching. This is a grave mistake. It is an effort on the part of Satan to rob preaching of one of its most glorious functions; namely, that of revealing to mankind some of the vital things which the future holds in store.

The fundamental Christian doctrines of the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection, the millennium, the destruction of sin, the restoration of Paradise lost, et cetera, are all founded on unfulfilled prophecy. These doctrines have been the hope and the joy of God's people in ages past. They are still the blessed hope of the saints today. The realization of all that is vouchsafed to us in the gospel is dependent on the accomplishment of prophecies yet unfulfilled. The elimination of these prophetic doctrines would deprive the gospel message of much of its charm and power. It would leave it meaningless; for without the resurrection and Paradise restored, the sacrifice on the cross will have been in vain. Instead of eliminating these unfulfilled prophecies from our preaching, we must proclaim them with greater power and conviction than ever before.

There are also other unfulfilled prophecies we must present if we are to give the third angel's message to the world in its fullness. There is, for instance, the prophecy of Revelation 13 regarding the parts that certain powers are still to play in the final scenes of this world's history, with special emphasis on the enforcement of the mark of the beast. Such unfulfilled prophecies must be given the place in our preaching that their importance demands. What we are to avoid is the descent into the realm of speculative prophetic preaching.

Our business is to preach the Word. To a world groping in darkness we are to bring the light of the "more sure word of prophecy." This is the only thing that can reveal the meaning of what is taking place in the world today and throw light on the future. It is the only thing that can bring hope to a despairing world.

If we are to meet the mind of God in our preaching, we must present the captivating prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, which take its front one milepost to another down through history to the very close of time. We must let our audiences stand with the prophets as they draw back the curtain, that we may behold the final scenes in the great conflict between the forces of good and evil. We must let them catch the entrancing vision of the glories and the bliss that are in store for the redeemed in the earth made new.

Prophecy, then, must find a large and prominent place in our preaching. It is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Revelation 1:1. This revelation we have been solemnly charged to proclaim to the world. Writes the servant of the Lord:

"The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed, be left untouched. If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, 'the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star.'" [17]

Part 2

The Advent movement is a prophetic movement. It is in the world today in fulfillment of prophecy. From his exile on the lonely Isle of Patmos the aged apostle and prophet John, looking down through the stream of time, saw a mighty movement represented by three angels announcing to the inhabitants of earth the startling fact that the hour of God's judgment had come.

According to the prophecy of Daniel, chapters 8 and 9, we all know that the hour fixed in the divine timetable for this judgment to begin was the year 1844. When the appointed hour was about to strike, God moved upon men in different parts of the world to sound the alarm. Hundreds of preachers in America, England, and other parts of the world cried "with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Revelation 14:7. When the preachers were forbidden by the authorities, as was the case in Sweden, to sound forth this message, God moved upon children to proclaim it.

The proclamation of this stirring message produced a profound impression. Tens of thousands of people cried unto God for mercy. They believed that the “hour of his judgment” meant the coming of Christ in glory to gather His saints and to take vengeance on the unprepared. They were mistaken in their understanding of the event but right in regard to the time. Though they knew it not, they were, in the providence of the Almighty, fulfilling prophecy when they proclaimed with power, “The hour of his judgment is come.” Speaking of this, Mrs. White says: “Those who proclaimed this warning gave the right message at the right time.” [18]

When the Savior did not come at the time expected, the disappointment was keen. Many abandoned their faith, and others were carried away by fanaticism; some, however, refused to surrender their faith in God and His Word. They knew that the Lord had been with them. A prayerful restudy of the prophecies confirmed them in their belief that the long prophetic period of Daniel 8:14 ended in 1844. Then as they cried unto the Lord for a clearer understanding of His Word, God in His mercy led them to see and understand that the predicted event to take place in 1844 was not the Second Coming of Christ to this earth, but the beginning of the investigative judgment in the sanctuary above.

Now in the light shining from the sanctuary, the three angels’ message of Revelation and many kindred Bible doctrines became clear to their inquiring minds. A whole system of truth took shape before their wondering eyes. Gradually it dawned upon them that God had revealed to them His last warning message for a world soon to perish at the Second Coming of Christ.

The conviction now gripped their hearts and souls that God had called them to give this solemn message to the world. Obedient to their heavenly calling, they entered upon their task. Though few in numbers, poor, hated, and despised, they pressed forward, trusting in God. As they advanced, their numbers increased. Soon the movement became an organized body known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, frequently and affectionately spoken of as the Advent movement.

Under the blessing of God this movement has made marvelous progress. In a comparatively few short years it has spread from land to land and from continent to continent, so that today it is found in nearly every country in the world and in many scores of islands in the seven seas.

A great work has already been accomplished, but “there remains yet very much land to be possessed.” The movement is to expand into every nook and corner of our old world. To “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6) it is to go. It is to continue its operations until the earth is lightened with the glory of the Lord. Then it will culminate in the coming of Christ to gather the harvest of the earth.

Such is the picture of the Advent movement given us by the revelator. It is indeed a prophetic movement. It is in the world today in fulfillment of prophecy. Not only is the Advent movement a prophetic movement, but it also has a prophetic message. The same prophet who foretold the rise and progress of the movement also foretold the message that it would carry to the world. This message is clearly stated in the prophecy of John. It is generally known as the threefold message of Revelation, or, for convenience, the third angel’s message.

This is a special message for a special time. It is the last message that will ever come from our merciful and longsuffering God to the inhabitants of this world, for it culminates in the coming of the Lord. When it has reached every soul on earth, Christ, our great high priest, will lay off His priestly garments and close the door of probation forever. No more then will His gentle voice be heard pleading with sinners to

repent. The destiny of every human soul will then have been settled, and the verdict will go forth: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22: 11.

This prophetic message, which is to be carried to the world by a prophetic movement, is destined for a prophetic time or age. As already indicated, it is the last message that God will send to this world; consequently, it is destined for the period spoken of in the Bible as “the last days” (Acts 2:17), “the day of his preparation” (Nahum 2:3), “the time of the end” (Daniel 12:4), etcetera.

No period in the entire history of the world has received so much attention by the prophets as this period. Practically all the prophets from Enoch to John have prophesied concerning it. Most of the prophecies of Jesus recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke relate to this time.

From our study of the prophecies we know that we are living in this prophetic period. The prophecies of Daniel lead us step by step through the turbulent history of the world to our own time. The events foretold by both Old and New Testament prophets for the last days are now taking place all around us. There is no room for a shadow of doubt. We are living in the last days. Writes the messenger of the Lord:

“We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.” [19]

Somber indeed is the picture which the ancient seers have painted of our age. It is “a day of darkness and of gloominess” (Joel 2:3); a time of great upheavals in nature earthquakes, storms and tidal waves; a time of war and bloodshed, of famine and pestilence. A time of bitter conflict between capital and labor; a time of apostasy and corruption, of immorality and vice, of drunkenness and degradation; a time when men’s hearts fail them for fear and for looking after the things that are coming upon the earth. (See Matthew 24; Luke 21; James 5:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:1-5)

This prophetic picture of our day is not overdrawn. The reality beggars description. Human language seems inadequate to describe accurately the situation the world finds itself in today. That we are living in a time of crisis is recognized by thinking men and women all over the world. The titles alone of books, pamphlets, and magazine articles are revealing. Notice a few of them: The Coming Crisis, World Crisis and World Corruption, The End of European History, Nearing the Abyss, The Annihilation of Man, Time for Decision, Persuade or Perish, Minutes to Midnight, Five Minutes to Twelve.

Wilbur M. Smith writes: “Today the world, the unbelieving world, unites in testifying that we are in an hour of dire crisis-not only an hour of possible, impending calamities; but it would seem, on the very verge of the eclipse of civilization and the destruction of humanity. Many believe it (the crisis) is so critical that they insist civilization is doomed and we are at the end of this age.” [20]

From a book by Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Man and Society in Calamity*, Wilbur Smith quotes the following striking paragraph: “We live amidst one of the greatest crises in human history. Not only war, famine, pestilence, and revolution, but a legion of other calamities are also rampant over the whole world. All values are unsettled. All norms are broken. Humanity has become a distorted image of its own noble self. The crisis is omnipresent and involves almost the whole of culture and society from top to bottom. It is manifest in the fine arts and science, in philosophy and religion, in ethics and law. It permeates the forms of social, economic, and political organizations and the entire way of living and thinking. There is every reason to expect that the disastrous effects of such calamities will fall upon us in a much more intensive and extensive scale during this catastrophic age of ours.” [21]

Throughout the world there is a growing feeling that what the world needs now is a prophet-an Elijah or a John the Baptist. We often see this thought expressed in books and papers. These expressions come from men filling important positions in different walks of life. We have space here only for a few sample quotations.

“There is beginning to arise in the church a call for the prophet a, distinguished from the preacher. There are faithful, zealous, intelligent preachers, but few if any of them function as the hoped for prophet must do, if he comes with the mighty uplifting message for which a troubled age awaits. Will he come?” [22]

“Excepting a sprinkling of scattered individuals, nobody finds in Christianity today a knowledge or a faith that is ‘clear enough to be a beacon’ for our social navigation, or ‘sharp enough to cut a way for us through the tangled confusion of the present,’ or vital enough to provide ‘a program of action through which we can claim the future as our own.’ [23]

“We are asked to turn to the Church for our enlightenment, but when we do so we find that the voice of the Church is not inspired. The voice of the Church today, we find, is the echo of our own voices, and the result of experience, already manifest, is disillusionment.”

“The way out is the sound of a voice, not our voice, but a voice coming from something not ourselves, in the existence of which we cannot disbelieve.” [24]

“Never have Christian pastors experienced such soul-searching as they now undergo in uttering the Christian message. Testimonies of the clergy are heard on every hand in which the bravest and most devout confess their inability to reach a decision which they can proclaim with assurance that it reflects the mind of Christ. These are indeed times that try men’s souls-and none so much as the souls of God’s prophets. The church’s leadership has a profound sense of needing to be led. The hungry sheep look up to hungrier shepherds. The Christian is now a total community of confused minds, of hearts waiting for a sure word of God, of leaders whose voices are hushed until the live coal of prophecy touches their lips.” [25]

“Our civilization is greatly in need of a prophet. In bygone times, God has spoken through men. Would that he could find the human instrument through whom he could speak again.” [26]

The anguished cry of all these writers is for a voice, a prophetic voice, that can declare the meaning of the things that now haunt men’s souls and that can point the way out of this wilderness of despair.

This voice God has promised to send at this very time.” Behold,” He says, “I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” Malachi 4:5. We understand that this does not mean that God will send the man Elijiah, but rather the Elijah message. Just as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) to prepare the way for the first coming of Christ, so a mighty movement is to sweep over the world in these last days in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ. This can be none other than the movement represented by the three angels of Revelation 14; for this, according to the prophet, is God’s final effort to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of man in power and great glory to redeem His people. This thought is embodied in the following lines from the inspired pen: “Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent.” [27]

“In this age, just prior to the Second Coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that of John is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord has given messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all give heed to the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners. Repent ‘for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ’s soon appearing, we have a message to bear, ‘Prepare to meet thy God.’ We are to lift up the standard and bear the third angel’s message. Our message must be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was in peril, the truth did not languish upon his lips. And our work in this age must be as faithfully done.” [28]

It is clear, then, that as John the Baptist was the predicted voice in the wilderness of Judea (Isaiah 40:3 and Matthew 3:1-3) to prepare the way for the first advent of Christ, so the Advent movement is the voice of prophecy in the present wilderness of sin, uncertainty, and fear, to prepare the way for the Second Coming of our Lord.

Though couched in few and simple words, the prophetic message which the remnant church has been charged to carry to the world is comprehensive in its scope. It includes all the divine light and truth of ages past plus the special light for these closing days. It is not a new gospel; it has no new remedy or panacea for sin; but thank God, it has the old gospel, the everlasting gospel, the only gospel that can save from sin and death. It points the world to Calvary’s cross. It presents Jesus, the divine Son of God, as the sinner’s only hope.

There is a very definite reason why God has ordained that special emphasis is to be placed upon the everlasting gospel in these last days. It is because the enemy has succeeded in introducing a false gospel—a gospel without a divine sacrifice. From pulpit and press the world is being told that Jesus, who died on the cross, was not the Son of God but the son of Joseph, and that He was no more divine than other men. They no longer believe in the efficacy of His shed blood.

In his recent treatise on *The Growing Super-Church*, James DeForest Murch writes: “It is a well-known fact that many NCC [National Council of Churches] members do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God in the full theological sense of the term.” [29]

He quotes the well-known Baptist preacher Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick as saying, “ ‘Of course I do not believe in the Virgin Birth or in that old-fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement; and do not know any intelligent Christian minister who does.’ ” [30]

In the same pamphlet Dr. McConnell is quoted as follows:

“Critics point out to us that in the early days of the church it was quite common even for popular thought to deify a man. On that memorable occasion in Paul’s missionary journey through south Galatia when multitudes called Barnabas Zeus and Paul Mercury, they were acting true to that idea of their time which conceived of gods as capable of appearing in human form and found it easy to believe that man could become a god. Is not this tendency to deify Jesus more heathen than Christian? Are we not most truly Christian when we cut loose from a heathen propensity and take Jesus simply for the character he was and for the ideal he is?”

This is rank heresy, and it is spreading like a poison gas throughout the Christian world. It is sapping the church of its vitality and its spiritual power. To counteract this deadly and destructive heresy God has raised up the Advent movement to proclaim with power and conviction the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. He is to be made the center and the circumference of our prophetic message to the world.

The threefold message of Revelation 14 opens with a trumpet call from heaven to the people of every land and tongue to “fear God, and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” What message could be more appropriate for our day than this? It comes at a time when the Bible doctrine of creation is being set aside for the false theory of evolution. This bewitching theory threatens to undermine the very foundations of the Christian faith. The church is already honeycombed with its teaching.

Referring to this situation, Alfred M. Reliwinkel writes: “The world as it is today is said to be the result of a slow process of evolution which has been going on for millions and billions of years and will continue onward and upward through endless time. This is the accepted view of our age. The writers of our science textbooks propound this theory as truth. The youth of today is brought up on this theory in school and in college. The press, radio, and current literature popularize it, and the uncritical public accepts it as true. Anyone daring to question this theory is considered an obscurantist or a fanatic.” [32]

This anti-Biblical theory is also being taught in theological schools, in the religious press, and from the pulpits of the land. As already stated, the religious world, as well as the non religious, is being saturated with it. This doctrine of evolution has had a profound influence upon men’s attitude toward some of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. For one thing, it has changed their concept of sin. This is admitted by Dr. John A. Hutchinson, Federal Council historian. He is quoted as saying, “The concept of sin has received important qualifications at the hands of evolutionary and scientific thought.” [33]

It cannot be otherwise. When men no longer regard God as their Creator they naturally feel under no obligation to Him. They glibly deny the divine authorship of the law of God and do not consider themselves bound by its precepts. It is claimed that “It is unscientific and absurd to imagine that God ever turned stone-mason and chiseled commandments on a rock.” [34]

Some years ago Harold Bolce spent two Nyhole years visiting “class-rooms from Cambridge to California” to discover what is being taught in our higher institutions of learning. On the completion of this thorough investigation he wrote several articles for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* setting forth his findings. As an introduction to these articles the editor of the journal wrote:

“What Mr. Bolce sets down here is of the most astounding character. Out of the curricula of American colleges a dynamic movement is upheaving ancient foundations and promising a way for revolutionary thought and life. Those who are not in close touch with the great colleges of the country will be astonished to learn the creeds being fostered by the faculties of our great universities. In hundreds of class-rooms it is being taught daily that the decalogue is no more sacred than a syllabus; that the home as an institution is doomed; that there are no absolute evils. That immorality is simply an act in contravention to society’s accepted standards; that the change from one religion to another is like getting a new hat. That moral precepts are passing shibboleths; that conceptions of right and wrong are as unstable as styles of dress; and that there can be and are holier alliances without the marriage bond than within it. These are some of the revolutionary and sensational teachings submitted with academic warrant to the minds of hundreds of thousands of students in the United States. It is time that the public realized what is being taught to youth of this country. ‘The social question of to-day,’ said Disraeli, ‘is only a zephyr which rustles the leaves but will soon become a hurricane.’ It is a dull ear that cannot hear the mutterings of the coming storm.” [35]

We do not hold that the widespread teaching of evolution is alone responsible for the alarming condition described in the above quotation, but we do hold that it is one of the chief contributing factors. How could it be otherwise? If Satan can convince men that God did not create them, it is easy to lead them to the conclusion that they are under no obligation to observe the moral laws and precepts that He has established to govern their lives. If God is not their Creator, it is reasoned, He is not their sovereign, and therefore has no right to usurp authority over them or to legislate for them.

One of the chief reasons for the existence of the Advent movement is the great need to expose the dangers of the evolution doctrine and to turn men everywhere away from its deceptions and delusions to worship the Creator of the heavens and the earth. With great earnestness we must appeal to the people of our day, as did the prophet Elijah of old to the people of his day, to follow the true and living God. This constitutes an important part of our prophetic message.

One of the most startling features of the third angel’s message, as has already been pointed out, is the solemn truth that the investigative judgment is now in session in the courts of heaven and that the cases of all living will soon be called in review. This astounding fact must now be sounded forth in trumpet tones. Men and women everywhere must be informed that the judgment hour foretold by ancient prophets has struck and that it is high time they have an advocate to plead their cases.

Another feature of our prophetic message that must be given prominence in our preaching is the announcement that Babylon is fallen. With a mighty voice we are to proclaim to the world that “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:2-4.

The message of the third angel, in this series of three, is a bugle call from heaven for a reformation and a solemn warning against the worship of the beast and his image. It is a prophetic voice calling honest souls to turn away from every apostate movement and from all false religions to serve the true and living God. It is a call to forsake the commandments of men, to “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” It is a call back to “paths to dwell in,” a call for the restoration of the breach and for the Sabbath reform foretold by Isaiah the prophet.

The warning of this angel against the worship of the beast and his image is the most startling, the most terrifying warning ever given to the inhabitants of earth. The antediluvians were threatened with sudden destruction by a flood of water, but here is a threat of slow

and excruciating suffering and death in a lake of fire and brimstone. Those who fail to heed the warning are to “drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation.” Revelation 14: 10.

This prophetic message of doom we must give to the world. No one must be left in ignorance. All must hear the warning. But with the warning must go the appeal to flee from the wrath to come. While lifting up the trumpet of doom we must also lift high the cross of Calvary, in order that every honest soul may be drawn unto Him who said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” John 12:32.

This threefold message is the special message that God has charged His remnant church to carry to the world. It is a prophetic message to be carried by a prophetic movement to the people of a prophetic age. In order to give it in all its fullness to the world, we must of necessity give prophecy a prominent place in our preaching.

As ministers in the Advent movement we must never forget that we have been brought into existence for the express purpose of proclaiming to the world a prophetic message. If we fail to give prophecy the prominence in our sermons and writings that its importance demands, we shall be untrue to our trust.

Shorn of its prophetic element our message would be weak and insipid. For want of the prophetic voice, many a Christian pulpit today lacks vision and power. The same will be true of ours if we fail to let the prophets speak.

Before the first world war we were often branded as alarmists, calamity howlers, and warmongers because we declared that which the prophets had foretold would soon come upon the world. They scoffed at the idea of the predicted sorrows to overtake the rich. They declared that man had become too enlightened, too civilized, and too wise ever again to plunge the world into bloodshed and war. They preached peace and safety; they assured us that we were entering into the millennium.

All this has changed now. They have lived to see the rich in many lands dispossessed of their wealth and completely liquidated. They have seen the world racked and ruined by the most extensive and the most devastating wars ever fought on our globe. The things foretold by the prophets they have seen fulfilled round about them. Baffled and alarmed by what they see coming upon the earth, many now come to us to learn what these things mean. This is as it should be. The world must know that there is a people with a message that throws light on both the present and the future.

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchman and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God’s people are to be true to the trust committed to them.” [36]

“We are under obligation to declare faithfully the whole counsel of God. We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and made us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God.” [37]

For a number of reasons our message is unpopular. It calls for a complete separation from the world with its pleasures, its vices, and its ambitions. It sets its followers apart as peculiar, because of their modesty in dress and their temperate habits in eating and drinking. It also marks them as strange because of observing a different Sabbath from the rest of the professed Christian world.

Notwithstanding these unpopular features of our message, it is making an impact on the world. It is attracting the attention of multitudes and winning many converts. One of the outstanding reasons for this is to be found in its prophetic setting. There is power in the prophetic word—it grips and holds the hearts of men. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit it brings men to their knees before God. Its value in our work can never be overestimated. Through His inspired messenger the Lord has repeatedly urged upon its the necessity of presenting the prophecies. Notice these paragraphs:

“Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.’

“The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is presented to me again and again as something that is to be brought to the attention of all. We are to-day living in the time when the predictions of this chapter are fulfilling. Let our ministers and teachers explain these

prophecies to those whom they instruct. Let them leave out of their discourses matters of minor consequence, and present the truths that will decide the destiny of souls.” [38]

“We are to proclaim to the world the great and solemn truths of Revelation. Into the very designs and principles of the church of God these truths are to enter.” [39]

“The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues.” [40]

“We are living in the close of this earth’s history. Prophecy is fulfilling. Soon Christ will come with power and great glory. We have no time to lose. Let the message sound forth in earnest words of warning. Let there be no indifference in this matter. The Lord calls for workers who are filled with an earnest, decided purpose. Tell the people to be instant in season and out of season. With the words of life upon your lips go forth to tell men and women that the end of all things is at hand.

“Let us keep our souls in the love of God. The note of warning must be given. The truth must not languish upon our lips. We must rouse people to immediate preparation. Let every teacher present an open door before all who will come to Jesus, repenting of their sins.” [41]

“The time has come when the message of Christ’s soon coming is to sound throughout the world.” [42]

“Sound an alarm through the land. Tell the people that the day of the Lord is near, and hastens greatly.” [43]

With this agree the words of the ancient prophets. Joel cries: “Blow you the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord comes, for it is nigh at hand.” Joel 2:1.

Isaiah says, “The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare you the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” Isaiah 40:3.” Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.” Verse 10.

While proclaiming in trumpet tones the prophecies foretelling the judgments soon to fall upon the inhabitants of this old sinful world, we must not neglect the brighter side of the picture. Remember, we are not simply preachers of doom, We are, above all else, preachers of hope and promise. We have the most glorious, the most thrilling, and the most inspiring message ever given to mortal man. While others are declaring that God has forsaken the world and that the human race is about to annihilate itself by its own uncontrollable devices and inventions, we can assure men on the strength of the prophetic word that God is still on His throne, and that "a divine hand is on the wheel"; that seedtime and harvest will continue; that multitudes of human beings will live, move, and have their being on this earth until the day when the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.

Notwithstanding the sorrow that is coming upon the earth and the persecution that will be the lot of God's people, we are to preach with confidence and great assurance the marvelous triumphs foretold by the prophets for the remnant church.

The grand and glorious climax to our message is the assurance of the prophets that the event which has been the hope and the comfort of God's children in ages past is now about to take place. With a shout of triumph we are to publish to the world that Jesus is coming-coming soon to burst the fetters of the tomb and set His captives free, coming to gather His loved ones of every land and clime, to reign . with Him throughout the endless ages of eternity.

Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God. Joel 2:23.” Lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh!" Luke 21:28.

Wonderful indeed are the scrolls of the prophets. There, as nowhere else, God stands revealed to His Earth born children. There we catch visions of His glory and majesty, of His wisdom and power, of His love and loveliness. There we behold Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth and as the One who upholds and rules the vast universe.

As we walk with the prophets along the corridor of the centuries and discover, as revealed through the sacred pages of their inspired writings, the accuracy with which they foretold the events of history, there is laid for our faith in God and in His Word a foundation that Satan with all his sophistry cannot destroy. Again we wend our way with Cleopas and his friend on the Emmaus road and hear the Master expound all the things written in Moses and the prophets concerning Himself, and our hearts burn within us and we are led to exclaim with the disciples of old, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:69.

Moreover, as we sit quietly with the prophets and listen to their utterances of divine wisdom, we begin to understand the meaning of the dark and terrifying things that are now filling the hearts and souls of men with fear and trembling. Then as they unlock the doors to

the future and permit us to view the final scenes in the mighty conflict between the forces of good and evil, our whole being becomes tense. Spellbound, we watch the changing scenes. We almost stop breathing as we see the contending forces march into the final combat but our spirits revive and our souls rejoice when we see the enemy defeated, crushed and destroyed forever. Then as we behold rising from the ashes of the old a new earth clad in Edenic beauty to be the home of the redeemed throughout the endless ages of eternity, our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude to our God for His wonderful love.

We come away from our interview with the prophets with a radiant hope and a fixed purpose to press on in the battle against sin until the conflict is ended, the victory won, and we stand triumphant with the soldiers of Christ before His throne.

The longer we contemplate the prophecies, the more precious they become. Without them the future would be darker than midnight. All would end at the grave. There would not be a ray of light beyond the tomb. Now, thank God, with the light shining from the prophetic page the future is bright with promise.

As the messengers of God in a prophetic movement with a prophetic message for a prophetic age, we must give prophecy a wide and conspicuous place in our preaching.

22. The Lord Our Righteousness

W. H. BRANSON

Imputed Righteousness

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1: 16, 17.

The gospel is a plan laid by God to meet the terrible emergency of sin. Through Adam’s transgression the whole world has become sinful. To this rule there is no exception.” By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12.

Sin, therefore, is a universal malady, for “there is none righteous, no, not one. . . . They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one.” Romans 3:10-12.

How, then, do men become sinners? We answer, They have inherited a sinful nature from Adam through their parents.” Behold,” says the psalmist, “I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Psalm 51:5.

When Adam, our forefather, sinned, he sold the entire human family under sin. The only nature he could pass on to future posterity was that which he himself possessed. He had become a sinner; therefore, since he was the father of all living, all future generations would inherit his nature.

“Thus by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” Romans 5:19. So literally is this true that Paul exclaimed, “I am carnal, sold under sin.” “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing.” Romans 7:14, 18.

Sin’s Wages

Now, “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), for “sin, when it is finished, brings forth death” (James 1:15). Since, therefore, all are sinners by nature, the entire human family is under the death sentence.” Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12.

Does someone ask, Why should sin have such awful results? The answer is that sin is lawlessness. It is rebellion against God and the principles of His kingdom. It is the transgression of His great moral law.

God’s law is a perfect standard of righteousness. It is a transcript of His own character, and constitutes the foundation principles of His kingdom. Anything contrary to it is treason against God’s kingdom and rebellion against His authority.

The law of God constitutes also the standard of citizenship in God’s kingdom. No one will be granted citizenship whose life is out of harmony with this divine standard. To include sinners in the citizenry of God’s kingdom would be to jeopardize its whole future and wreck the universe. Therefore sinners must die. What can man do about it? This is the great question. It is the question of the ages. How can we escape the death sentence? What must we do to be saved?

Shall we try to cancel the sentence by changing now and beginning to keep God's law? No, that is impossible, for our minds and hearts are carnal and cannot keep a holy law." Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7.

Humanity is weakened by inherited sin as well as by the personal practice of sin and is therefore entirely unable to reach any righteous standard." Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4.

But even if this were possible, our keeping of the righteous law in the present and future would not serve to atone for any of the sins of the past when we were living in transgression. That guilt would still cling to the soul and would bring about its destruction.

The law of God sets the standard of righteousness but is powerless to bestow it. It shows the sinner his need of salvation and deliverance, but it cannot do the saving." Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20.

So man, through sin, is entirely undone. He cannot bridge the gulf that sin has made. He is "without strength" and therefore is powerless to make himself holy. He is "filled with all unrighteousness-(Romans 1:29), and in that state is without hope and "without God in the world." He cannot obey a holy law.

A Way of Escape

But God has provided a way of escape. The gospel is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believes." Therein is the righteousness of God revealed. Or, in other words, God has, through the gospel, provided righteousness for the sinner that can replace his record of past sins. The gospel makes no provision to recognize man's own efforts to attain to righteousness, but instead it makes available to him the righteousness of Christ.

The gospel provides for the complete exchanging of Christ's righteousness for the sinner's guilt and sin.

"Christ came from the courts of glory to this sin-polluted world and humbled Himself to humanity. He identified Himself with our weaknesses and was tempted in all points like as we are. Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on His own account, for His character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character He offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family." [1]

This is the most sublime truth that has ever been revealed. We are told by the Lord's messenger that "one interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other, Christ our righteousness." [2]

With the making of this marvelous plan, the sinner has had nothing to do. It was born in the heart of a loving and infinite God, and was made effective by the life and death of Jesus Christ, His Son." For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2: 8, 9.

Salvation, therefore, is not of works. It is a gift. God provides it without our effort and without money or price. We have only to accept it.

Now this plan provides for man to become righteous without having first kept God's law." The righteousness of God without the law is manifested; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Romans 3:21,22. It would have to be that way. The sinner has not kept the law during his past life. He cannot go back and live those years over and thus change the record. If his past sinful deeds are therefore ever to be canceled, it must be without his having done the deeds of the law during that time. This difficulty Christ completely overcame.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus." Verses 24-26.

What a marvelous arrangement is this! Those who have faith in the shed blood of Christ as having been the penalty for their sin and guilt are now freely justified by God's grace. They experience redemption through Jesus Christ, and Christ's righteousness is declared to take the place of their sins that are past.

“Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love, and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

“Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God’s promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they can not find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live, and not die.

“God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tender compassion. He says, ‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.’ ‘I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.’”

“I have no pleasure in the death of him that dies, said the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live you. ’ Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say: ‘Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a

compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused His love, though the blessings He has given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, “I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants.” The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”

“But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by His prophet, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.’ While the sinner is yet far from the Father’s house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father’s heart is yearning over him. And every longing awakened in the soul to return to God, is but the tender pleading of His Spirit wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father’s heart of love.” [3]

The sinner, to be justified, must have righteousness. Because he has none of his own, righteousness must be provided for him; otherwise God could not declare the sinner just before Him. To meet this need, Christ, who lived upon the Earth in human flesh for thirty-three and a half years, offers to credit His own righteousness to the sinner as a substitute for his sins that are past.

This evidently is what Paul meant when he said, “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:17.

And this gift of righteousness comes to the sinner by faith. He does nothing to earn it-Jesus did that for him. He cannot demand it, for it is not his. But by faith-taking Christ at His word-he may have it. It is freely offered to him. It becomes his for the taking.

If Christ’s righteousness is accepted by the sinner, then God-counts that it is his in very fact. Through repentance and confession his past sins are removed, and covered with Christ’s righteousness, lie stands innocent before God. He is accounted righteous.

Christ’s righteousness in which the sinner now stands is a perfect righteousness. When He lived upon the earth in human flesh He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was buffeted by the devil, persecuted by wicked men, and finally slain upon a cross; but through all these experiences He was a conqueror. Never once did He yield to sin. Said He, “I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” Paul declares that He “is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Hebrews 7:26.

And this Holy One now offers to cover us with His holiness! This is the most sublime transaction in the history of the universe. God’s messenger has said:

“Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Savior, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.” [4]

No wonder Martin Luther, the great herald of the doctrine of justification by faith in the sixteenth century, exclaimed, "With what love He [Christ] opens His arms to you, taking all your sins upon Himself and giving thee all His righteousness."

"The world's Redeemer was treated as we deserve to be treated, in order that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins upon His own divine soul, that we might receive His imputed righteousness. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share." [5]

So now the former sinner is free. The exchange is complete. No longer does he stand clothed in the filthy rags of his own miserable failures and sins, but he wears the robe of the King of the universe. He is clothed in the garments of Jesus.

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." Isaiah 61:10. Again we read from the pen of God's messenger:

"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." [6]

Truly this is a precious thought. Men entirely without personal merit, men devoid of righteousness because they have always lived in sin and transgression, may, by an act of simple faith, have the very righteousness of Christ attributed to them as though they personally have been perfectly righteous all the time. Their every sin is pardoned, their guilt is removed, and they stand clear and innocent before God. They stand complete and whole in the righteousness of Christ their Savior.

What a wonderful Savior is Jesus! Said He to the Jews, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

After the sinner has been pardoned, he is free from sin, free from condemnation (see Romans 8:1), fully justified, stripped of his filthy garments, and clothed with a white robe of righteousness. He is wholly transformed; he is a new creature.

In the sight of heaven the sinner, defiled and lost, has been saved from past guilt and now stands with Jesus and is given full credit for all of Jesus' earthly victories over sin and His righteous deeds in obeying God's law.

Little wonder that "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."

What a pity that as a people we have not in the past always emphasized this truth as we should. Doubtless it was because some did not understand it, and among them were preachers who failed to grasp its full significance, when it should have been the pith and core of every sermon. For Christ sent us to preach the gospel, for the preaching of the cross is the power of God. (See 1 Corinthians 1: 17, 18)

The Penalty of Death

But one may ask, How can God set a sinner free from his guilt and sin, and impute when he has not paid the penalty of death? Ah! but the sinner has paid the penalty. He paid the penalty of death in his substitute, Jesus. When Jesus expired on the cross He tasted death for every man. He bore our sins to the cross, for the Lord had laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Surely he has borne our grief and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:4, 5.

To illustrate: Here is a thief. He is condemned by the law. His wages are death. He has no power to change the sentence. He is lost. The decree has gone forth that "for his iniquity that he has committed, he shall die for it." Ezekiel 33:13.

But now Christ appears on the scene. In Him the sinner finds hope. He casts himself upon His mercy and pleads for help. He acknowledges Christ to be his only Savior. He confesses his sins to God in the name of Jesus. He is fully repentant. He believes God's promises to save those who believe in Jesus.

Now an astounding thing takes place. The pure and holy Jesus takes upon Himself the full responsibility for the sinner's transgressions. The guilt is now His. He is the sin bearer. It is all laid upon Him, and in exchange He imputes to the sinner His righteousness. A complete exchange is made. Christ assumes, all the sinner's liabilities and gives to the sinner all His own assets.

Thus Christ bears away the sin of the world. Before His crucifixion Christ had voluntarily taken upon Himself the responsibility for the sins of all men, and thus He was able to bear them to the cross and pay the full penalty for them. When, therefore, the sinner surrenders and accepts Christ as his Savior, he and his sins are dated back to the cross, and it is reckoned that when Christ died on

Calvary it was in reality the sinner who died, for Christ was acting only in a vicarious capacity. Therefore, God counts the death of Jesus the full and specific punishment for this repentant sinner's guilt, and it is reckoned that in Christ he has died and is now justified from all things.

"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 they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they can not resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His g-lay to encircle us in the arms of His love, and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

"Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every, sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that

they can not find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of, dirty garments stained and polluted with sin, and, to put the robes of righteousness; He bids them live, and not die." [7]

"For if we have become one with Him by sharing in His death, we shall also be one with Him by sharing in His resurrection. This we know-that our old self was nailed to the cross with Him, in order that our sinful nature might be neutralized, so that we should no longer be the slaves of sin; for he who has died is absolved from his sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." Romans 6:5-8, Weymouth.

Therefore when the sinner accepts Christ as his Savior, and Christ's death to have been the punishment for his sins, God counts that he was actually nailed to the cross in Christ. The penalty then has been paid; so the sinner stands absolved (freed) from his sins.

It is because of this mighty truth that God can be just and yet justify the sinner. It is because God is faithful and just that the sinner is forgiven, for He cannot justly inflict a second time the punishment that has already been borne. God's justice is now enlisted on the sinner's side and He declares him free!

"What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against its? He who did not withhold even His own Son, but gave Him up for all of us, will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" Romans 8:31-33, Weymouth.

Thus the sinner, by coming to Christ and believing in Him for salvation, escapes the penalty for his transgressions through the merits of Jesus' death. Though his sins may have been as scarlet, they become like wool; though they were red like crimson, they are made white as snow. (See Isaiah 1:18) For "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.

It is hard for sinners to realize that it is possible for God actually to forgive their sins and set them free. Men become accustomed to the feeling that they are lost and there is no hope or possibility of changing their situation. The following story told by Dwight L. Moody illustrates how even in this life men are often incredulous when pardon and liberty are freely offered them:

"I was in Ohio a few years ago and preached in the state prison. Eleven hundred convicts sat in front of me. The chaplain said to me, 'Mr. Moody, I want to tell you of a scene which occurred in this room. A few years ago our commissioners went to the governor of the state and got him to promise that he would pardon five men for good behavior. The governor consented with the understanding that the record was to be kept secret and that at the end of six months the five men highest on the roll should receive a pardon, regardless of who or what they were. At the end of six months the prisoners were brought into the chapel. The commissioners came up and the president stood on the platform. Putting his hand in his pocket he brought out some papers and said, "I hold in my hand pardons for five men."

"The chaplain told me that he never witnessed anything like it. Every man was as still as death, many were deadly pale and the suspense was awful; it seemed as if every heart had ceased to beat. The commissioner went on to tell them how they had got the pardon. But the chaplain interrupted him. 'Before you make your speech read out the names."

"Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon and he held it out but none came forward. He said to the governor, 'Are all the prisoners here?' The governor told him they were all there. Then he said again, 'Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon. It is signed by the governor. He is a free man. ' Not one moved. The chaplain told me he looked right down where Reuben was. He had been there nineteen years and men looked around to see the fortunate man who had got his pardon. Finally the chaplain caught his eye and said, 'Reuben, you are the man. ' Reuben turned around and looked behind him to see where Reuben was. The chaplain said the second time, 'Reuben, you are the man,' and the second time he looked around, thinking it must be some other Reuben. The chaplain

had to say it three times, 'Reuben, come and get your pardon.' At last the old man got up and came along down the hall, trembling from head to foot, and when he got the pardon he looked at it and went back to his seat and buried his face in his hands and wept."

It seemed absolutely incredible to him that the pardon was actually meant for him. He had not deserved it. It came as an act of overflowing grace from the governor of the State, who alone had the power and authority to set him free.

Righteousness Witnessed by the Law

Before conversion, the law of God, which is the standard of righteousness, brought only condemnation to the sinner. But after he has received the righteousness of Christ he stands again before the law and now it finds no fault in him. What was formerly an instrument of condemnation to him has now become an instrument of commendation, for "now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." Romans 3:21.

-The law, which once condemned him, now testifies to his innocence. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed him from all sin. (See 1 John 1:7)

What has happened to his past sins? God has cast them "into the depths of the sea. --- He has removed them as far from the sinner "as the east is from the west." He casts them behind His back and remembers them against the sinner no more forever.

His sins are entirely separated from him, and even God, against whose law he had sinned, forgets them. In the righteousness of Christ he stands. Through Him he has been justified. His guilt is gone.

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things." Acts 13:38, 39.

John the revelator saw in vision the vast host of the redeemed as they shall finally stand before the throne of God in His kingdom, and has left us the following graphic description of this glorious scene:

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kingdoms, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou know. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-14.

And all this is absolutely free to the sinner. God not only offers it all as a gift but actually pleads with the sinner to accept it as such. Hear His earnest entreaty: "My son, give me your heart." Proverbs 23:26." Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28." Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

By Faith

But all this can be received only through the exercise of faith." For by grace are you saved through faith." Ephesians 2:8. It is only those who believe on Him who are saved." Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he rewards them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

"Abraham believed God, and this was credited to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6.) But in the case of a man who works, pay is not reckoned as a favor but as something due; whereas in the case of a man who in place of working believes in Him who acquits the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness." Romans 4:3-5. Weymouth.

Again the apostle speaks of "a righteousness of God conditional on faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. No distinction is made; for all alike have sinned, and consciously fall short of the glory of God, but are acquitted freely by His grace through the ransom given in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation available to faith in virtue of His blood. It was to demonstrate God's justice, in view of the condoning by His forbearance of sins previously committed-that is to demonstrate His justice at the present time, that He may be shown to be just Himself, and the justifier of the man who believes in Jesus." Romans 3:21-26, Weymouth.

For says the apostle, "We deem that a man is accounted righteous by faith, apart from fulfillment of the Law." Verse 28, Weymouth." This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power.

"From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for

thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.' The sick man might have said, 'Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.' But no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

"In like manner you are a sinner. You can not atone for your past sins, you can not change your heart, and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins, and give yourself to God. You will to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfil His word to you. If you believe the promise, believe that you are forgiven and cleansed, God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

"Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, 'I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.'" [8]

"The wondering crowd that pressed close about Christ realized no accession of vital power. But when the suffering woman put forth her hand to touch Him, believing that she would be made whole, she felt the healing virtue. So in spiritual things. To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul-hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Savior of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Savior; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.

"After healing the woman, Jesus desired her to acknowledge the blessing she had received. The gifts which the gospel offers, are not to be secured by stealth or enjoyed in secret. So the Lord calls upon us for confession of His goodness. 'You are my witnesses, said the Lord, that I am God.'" [9]

This, then, is righteousness by faith. It is imputed righteousness. It was not ours by right, but it becomes ours by God's grace when we accept it by faith. Only the Christian religion provides such a plan of salvation as that! All other religions leave man to lift himself from the mire of sin by his own efforts. Christ Jesus came down from heaven and lifted us up to God. Therefore, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. What a Savior!

Today the Lord says to us: "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee. I will take your sins and give you My peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove." [10]

O brethren, hear the message of God. Even "your remorse for sin I will remove." What wonderful boundless love! Then we are free, made free by God's Son and therefore free indeed. (See John 8:36) Standing then acquitted as a result of faith, let us enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

The story is told of a man who, while traveling in the great Sahara Desert, found that his supply of water was exhausted. He was overcome by thirst, and was on the verge of utter despair.

As he attempted to struggle on a little further in tile apparently vain hope of relief, he suddenly noticed by the side of the path a sign which said:

"Ten paces to the east, O traveler, you will find the treasure of paradise."

Quickly he took the ten steps, dug into the loose sand, and found a spring of clear water. His life was spared. Just so the treasure of eternal life and heaven is near us -perhaps less than ten paces away. God is not very far from any one of us.

In the light of eternity's joys there is so little to give up. Shall we not just now take the few necessary steps to enable us to drink of the water of life freely? Christ beckons us to come. He entreats us to believe. How can we stay away?

Imparted Righteousness

"If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Romans 5:10. The same God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to the repentant sinner now actually imparts it to the Christian. Christ now desires to identify Himself so closely with the believer that His very own life will be lived in and through the Christian.

Thus we must become saved, and thus we must keep saved, by Christ's life. Let us read Paul's

words, as they appear in Weymouth's New Testament in Modern Speech: "For if while we were hostile we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, the more certainly, after being reconciled, we shall obtain salvation through Christ's life."

A pardoned sinner does not have within himself the power to live a life of righteousness. He is still without strength. He is utterly dependent upon God to keep him saved. Now, as before, he is powerless to obey God's holy law. The fact that his past sin and guilt have been removed does not give him the requisite power to reproduce the life of Christ in his person. The demands of the law are much too high for him to reach. This is why Jesus warned His disciples, "Without me you can do nothing." If left to himself, then, the pardoned sinner must soon lapse right back into sin. By trusting in God he will grow in grace and strength, but he never will be able to walk alone. He is still and, while time lasts, ever shall be utterly dependent upon Christ. Herein lies the most profound truth of the ages, setting forth the astounding fact that Christ, who lived on earth thirty-three and a half years in human flesh in order to work out a righteousness which He could impute to repentant sinners, now offers to take up His abode by faith in the heart of the converted sinner and impart His very life to His justified child, living it once again in human flesh, through him.

Paul calls this a mystery-the mystery of the ages. It is the mystery of godliness." Even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles. Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom. What we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily." Colossians 1:26-29.

"Christ in You the Hope of Glory"

This, then, is the hidden mystery that now stands revealed. This is God's secret plan to save men. It can be understood only by those who experience it. And it can be experienced only by those who accept by faith the presence of the Lord Jesus into the soul. When Christ is in one He lives His life through that one's flesh, and thus His own righteousness becomes a part of one's very life. Thus we are saved entirely by His life.

What marvelous condescension! What infinite love is here revealed! What an astonishing plan by which to save men! It could have originated only in the heart of a God of infinite love and mercy.

God's Promises to the Believer

Let us ponder here a few of God's great and precious promises to the believers, made by Jesus while upon earth." I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:18.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but you know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you." Verses 23, 16, 17.

Thus it is the Holy Spirit that ministers the very life of Jesus to the soul. Christ personally is in heaven, but the divine Comforter is in the world and has been given charge of the church.

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their [the disciples'] interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Savior would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high." [11]

He it is that, in the name of Jesus, dwells in the heart." Know you not," asks the apostle, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own?" 1 Corinthians 6:19.

But the Comforter was to come in the name of Jesus. He was to glorify Christ. He was to speak for Christ, and His presence in the life of the child of God would be equivalent to the very presence of Jesus. Thus Jesus could say to His disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (See John 14:16-26; 16:7-14)

To this agrees the message of Paul when he says: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:17-19.

"We are abiding in Christ by a living faith. He is abiding in our hearts by our individual appropriating of faith. We have the companionship of the divine presence, and as we realize this presence, our thoughts are brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. Our spiritual exercises are in accordance with the vividness of our sense of this companionship. Enoch walked with God in this way; and Christ is dwelling in our hearts by faith when we will consider what He is to us, and what a work He has wrought out for us in the plan of redemption. I want to impress upon your mind that you may have a divine companion with you, if you will, always." [12]

The Results

And what is to be the result of the abiding presence of Christ in the human heart and life? He is to work in us, doing the will of God through us." It is God which works in you." Philippians 2:13. By Christ's living and working in us we shall "be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:19." Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." Verse 20.

He is able to do "exceeding abundantly." We can do nothing, but He is mighty to save. His omnipotence is united with our humanity, and our success in producing righteousness is in accordance with "the power that works in us." Since that power is now Christ, our lives will reflect His virtues and beauty. He is able.

Thus God makes known to us "the riches of the glory of this mystery." It is "Christ in you" Christ working in you this is your hope of glory. (See Colossians 1:27) Continues the apostle:

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily." Colossians 1:28, 29.

Our success, therefore, in attaining to perfection of character is according to who is at work. If we endeavor in our human weakness to produce a life of perfection and obedience, we shall fail. But if Christ is working in us "mightily," we shall succeed. He will make it possible for us to be presented "perfect in Christ."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 1:24. Let us add one more testimony regarding this marvelous experience.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Hebrews 13:20, 21.

Perfection, then, is possible for us. The God who demonstrated His power by bringing Jesus from the dead can also make you perfect-perfect in every good work to do His will. How is this accomplished? It is by Christ working within us. He does within us and through us the things that are well-pleasing in God's sight.

Thus we receive His righteousness. It still does not come by our own works but by Christ's works within us. We are not saved by what we do for God but by what He does for us and through us.

A Transformation

This experience brings an entire transformation of life. We become partakers of the divine nature, and the virtues of Christ take the place of the works of the flesh.

"According as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that bath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the

corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3, 4.

"The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit." [13]

Men may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness; that power is Christ.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Galatians 2:20, 21.

That altogether new life is, therefore, the life of Jesus in the soul. This is putting off “the old man” of human sinfulness and putting on “the new man,” which is Christ and His righteousness. Now the very image of the Creator appears in the life of one who formerly was a sinner but now is a child of God and is under the full control of Christ Jesus. Thus Christ becomes all and in all. We are told that when Jesus lived here in the flesh He did not yield to temptation “even by a thought.” He did not consent to sin. So it may be with us.

“Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.” [14] And again we read:

“ ‘I am the Vine; you are the branches,’ Christ said to His disciples. Though He was about to be removed from them, their spiritual union with Him was to be unchanged. The connection of the branch with the vine, He said, represents the relation you are to sustain to Me. The scion is engrafted into the living vine, and fiber by fiber, vein by vein, it grows into the vine-stock. The life of the vine becomes the life of the branch. So the soul dead in trespasses and sins receives life through connection with Christ. By faith in Him as a personal Savior the union is formed. The sinner unites his weakness to Christ’s strength, his emptiness to Christ’s fullness, his frailty to Christ’s enduring might. Then he has the mind of Christ. The humanity of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. Thus through the agency of the Holy Spirit man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is accepted in the Beloved.

“This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can you, except you abide in me.” [15]

This is deliverance. And to this agree the words of Paul when he said, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.” Romans 6:14. The sinner is under the condemnation of the law, whereas the believing Christian is in harmony with the law and is therefore under grace. And the promise of God goes further. We are assured that “whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” 1 John 3:9.

That “seed” is Christ.” He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Galatians 3:16. So long as Christ remains in full control, sin is not committed, since He is not a sinner.

“When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see, creates a new being in the image of God.” [16]

Thus Jesus is able to save to the uttermost. (See Hebrews 7:25) With Christ in control there is victory, for God “gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57. We are “kept by the power of God through faith.” 1 Peter 1:5.

The Fruits of Righteousness

What, then, will be the fruit of Christ’s righteousness when it is imparted to our lives by His indwelling presence through His Holy Spirit?

We reply, It will be perfect conformity to the law and will of God. Through Christ it has become possible for the righteousness of the law to be “fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4.

“We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith. You know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abides in him sins not; whosoever sins has not seen him, neither known him. Here is the true test. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law.” [17]

The Christian must, of course, seek to know the full will of God. Willing ignorance is no excuse for transgression. He must also desire in his heart to be fully conformed to Christ's image and that his life be brought into harmony with the expressed will of God in every particular. But his dependence for bringing this about must be in the power of Christ working in him-not in himself.

For example, as a result of studying the Word of God some new ray of light shines forth. Some duty is revealed that had not been seen or understood before. What now shall be the attitude of the Christian toward this new revelation of God's will?

Clearly it is his duty to walk in the light, but he should not undertake this in his own strength. He should come to God in prayer and declare his desire to follow the light by obeying every command of God but confess his inability to do so alone. Then he should appeal for the Spirit of God to impart to him the necessary power. Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is able to make one perfect in every good work to do His will, provided one seeks His help and divine strength.

"Without me you can do nothing" is as true today as when Christ announced this great truth, but it is also true of us today, as it was of Paul, that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Our attitude toward every new ray of light from the Word should be, "Yes, I believe; yes, I must obey. My life must be in all things like His. Lord, make me so. Enable me to walk in this new light, to keep this additional truth, and to render perfect obedience." Then the Christian, trusting in the power of Christ, should immediately make the effort to obey.

When Jesus bade the paralytic walk, he, believing in Christ's power, stretched forth his legs and began to walk. He willed to walk, he had appealed to Christ for help, and Christ had said, "Take up thy bed, and walk." For thirty eight years he had not walked, but now he believed that Christ had enabled him to do what before had been impossible. When, therefore, he made the effort, Christ supplied the needed strength, and he walked. Christ had made him whole.

"All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart-work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us." [18]

"The power of evil is so identified with human nature that no man can overcome except by union with Christ. Through this union we receive moral and spiritual power. If we have the Spirit of Christ, we shall bring forth the fruit of righteousness." [19]

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Galatians 5:16. Why? Because "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Verses 22-24.

"You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Matthew 7:16-18.

The changing of the tree produces a change of fruit. The old tree, the sinner, could not produce commandment keeping because of his great weakness. Christ, the new tree, living His life in the believing saint, by His great power can obey every command of God to perfection, and thereby He produces in us the beautiful fruits of righteousness. Thus "their righteousness is of me, said the Lord," and it is a perfect righteousness. (See Isaiah 54:17.)

"By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah." [20]

This will not lead to Pharisaism or a holier-than-thou attitude on the part of the receiver. Far from it." The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power." [21]

Paul was never nearer to Christ than when he was led to exclaim that he was chief of sinners. It is not in our perfection that we are to trust but in the perfection of Jesus. His life and nature are to be imparted to us so that we stand clothed in His righteousness rather than in our own filthy rags.

“Where then is there room for boasting? It is shut out.” Romans 3:27, Weymouth.” For it is by grace that you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves. It is God’s gift, and is not on the ground of merit-so that it may be impossible for any one to boast.” Ephesians 2:8, 9, Weymouth.

Why Israel Failed

It was on this very point that the Jewish nation stumbled and failed. They saw the righteousness that was demanded by the law given to them at Mount Sinai, and they sought to attain to it. Very meticulous were they in trying to obey to the very letter. In fact, they often went beyond the law’s requirements and busied themselves in a round of ceremonies that became irksome and a real yoke of bondage.

Though they were sinful, they did not realize it, and at Mount Sinai they said to Moses, “All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.” This was a fateful promise. Of them the apostle Paul said:

“They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:2,3.

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed ‘not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, bath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believes on him shall not be ashamed.” Romans 9:30-33.

Because they sought it not by faith, they failed. They stumbled at Christ, the “stumbling stone.” Had they received Him into their hearts, He would have strengthened them and produced acceptable commandment keeping in their lives, but they rejected Him and set about the task of producing a righteousness of their own. This was not acceptable to God, and He was forced to reject them as a nation. In rejecting Christ they had rejected salvation.

What a tragedy that men so little realize their utter dependence upon Christ! How pitiful to see so many trying to justify themselves before God! Recently there appeared in a popular magazine an article from a noted Jewish rabbi in which he set forth the three basic tenets of the Jewish faith. He listed these as:

1. The love of learning.
2. The worship of God.
3. Good deeds.

He further stated that Jews reject the principle of incarnation-God becoming flesh. God is purely spiritual to them.” Judaism,” he declared, “also rejects the principle of vicarious atonement-the idea of salvation through Christ. We believe that every man is responsible for his own salvation; that no one can serve as an intermediary between God and man even in a symbolic sense.”

Poor deluded humanity! Only one way of escape from sin and eternal death is available, and that they will not accept! So it may be with us.

“Except your righteousness,” said Jesus, “shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:20. Only faith righteousness can assure us entrance through the pearly gates of the Holy City.

“The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.” [22]

The first was worked out for us. The second is worked out in us.

“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 the evil one have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ’s righteousness.” [23]

“When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ, becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A

soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies, is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome.” [24]

“When Christ is in the heart it will be so softened and subdued by love for God and man that fretting, faultfinding, and contention will not exist there. The religion of Christ in the heart will gain for its possessor a complete victory over those passions that are seeking for the mastery.” [25]

Thus the life of Christ’s “trusting disciple will be like His, a series of uninterrupted victories, not seen to be such here, but recognized as such in the great hereafter.” [26]

“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retains not his anger for ever, because he delights in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” Micah 7:18, 19.

“In ignorance I thought (In silly fear, and foolishness and dread) God does remember all the sins I wrought,

And does forget how needy is my lot,

But lo, instead, When I His message read, I found it was my needs on which He thought, My sins that He,

because of Christ, forgot.”

What a salvation! Our iniquities pardoned and subdued, our sins cast into the depths of the sea, and the righteousness of Christ shining forth from the life. No Wonder the angel announced to Joseph, “Thou shall call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16. Brethren, can it be that any here have not yet tasted the sweets of the imparted righteousness of Christ? Is it possible that any of us are still living under the old covenant, trying to “do and live” instead of daily trusting Jesus to do for and in us so that we may live?

Let us remember that this blessing comes only by faith.” For by grace are you saved through faith.” Faith is the connecting link that puts one in contact with Christ Jesus. Jesus saves. If your faith is in Him, it is a saving faith, but if it is in your own merit or personal attainment, you are lost.

Does someone say, “I see this great truth concerning imparted righteousness, and I long for it in my heart, but my faith is too small”? I answer, No, you are wrong. It is not a big faith that you need. Yours is big enough to put you in touch with Christ, if you will only use it. God has given to every man a measure of faith, sufficiently great to bring him into contact with the power of omnipotence.

True, your faith may be only as a grain of mustard seed, but it will grow by exercise. Do not wait for a stronger faith to claim the righteousness of Christ. Do it now. It is yours if you reach up the hand of faith and grasp it.

Acceptance of the Righteousness of Christ

“After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:1-4.

Here is a description of God’s final and mightiest work upon earth. The work of the other angel of Revelation 18 joins the work of the third angel of Revelation 14, causing the message to swell into a loud cry. The earth will be lightened with his glory. He will have great power. He is to cry “mightily with a strong voice” that will resound through out the nations. Under his voice the people of God will be called to throw off the sins of Babylon and be prepared to stand through the plagues.

During the work of this angel, the mighty power of God will rest upon the church. It will truly arise and shine among the nations, and will relay to men the most powerful appeal to turn from sin to God that has ever emanated from the throne. This will bring the final cleavage between those who are to be saved and those who are to be lost.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It is the promised baptism of God's power without measure. It will be as much greater than Pentecost as the times demand a more potent message.

What Will Bring the Latter Rain?

But what will bring the latter rain in its fullness? When will the power of the angel of Revelation 18 be seen? I hear many answers. People are writing to me every few days telling me what the church must do to receive the fullness of the Spirit's power. A number have said that we should place greater emphasis on the health phase of our message, because that is the point in which we are lacking. And I am sure this should be done.

Others say the hindering cause is the spirit of worldliness, pride, and vanity in the church today. And no doubt there is much truth in this. Some point to the spirit of rivalry, criticism, and faultfinding among God's people, and I am sure this is definitely a hindrance to the in filling of the Spirit of God.

And there have been still other suggestions as to what should be done to prepare the church for the greatly needed and desired latter rain. But I am sure that reformation on any or all of these points would not bring the promised blessing. Such a reformation is greatly needed. But merely trying to correct these things would, I believe, be like trying to kill a noxious tree by plucking off some of its leaves or fruit. It would be an attempt at reformation without real revival.

The work has to go much deeper. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree. The Holy Spirit will come in the fullness of power when the church of God lays hold by faith of the righteousness of Christ as a living, personal experience." This message [the loud cry] seemed to be an addition to the third message, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel's message in 1844." [27]

No external work of ours will bring this mighty heavenly boon. We have been too long trying to establish our own righteousness and condition ourselves for this promised blessing. Many of God's people today are like the Jews of Christ's time, ignorant of the righteousness of God. The Jews did not recognize any need of Christ or His righteousness. Were they not the literal descendants of Abraham, and did they not strictly keep the 613 requirements of the Talmud? What more could be needed? They rejected Jesus' offer to free them from the bondage of sin. They trusted explicitly in their own righteousness.

So now, many trust in their own personal efforts to reach the required state of perfection in order to receive the gift of the Spirit, but in such effort they accomplish little. God must do a work for us in the heart. He must produce His righteousness in our lives and thus bring to us complete deliverance from our weaknesses and failures. Many who have been in the church for years have not yet learned the difference between trying to save themselves and letting God save them through the operation of Christ dwelling in the heart.

In 1889, the year after the memorable Minneapolis Conference, the messenger of God wrote: "There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject [justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ] that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare." [28] On this subject she also wrote:

"Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin." [29]

"There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness." [30]

"There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character, and secure salvation. Their hearts are not moved by any deep sense of the love of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing." [31]

"The law requires righteousness, a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give.

He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus." [32]

"When Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten. Love to Christ will be the spring of action. Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With earnest desire they yield all. A profession of Christ without this deep love, is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery." [33]

Many have not as yet learned the difference between personal effort to do God's will and yielding the heart and life to the full control of Christ, trusting Him to reproduce His righteousness in them.

"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." [34]

Our Great Need

At this very moment, then, the outstanding need of the church is to lay fast hold of the righteousness of Christ. There is no other righteousness. What is the chaff to the wheat?

This righteousness will not come as a result of our piling up a record of good deeds or changing this or that habit or practice.

It will come by receiving Christ in the fullness of His power into our very heart of hearts and permitting Him to bring our entire life into conformity to God's will. This, and this alone, will bring the abundance of the Spirit's power upon the church in the form of the latter rain. This will bring the finishing of the work of God upon the earth, since it will prepare the way for the mighty cry of the angel of Revelation 18:1-4.

After the session of the General Conference in Minneapolis, already referred to, the Lord's messenger, writing of that experience, said: "The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth." [35]

At that meeting strong messages were given by some of the ministers on Justification by Faith-and "The Righteousness of Christ." It was there emphasized that the one great need of the church and of its individual members was to accept this righteousness by simple faith and appropriate it to the heart and life.

It was a clarion call to a closer fellowship with Christ and a richer, fuller experience in the things of God. It was a call to sanctification and holiness through the power of the indwelling Christ. Some, with joy, accepted the great truth of justification by faith and opened their hearts for the abiding presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit. With rejoicing they claimed by faith the righteousness of God as a glorious substitute for their own weaknesses and failures.

But not all entered in. Some doubted the message and some even opposed it. This division caused a degree of confusion and darkness and prevented the fullness of blessing from coming to the church at that time. Those, however, who did lay hold of this new experience went back to the churches with the message of complete salvation through the righteousness of Christ, and in the Review and Herald of March 5, 1889, the year following, Mrs. White reported that great revivals were taking place wherever the message was presented.

This Is the Third Angel's Message

A question arose in the minds of some as to the relation of the message of righteousness by faith, as presented at the 1888 Conference, to the preaching of the third angel's message of Revelation 14. They wrote to Mrs. White about this. In her reply she said:

"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." [36]

The truthfulness of that statement is evident. The burden of Revelation 14 is the preaching of "the everlasting gospel." That is what the three angels are to proclaim to the nations, kingdoms, and tongues of earth.

True, the gospel here is clothed in a new setting. A new urgency is given to the importance of men everywhere receiving it. That urgency is set forth in the cry, "The hour of his judgment is come." Time is short, probation is closing, Jesus is coming to reap earth's harvest. Therefore men must hasten to accept the gospel, lest they be too late.

But it is "the everlasting gospel" the good news concerning what Christ has done and still desires to do for men. It points the way of salvation through His merits alone. It is the same message of righteousness through Christ as was preached by Jesus, Peter, Paul, and all God's ministers since sin came into the world.

Besides the gospel of Christ there is no other means of salvation. Paul points out that to the Jew and to the Greek the plan is the same. Everyone that believes must believe in the same Christ." I am not ashamed," declares the apostle, "of the gospel of Christ: for it is the

power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:16,17.

Here Paul places emphasis upon the fact that in the gospel “is the righteousness of God revealed.” -Since the threefold message of Revelation 14 is a gospel message, bringing Christ to the nations, the doctrine of justification by faith and righteousness through Christ is the heart and essence of that message.

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” [37]

Brethren, here is something of importance to the church.” The Lord sent a most precious message to His people.” When? In 1888 at the General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was a message of justification through faith. The people were urged to receive the righteousness of Christ. This is the third angel’s message which is to be proclaimed to the world. Its preaching will be attended by the power of the Holy Spirit in large measure.

In the light of these stirring statements we must expect that this mighty message of righteousness by faith, which came so definitely to the church in 1888, will become dominant in the personal experience of the leaders and members of the remnant church and in their preaching as the message swells to a loud cry. This is already many years overdue. In 1888 the loud cry had already begun. It should have been finished long since. We have been marking time. Does someone ask why? We have the answer: “The doctrine of justification by faith has been lost sight of by many who have professed to believe the third angel’s message.” [38]

And many are still forgetting. Sixty-four years after this message of God’s righteousness came to us we are still very quiet about it. Neither in our personal experience nor in our preaching do we give this doctrine much prominence, and yet we should be shouting it from the housetops. We should be rejoicing in it as a glorious reality in our own souls. This is what God expects, and this is what must be before His work can be finished in power.

In giving emphasis to the great urgency of this matter, Ellen G. White, in 1888, sent the following message to the churches: “Spiritual death has come upon the people that should be manifesting life and zeal, purity and consecration, by the most earnest devotion to the cause of truth. The facts concerning the real condition of the professed people of God, speak more loudly than their profession, and make it evident that some power has cut the cable that anchored them to the Eternal Rock, and that they are drifting away to sea, without chart or compass.” [39]

Brethren, here is a terrible warning! Some power has cut the cable that anchors to the eternal Rock. Through attempting to reach a standard of righteousness by personal effort we have neglected to lay hold, by faith, on the righteousness of Christ.

Modernism has largely swept away the foundation of righteousness by faith in Christ and has left the Christian churches without an anchor. God forbid that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should drift with the rest. Someone must cast out an anchor that will hold. Who should it be but the remnant church that is preaching the soon coming of Jesus?

Brethren, the way to the finishing of God’s work is through the power of Christ’s righteousness.

The reception of this righteousness will bring the baptism of power and the loud cry of the message of the third angel. And this alone will cure the feebleness of the Laodicean church. This is the everlasting gospel that must be preached to the nations. We must arise now and in the strength of God proclaim it to the world. The night is falling. We dare delay no longer.

Laodicea’s Sickness

In His message to the church of Laodicea, God charges it with sickness. It boasts of its spiritual health, but God declares it to be sick almost unto death. Let us look again at His earnest entreaty to His remnant people:

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things said the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou says, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knows not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou may be rich. And white raiment, that thou may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do

not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that thou may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:14-20.

"I know thy works." What is wrong with their works? They are self-righteous. They boast of riches. They are increased with goods. They have a perfect system of truth. They have a marvelous organization. They have the marks of the remnant church. They excel in giving to advance the cause of truth. What more could be needed? That is as it appears to them.

But when God places His evaluation on the condition of the church He declares its members to be wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. And their greatest peril is in the fact that they are ignorant of their true condition." And knows not." They are contented, self-assured, and satisfied at the very time when they are in gravest danger of being spewed out of the mouth of God.

True, they have works. They are eager, energetic, and faithful in the work of the church, but the works of many are works of self-righteousness. They are destitute of real righteousness-the righteousness of Christ.

They need gold tried in the fire-purity of character. They need the "white raiment" of Christ's righteousness. They need eye salve-heavenly wisdom and understanding. Brethren, we claim to be the church of Laodicea. If this is true, then this is God's message to us here and now, even while we are in this great Bible Conference. It comes fresh today to each worker, to each individual believer.

"Behold," says Jesus, "I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice I will come in." Verse 20. This is what we need. We need Christ inside, not standing outside knocking. We need the things He can bring into our lives. We need the Holy Ghost, who is waiting to fill the yielded heart with the fullness of power.

"If any man hear my voice [if your heart hears His call], and open the door, I will come in." It is just as simple as that. Brother, will you be that man? Will you do it now as you sit there in your seat? He stands there now. He pleads, oh, so earnestly. He desires to bring to you the full riches of His power, grace, and glory. But you must open the door. You must ask Him in. He awaits only your invitation. Even now He reaches for the hand of faith in you, bidding it lay fast hold on the righteousness of God. He wants to come in now.

And you who were not privileged to attend this Bible Conference, but who are reading this report, the message is also to you. To your heart also Jesus is calling. Will not you also respond to His loving entreaty and open your heart's door to Him, that He may clothe you with the righteousness of God?

This call is to all the church, but especially to God's ministers. This fact was set forth by David when he said, "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy." Psalm 132:9.

Of all people in the world, God's priests should be clothed with Christ's righteousness. When they are, there will be great rejoicing in the church. The saints will shout for joy and will follow the example of their spiritual leaders.

"All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness." [40]

Brethren, we must personally experience this mighty blessing before we can take it to our churches. We must believe in it. We must enter into its blessedness. Then we must take it to our conference workers' meetings and enlist our workers' cooperation in taking it to our people in all the churches. We must encourage our evangelists to preach it to the people. The cry of Christ's saving grace and power must be sounded to the ends of the earth.

Mighty miracles of grace will follow. Revival will come to our churches. The baptism of the Holy Spirit will come upon God's people in the fullness of power, and the work will be finished." For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:28.

"You will meet with those who will say, 'You are too much excited over this 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." [41]

Heaven Is Ready

“I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mightily, with a strong voice. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel’s message, as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to fearlessly proclaim the third angel’s message.” [42]

So this is God’s way and this is His plan for His church. It is for us now to act. His call has been long and loud. He has been long-suffering for these years. He has waited for us to get ready to receive the fullness of His blessing and power. Now the decision rests with us.

God’s message through the prophet Hosea is, “sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hosea 10: 12.

To a large degree the church failed to build on the foundation laid at the 1888 General Conference. Much has been lost as a result. We are years behind where we should have been in spiritual growth. Long ere this we should have been in the Promised Land.

But the message of righteousness by faith given in the 1888 Conference has been repeated here. Practically every speaker from the first day onward has laid great stress upon this all-important doctrine, and there was no prearranged plan that he should do so. It was spontaneous on the part of the speakers. No doubt they were impelled by the Spirit of God to do so. Truly this one subject has, in this conference “swallowed up every other.”

And this great truth has been given here in this 1952 Bible Conference with far greater power than it was given in the 1888 Conference because those who have spoken here have had the advantage of much added light shining forth from hundreds of pronouncements on this subject in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy which those who spoke back there did not have.

The light of justification and righteousness by faith shines upon us today more clearly than it ever shone before upon any people.

No longer will the question be, “What was the attitude of our workers and people toward the message of righteousness by faith that was given in 1888? What did they do about it?” From now on the great question must be, “What did we do with the light on righteousness by faith as proclaimed in the 1952 Bible Conference?” Brethren, what shall be our response?

The reception of the righteousness of Christ by faith will bring the Holy Ghost down from heaven. This will result in the very foundations of the world being shaken by the preaching of the Advent message.

We are engaged in an effort to double our church membership in a four-year period from January 1, 1950, to December 31, 1953. Some have reckoned such a goal to be preposterous. But is it? When the first Pentecost came the church doubled its numbers in one day.

The reception of the righteousness of Christ by the church today will bring the second Pentecost. Revelation 18:1-3 will be fulfilled. Thousands will be converted in a day as the message of salvation through Christ swells to a loud and mighty cry. With such power in the message, who shall say that a four-year period is too short a time in which to double the number of those who are brought into the church of God?

This question of receiving the righteousness of Christ in its fullness is therefore the most important consideration before the church today. It is the most important consideration before each one of us. Who, then, are there among us who will without further delay reach out the hand of faith and grasp this mighty gift: It is ours for the asking and taking if we only believe.

When this takes place the very skies will pour down righteousness and the earth will open up and cause righteousness and salvation to spring up together. (See Isaiah 45:8) “But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.” Amos 5:24.

There are leaders here from all our world divisions. Brethren, it is within your power to carry this message of justification and righteousness by faith back to the very ends of the earth. You can instruct every Seventh-day Adventist worker in this doctrine. You can encourage the brethren, in turn, to set it before the churches. You can sound throughout your divisions an appeal for our people everywhere to lay hold of this mighty experience.

Let us arise and shine in the glory of the righteousness of our God.” If the people receive it fully, his [Satan’s] power will be broken.” [43]

23. The Holy Spirit And The Latter Rain

LOUIS K. DICKSON

The Holy Spirit

The church has now reached the time when all uncertainty concerning the Holy Spirit and His ministry must be dissipated. This is in a very real sense the time when in the purposes of God this mighty third person of the Godhead must be known, understood, and possessed in all His fullness. Nothing less than this will measure up to the divine plan for the remnant church.

We should then move into the study of this great subject with eagerness, confidence, and perfect devotion, that we may intelligently seek with all our hearts the fulfillment of the promises God has made to us who are sincere followers of truth and righteousness.

Personality of the Holy Spirit

No attempt to understand the Holy Spirit's ministry would be logical or successful without first of all discovering the revealed truth concerning His personality and relationship to the Triune Godhead. We are forced to humbly acknowledge our inability to exhaustively understand the personality of the Holy Spirit because of the fact that we are finite and He is infinite, we are human and He is divine. Our comprehension is faulty and our understanding is darkened by sin and its degenerating results, and thus we are confined to what divine revelation has seen fit to disclose to us concerning the personality of this great person, the Holy Ghost.

Human terms are limited to human understanding and comprehension, and therefore any description of the Holy Spirit in finite terms must of necessity fall short of a perfect and conclusive description. Clear definition, however, can be given the personality of this great and holy being by remaining within the realm of what we may understand as human beings. Certain capacities constitute proof of personality, such as being vexed (Isaiah 63: 10), grieved (Ephesians 4:30), pleased (Acts 15:28), and being able to speak (Matthew 10:20; Acts 13:2; 1 Timothy 4: 1), hear (John 16:13), convict (John 16:8), impart (Romans 5:5), transform (2 Corinthians 3:18), teach (John 14:26), guide (John 16:13),

console (Acts 9:31), testify (John 15:26), and bestow spiritual gifts severally to every man according to His own will (1 Corinthians 12:11)--all of which are mentioned in the Bible in relationship to the Holy Spirit. A person is a being who can be heard, trusted, followed, turned away from, and influenced by. These foregoing capabilities on the part of the Holy Spirit prove He is a personal being rather than merely a powerful influence, and should be conclusive evidence to our minds.

The nature of the Holy Spirit cannot be comprehended or known fully by man, yet the fact of His personality is made clear by the inspired writers, and His ministry to man is clearly made known. This ministry includes testifying of Christ (John 15:26), guiding the church (John 16:13), bringing to memory the words of Christ (John 14:26), instructing in the truth (John 14:26), giving power in prayer (Romans 8:26), revealing the future (John 16:13), and giving power for witnessing and winning souls to God (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit is spoken of under the pronoun "he" about twenty times, the pronoun "him" three times, and the pronoun "whom" three times. Most of these expressions are found in John 14, 15, 16. The name "Comforter," along with the before-mentioned pronouns, is used in connection with the Holy Spirit and is in every case in the masculine form. Again, Jesus' own words concerning Himself made plain the fact that the Holy Spirit is a real being when He said:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18, 19.

To the disciples He said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26. And again He told them, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me." John 15:26. In none of the utterances of Jesus does He imply that the Spirit is merely an influence.

The deity of the Holy Spirit is established by both the Old and the New Testament. He is called by attributes that can only refer to Deity alone. In Hebrews 9:14 He is called the "eternal Spirit"; in 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11 He is credited with the attribute of omniscience; in Acts 1:8 with omnipotence; and in Psalms 139:7, 12 with omnipresence.

The Holy Spirit is linked with acts of creation in Genesis 1:2 and Psalms 104:30; with the power to give life in Luke 1:35 and Matthew 1:18. With miracle-working power in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; with resurrection power in Romans 8: 11; with the new birth in Titus 3:5 and John 3:5; with inspiration in 2 Peter 1:20, 21; and with the work of sanctification in 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

He is called by many different names, among which are the Spirit of adoption- (Romans 8:15); “the Spirit of life” (Romans 8:2, 9).” The Spirit of grace” (Hebrews 10:29); “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17); the “Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1: 13); “the spirit of wisdom” (Isaiah 11:2); “the spirit of knowledge” (Isaiah 11: 2).

Other names are given to this mighty third person of the Godhead; namely, “the eternal Spirit” (Hebrews 9:14), “the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 1: 18), “the Spirit of God” (Romans 8:9), “the Spirit of the living God” (2 Corinthians 3:3), the “Comforter” (John 14:16), the “Paraclete” (John 14:16, Douay), “the Spirit of Christ” (1 Peter 1:11), “the Spirit of his Son” (Galatians 4:6), “the Spirit of Jesus Christ-(Philippians 1: 19).

Certain symbols are used to denote the Holy Spirit, such as water (John 7:37-39), wind (Acts 2:2), fire (Acts 2:3), a dove (John 1:32), oil (Acts 10:38; Hebrews 1:9), a seal (Ephesians 1:13), “the earnest of our inheritance” (Ephesians 1:14), and in Testimonies, volume 4, page 319, the Spirit is likened to light, salt, and leaven.

To try by human reasoning to go further than the declarations of the Divine Word and the Spirit of prophecy is a mistake, and we shall not attempt to indulge therein. The messenger of the Lord has said:

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them; but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” [1]

The Lord has revealed the fact that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. [2] This third person of the Godhead exerts His influence upon the human soul.

“The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The imparting of the Spirit is the imparting of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ.” [3]

The two foregoing quotations from the Spirit of prophecy are particularly interesting because of the fact that the Lord reveals both the thought of personality and the thought of influence. In other words, the Holy Spirit is a divine person, a being, whose influence is mighty and enters into the very lives of Christians. We must never use our limited understanding to describe the personality of the Holy Spirit. The following from the pen of inspiration reveals all we need to know of His divine nature:

“The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Savior would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.” [4]

All the Biblical writers who treat upon the Holy Spirit, whether casually, partially, or fully, invariably do so by using terms and forms of expression that do not leave one in doubt that they themselves believed in the personality of the Holy Ghost. How often they spoke of Him in the same terms they used in speaking of the Father or the Son. Insofar as language can escape obscurity, the Scriptures decisively reveal the fact that the third person of the Godhead is a distinct person and that their writers definitely designed to convey that thought.

It should be noted before going further with this study that the Holy Spirit is called the “Comforter” four times in the Authorized Version of the Scriptures. The original word *paraklitos*, appears five times and is translated four times “Comforter- and once “advocate.” The various translations give either “Comforter” or “advocate,” but the Douay Bible gives “paraclete,” as does also the margin of the Revised Version. Paraclete is the Anglicized form of the Greek word *paraklitos*, meaning one called to the aid of another.

One noted writer has this to say of the word Paraclete: “This is the title of a Person. It is indeed one of the incommunicable, non translated words of Scripture. Neither Comforter nor Advocate fully expresses its meaning. Both, and even something beyond, would be required to do this. Much would have been gained if no attempt had been made at translation, the word itself becoming the most familiar name of the Spirit.” [5]

Dispensation of the Holy Spirit

Just as in the fullness of time the Savior of men appeared, so in a definite period marked out the special working of the Holy Spirit will be manifested. According to the messenger of the Lord we are now in that period.” The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.” [6] The disciples were blessed during His ministry by Christ’s own

presence and guidance. Just so are we blessed, since Pentecost, by the personal presence and direction of the third person of the Godhead.

Prior to Pentecost He was present upon different occasions, but His fullness of presence was temporary and not constant. He came upon individuals upon certain occasions with great and unusual power in order that they might accomplish God's stated purposes. Thus He blessed Samson with strength far beyond any natural development. (Judges 14:6) He caused men to become messengers of God, as, for instance, Joshua (Numbers 27:18), Gideon (Judges 6:34), Saul (1 Samuel 10:10), and David (1 Samuel 16:13). Upon this point we read from the messenger of the Lord:

"During the patriarchal age, the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fullness. Now, in obedience to the word of the Savior, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people." [7]

Thus the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times worked upon men and came upon them, but it was left to later times for Him to dwell in and abide with men, as He did with the apostles and others in later than Pentecostal times. The personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is an experience given to the church in what is generally called the Christian dispensation. From Pentecost on to the Second Advent of Christ this precious gift of the Spirit is available to the whole church rather than to a few chosen individuals designated for a definite and single act for God." He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 3:11) is a promise that was given for a specific dispensation and has never been withdrawn.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was definitely withheld during the three and a half years of Christ's earthly ministry." The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:39.

This baptism was foretold by John the Baptist, but was not received until the specified time, when the disciples, according to Christ's own direction, tarried in Jerusalem following His resurrection, waiting for the fulfillment of His word. Therefore, we see that there was a specified time, or dispensation, of the Holy Spirit, and that period is still with the church today. Not all have received this baptism, but all have the privilege of receiving it by faith through prayer. Paul makes this clear when he says:

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:13, 14.

The Promise of the Spirit

When the apostle Paul spoke of "the promise of the Spirit through faith" he doubtless was referring specifically to those promises Jesus gave to His disciples just prior to His humiliation. He was fully convinced that the promises made to Abraham could never be fully realized except by and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Christ promised His disciples that He would pray to the Father, and He would send "another Comforter,- who would remain with them forever. (John 14:16; see also John 15:26; 16:13, 14) In verses seventeen and eighteen of chapter 14 it is made plain that His promise to be with them "even unto the end of the world" was to be fulfilled by the presence of the Comforter, who would come to the world as the representative of Christ. It was because of this that Paul prayed in behalf of every believer "that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Ephesians 3:16, 17.

"Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter. Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them." [8]

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," says Paul in Ephesians 3:17.

"The Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul." [9]

"On the day of Pentecost the promised Comforter descended, and the power from on high was given, and the souls of the believers thrilled with the conscious presence of their ascended Lord." [10]

It is significant that although the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is the personal representative of Christ, yet He acts with full authority of the Father and the Son, He exercises the fullness of the power of the Trinity. Note the following words from the messenger of the Lord concerning the spiritual battle in which His earthly servants are engaged:

“They are to contend with supernatural forces, but they are assured of supernatural help. All the intelligence of heaven are in this army. And more than angels are in the ranks. The Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord’s host, comes down to direct the battle.” [11]

Again we read: “The Comforter is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead.” [12]

“Evil had been accumulating for centuries, and could only be restrained and resisted by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.” [13]

The need for the coming of the Spirit to the church can best be seen by noticing some of the results that followed this great outpouring in the days of the apostles. First of all, the descent of the Holy Spirit gave great effectiveness to the witnessing of the apostles (Acts 1: 7, 8); it gave a holy boldness to the believers, such as had never before been seen among men (Acts 2:14; 4:13,31). It converted many souls - at one time three thousand (Acts 2:41), and at another time about five thousand (Acts 4:4). It drew multitudes (Acts 5:14; 6:7) according to Acts 14:1 “a great multitude,” according to Acts 11:21 “a great number” - churches increased rapidly (Acts 16:5). The word of God grew mightily (Acts 19:20); a great company of priests came to Christ (Acts 6:7).

The Ministry of the Spirit

The ministry of the Spirit is many fold; in fact, it would be impossible to exhaust the subject by any human effort. Perhaps the simplest analysis of the Spirit’s ministry for man is stated by three words; namely, regenerating (Titus 3:5), indwelling (Ephesians 3:17), equipping (Acts 1:8). All that is revealed of the mission and ministry of the third person of the Godhead will naturally fall somewhere under these three classifications. Thus Paul’s statement is made plain when he says:

“Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. And he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:26, 27.

Through the ministry of the Spirit redemption is efficacious to man.” Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and you see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” John 16:7-11.

While Christ was here among men He could only by an external presence and verbal counsel communicate with them. This could be done only to a comparative few at any one time and in any one territory or city for a few years, until He was offered up as an offering for sin. But God’s presence by the Spirit could dwell in and remain with His followers. Through the Spirit He could abide with them forever, have sweet communion and fellowship with them; through them do mighty deeds and spread forth the gospel in all lands and to all peoples. Through the Holy Spirit He could be infinitely nearer than even when He walked and talked with men.

“Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter, of whom Christ had said, He ‘shall be in you.’ And He had further said, ‘It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.’ Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them. The light, and love, and power of the indwelling Christ shone out through them, so that men, beholding, ‘Marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.’ [14]

By the indwelling Spirit, God comes into full possession of the human soul. His power is received by the believer as fully as though he were the only individual in God’s universe who has access to that power. Thus it is made possible for a greater Power to dominate the heart and life of man; he is made partaker of the divine nature, and abides in Christ, with sweet communion unbroken.

“The work of the Holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.” [15]

The expression “in Christ,” which occurs frequently in the New Testament, is significant, for it not only signifies an experience of a normal Christian life but involves an indwelling Christ.

“The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul. If it is welcomed as an honored guest, those who receive it will be made complete in Christ. The good work begun will be finished; the holy thoughts, heavenly affections, and Christ like actions will take the place of impure thoughts, perverse sentiments, and rebellious acts.” [16]

A Regenerating Agent

The Holy Spirit ministers to the human heart as a regenerating agent and helps our infirmities and weaknesses, which have caused us to sin. (Romans 8:26, 27)

“The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this Satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” [17]

The first work of the Holy Spirit on the human heart is that of a convinces of sin.” And when he is come, he will reprove [“convince,” margin] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 16:8. But His work does not end when He has convinced the soul of these things.

“God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God.” [18]

Thus are fulfilled the words of the apostle: “But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 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.” Titus 3:4, 5.

Again we read: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Through the Spirit’s ministry the very attributes of the character of Christ come into the life of the believer.” Hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Romans 5:5. On this point Ellen G. White has stated:

“God’s law is fulfilled only as men love Him with heart, mind, soul, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. It is the manifestation of this love that brings glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men. The Lord is glorified when the great end of His law is attained. It is the work of the Holy Spirit from age to age to impart love to human hearts, for love is the living principle of brotherhood.” [19]

The servant of the Lord has spoken again on this point as follows: “Unless you receive the Holy Spirit, you cannot have the love of God in the soul; but through a living connection with Christ, we are inspired with love and zeal and earnestness.” [20]

The advancement so needful in a successful Christian life is all worked out through this wonderful agency of the third person of the Godhead. By His power alone can the individual grow in grace and rise from one spiritual elevation to another. Through the loving ministry of the Holy Spirit upon the life of the true believer the character is made holy, created by the power of God.

“Through faith the Holy Spirit works in the heart to create holiness therein; but this cannot be done unless the human agent will work with Christ. We can be fitted for heaven only through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man.” [21] We read further upon this point:

“It is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal to the mind the character of the consecration that God will accept. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is enlightened, and the character is renewed, sanctified, and uplifted.” [22]

Enlightens the Mind

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: and he will show you things to come. He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” John 16:13, 14. (See also 1 Corinthians 2:9,10,13) The Holy Spirit, then, is our great Teacher, not only enlightening our minds but enabling us to teach and preach the truth to others.” The truth that has not been clearly discerned, will be opened before those who search for it as for hid treasure. The Holy Spirit will descend in power upon his people, explaining many mysteries.” [23]

How important it is for us to seek for the reception of the Holy Spirit and have no uncertainty at that point in our relationship to this mighty regenerating and enlightening power in our lives.” No one is prepared to educate and strengthen the church unless he has received the gift of the Holy Spirit. No minister is prepared to labor intelligently for the salvation of souls, unless he is endowed by the Holy Spirit, unless he is feeding on Christ, and has an intense hatred of sin.” [24]

Again we read: “The time has come when we must seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, a power that shall give force to the warnings that are to be given to the world. The words we speak are to be an evidence that the Holy Spirit is speaking through us as His messengers.” [25]

“We should have a realization that unless taught by the Holy Spirit, we shall not rightly comprehend the Bible; for it is a scaled book even to the learned, who are wise in their own conceit.” [26]

Over and over has the Spirit of prophecy amplified the promise made by Christ concerning the light which the Holy Spirit would shed upon the truth by those who would receive this Divine Guest. We dare not deprive ourselves of the enabling power of the Spirit as we search the Scriptures. We are assured that “the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven by the benevolence of infinite love, takes the things of God, and reveals them to every soul that has an implicit faith in Christ. As we study the Scriptures, we should pray for the light of God’s Holy Spirit to shine upon the word, that we may see and appreciate its treasures.” [27]

“Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God.” [28]

There needs to come over each one of us as believers the realizing sense of how much we must have the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit with us day by day and hour by hour. Never should we forget that we are wrestling “not against flesh and blood” but against “spiritual wickedness in high places.”

“Realize every moment that you must have the presence of the Holy Spirit; for it can do a work that you can not do of yourself.” [29]

To those who teach and preach the Word this realization is of vast importance, for “the preaching of the word is of no avail without the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit: for this Spirit is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit, will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. A minister may be able to present the letter of the word of God: he may be familiar with all its commands and promises; but his sowing of the gospel seed will not be successful unless this seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Without the co-operation of the Spirit of God, no amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light. Before one book of the New Testament had been written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying disciples. Then the testimony of their enemies was, ‘You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.’ [30]

We are not to seek to be important, but to be worthy and to possess the capacity to receive the fullness of the Holy Ghost in our lives. There will be only one standard when the time comes for us to be invited to sit down with Christ in heavenly places.

“In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, ‘Have you received the Holy Ghost?’ A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building. ‘Your size as a human being is nothing,’ said he, ‘but if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb. And through the eternal ages you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you.’ [31]

What a marvelous work of grace is wrought out in the life of the one who, laying self aside, makes room for the Holy Spirit! What transformations take place, what joy and rejoicing fill the heart!

“Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. The Spirit conforms the renewed soul to the model, Jesus Christ. Through its influence, enmity against God is changed into faith and love, and pride into humility. The soul perceives the beauty of truth, and Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break out in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude.” [32]

Again comes the revelation of the great work of transformation which by the Holy Spirit is carried out in the life of the Spirit-filled disciples of Christ:

“When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, and humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes

when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God.” [32]

“In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin.” [34]

“He came to destroy the works of the devil, and he has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.” [35]

Here are other matchless statements for our encouragement:

“He who is endowed with the Holy Spirit has great capacities of heart and intellect, with strength of will and purpose that is unconquerable.” [36]

“Through the Holy Spirit, God’s word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory-His character-is to shine forth in His followers.” [37]

“The choicest productions of art possess no beauty that can compare with the beauty of character which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit’s working in the soul.” [38]

“In order to be purified and to remain pure, Seventh-day Adventists must have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and in their homes. The Lord has given me light that when the Israel of today humble themselves before Him, and cleanse the soul temple from all defilement, He will hear their prayers in behalf of the sick and will bless in the use of His remedies for disease.” [39]

“Pray that the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, with all their quickening, recuperative, and transforming power, may fall like an electric shock on the palsy-stricken soul, causing every nerve to thrill with new life, restoring the whole man from his dead, earthly, sensual state to spiritual soundness. You will thus become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” [40] The new covenant becomes effective in the human heart only through the working of Christ therein. This is made possible through the mighty working of the Holy Spirit, who is the agent whereby the blessings of the new covenant come into the life of the one who enters into that redemptive relationship. We read:

“God is the mighty, all-powerful agency in the work of transformation. By His Spirit He writes His law in the heart. Thus divine relationship is renewed between God and man. The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means that sin is taken away, and that the vacuum is filled with the Spirit. It means that the mind is divinely illumined, that the heart is emptied of self, and filled with the presence of Christ.” [41]

Bestowing of Spiritual Gifts

According to the apostle Paul, when Christ ascended to heaven, there went with Him a multitude of captives and He “gave gifts unto men.” (Ephesians 4:8) We find a list of the gifts that are referred to here in the writings of this same apostle; namely, in Ephesians 4:11-15 and 1 Corinthians 12. These gifts of the Spirit were to be permanently in the church to the end of the gospel work in the earth, and were to be distributed to the church “severally as He will.”

“All men do not receive the same gifts, but to every servant of the Master some gift of the Spirit is promised. The gifts are already ours in Christ, but their actual possession depends upon our reception of the Spirit of God. The promise of the Spirit is not appreciated as it should be. Its fulfillment is not realized at it might be. None need lament that they have not received larger gifts; for He who has apportioned to every man, is equally honored by the improvement of each trust, whether it be great or small.” [42]

The office work of the Holy Spirit will bring out in the life the fruits of the Spirit, which are these: “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Galatians 5:22, 23.” The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.” Ephesians 5:9.

“Christ is seeking to reproduce Himself in the hearts of men; and He does this through those who believe in Him. The object of the Christian life is fruit bearing, the reproduction of Christ’s character in the believer, that it may be reproduced in others. As you receive the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of unselfish love and labor for others, you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely. Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” [43]

This wonderful fruitage of the Christian life is not something to be struggled after or labored for.” The Savior does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ.” [44]

Seals the Saints

The last act in the preparation of the saints of God to meet the Savior is the sealing work of the Holy Spirit. Paul enjoins us: “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30. The sealing involves all for which the acceptable keeping of the true Sabbath signifies, for the Sabbath is to be kept as a sign not only of God’s creating power in making a world but also of His re-creating power, which is found in the life that is truly sanctified. This involves victory over every sin and besetment in the life of the one whom God accepts as His own, which experience is wrought out by the Holy Spirit alone. The sealing work is performed by the third person of the Godhead.

The seal of God cannot be placed upon sin, but upon holiness alone. So it will be in the last days, when the saints are finally sealed by the Holy Spirit under the latter rain experience.

“Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully. I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing,’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action.” [45]

Thus we see that the solemn work of sealing the saints of God is a part of the office work of the Holy Spirit and calls for the sanctifying of the human soul. This is the work that is now going on, and only in the life of the one who with all his heart is searching and seeking for the gift of the Holy Spirit in all earnestness can this work be completed. How diligently, then, should the people of God make room for the Holy Spirit in their lives and allow Him to take His rightful place in all that they do and say. This is the time of heart searching which precedes the mighty outpouring of the latter rain, to prepare a people for the courts of heaven.

Grieving the Holy Spirit

“Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God” (Ephesians 4:30) is the injunction the apostle Paul writes to the church. To follow out this good counsel means that our heart’s door will be opened wide for the indwelling Spirit of Christ. (Revelation 3:20) It means that we will receive the Spirit, as was Christ’s intention for the disciples when He breathed on them. (John 20:22) It means that we must turn away from every sin, from “bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking. . . malice” (Ephesians 4:30, 31), cleansing the soul temple from every defilement and entering into the work of sanctification with all that it means.

The kind of life that grieves the Holy Spirit is plainly seen by the words of the messenger of the Lord as she describes those upon whom the seal of God will never be placed:

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.” [46]

Grieving the Holy Spirit is to quench the Spirit’s working in our hearts and lives. How serious it is, then, to disregard the plain counsel the Lord has sent us to pray and see and search for the Holy Spirit. How it must grieve Him when we turn to naught His loving counsel in this regard and go entirely upon our own in the work we strive to do for Him.

“There is not an impulse of our nature, not a faculty of the mind or an inclination of the heart, but needs to be, moment by moment, under the control of the Spirit of God.” [47]

It is by constantly resisting the Holy Ghost that we grieve Him and cause Him to turn from us and leave us in our sins and weakness. Darkness covers us and obscures the light of heaven in our lives as we quench the pleadings of His Spirit:

“Precious light is to shine forth from the word of God, and let no one presume to dictate what shall or what shall not be brought before the people in the messages of enlightenment that He shall send, and so quench the Spirit of God. It was from pursuing this very course that the popular churches were left in partial darkness, and that is why the messages of heaven have not reached them.” [48]

Resisting and grieving the Holy Spirit consists in a determined hostility toward the Spirit's purposes, His counsel, and His work. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is grieved through blindness. He takes into account that which causes the blindness and where the cause is of our own creation, He holds us responsible. Many times human blindness is due to disobedience to the heavenly vision at some earlier point in the experience, and for that disobedience we are responsible and guilty. Therefore, we need to perpetually examine ourselves as to whether we are in the faith. There are many who would vehemently

deny that they are at cross-purposes with the Spirit, but whose lives are out of touch with His divine leading and deeper moves.

Whenever the Spirit of God is thwarted, whenever He is disobeyed, whenever He opens up our minds and hearts to some new aspect of the character of Christ, and there is no response in our hearts, the Holy Spirit is grieved. The heart of Christ is made sad when His tender touches of grace by His Spirit are hindered or go unheeded by His professed children. Oh, how often has He been grieved in our lives when the Master has made some gentle demands for truer devotion and piety and He has been spurned and His ministry looked upon as a light thing. Every day's postponement of the perfecting work of the saints has grieved Him, for thereby His coming has been postponed and His great purposes have been thwarted. In solemn quietness and contemplation let us then ponder in our hearts where and how we have grieved the Holy Spirit, and let us cause the heart of Christ sorrow and sadness no longer.

Have we not quenched the Spirit too often by rushing into His service instead of waiting upon Him for the unction from on high? Have we not been lighting false fires upon the altars of God instead of waiting for the burnings of the Pentecostal flame? "Quench not the Spirit" longer by the use of worldly means of advancing the work of God, for God will not allow the fire of the Holy Spirit to be mingled with strange fires upon His altars. Man perpetually quenches the Spirit by attempting to work in his own strength, hoping that God will step in and make up what he lacks so desperately. God wants man to give himself up to Him for the doing of His own work. Has He not warned, "Behold, all you that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall you have of mine hand; you shall lie down in sorrow"? Isaiah 50: 11.

Let us hear His precious promise to those who will wait upon Him for His Divine Spirit and power: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31.

Much more might be said of the precious ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life and in the church-how He brings to our remembrance the things we have learned, how He reproves and corrects and restrains evil in our lives. We might well ponder how the Holy Spirit ministers to us by helping us to surmount great difficulties, by controlling all spiritual exercise, by inditing prayer, by molding the life, and by pleading with the heart.

We might also well spend time in pondering what other hindrances there may be in our lives to the powerful working of this heavenly Guest; how we hinder His loving ministry by being devoid of brotherly love and by disbelieving and working contrary to His plain revelations. We might well study how His ministry is barred from our lives by our holding fast to misconceived opinions and principles and being set in our own ideas. How self-sufficiency and sullenly pursuing our own way and worshiping the human, will obstruct His wooing upon our hearts; how faithlessness and a sharp and critical censorious spirit, with evil imaginings, quench His gracious work for our salvation. How frivolous talk and taking personal credit, gossiping, sowing discord, following too precise a program, and pleasing self alone, seeking only our interests rather than the interests of others, will wither the spiritual life He seeks to foster in our lives.

Those who vex the Spirit by following after carnal things, by indulging a fleshly disposition, by manifesting an unholy temper, or by compromising with iniquity in any way, cannot enjoy the peace and presence of the Holy Spirit. He is preeminently the Holy Spirit; and in order to enjoy His ministry in the life, we must put away forever from our lives whatsoever is known or believed to be unholy. He can have nothing in common with that which is unspiritual; therefore, whatsoever is known to be unspiritual in our lives must be abandoned, if we would have full fellowship with Him." For you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live." Romans 8:13." For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Verse 6.

Perhaps one of the greatest and most prominent ministries of the Spirit is the work of unifying the church. He it is who brings the church to the ultimate idea of unity to be attained by the body of Christ as described in the Biblical expression, "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Ephesians 4:13. The complete realization of this unity will be seen at the Second Coming of our Lord, when He will be manifested in glory among the children of men as His people reflect His image perfectly. Then will be seen a unity of faith and knowledge among His disciples that is impossible while we are compelled to "see through a glass, darkly" and to "know in part" only. Until that great hour it is the privilege of the church to come into the "unity of the Spirit" and walk in the Spirit through the uncertainties of the last days with complete triumph of faith." I beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:1-3." The unity of the Spirit" is that unity of fellowship which is begotten of the Spirit." And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," says the apostle John. (1 John 1:3) This is the great objective of the Holy

Spirit as He works within the hearts of the believers in order to bring them into the same fellowship with the Father and the Son and thereby into blessed and sweet fellowship with one another.

The Former Rain

The promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Scriptures under the figure of rain. Two rains are mentioned, the former and the latter rain. Since Palestine was a land watered by rain and not by irrigation, these figures were easily understood by God's people. In Deuteronomy 11:10 and onward we find the Lord speaking with His people regarding their land which the Lord cares for." He said He would watch over it "from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." God promised them that He would give rain "in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou may gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and your oil." Verse 14.

There were conditions under which all these promises were to be fulfilled to Israel." If you shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him" (Deuteronomy 11:22), were the conditions upon which God would work to give them rich fruitage in their fields and in their struggles with other nations." There shall no man be able to stand before you," God declared: "for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that you shall tread upon." Verse 25. Not only would their land be fruitful and their crops bountiful, but because of God's mighty power working in their midst their enemies would be powerless in their antagonisms.

No one can read the history of Israel in the days of David and his son Solomon without recognizing that God kept His promise to His people in a most glorious fashion. Israel became so successful and prosperous that she was able to support her own millions of inhabitants and to help other nations to support their people besides.

It is interesting, in connection with the falling of the former and the latter rain, to note that the first rain fell in the fall of the year, before the plowing time began. The land was such that no plowing or seed sowing could be done before the soil had received the early rain. The latter rain fell in the spring of the year, in order to bring the grain to complete maturity, ready for the harvesting. The prosperity of the nation depended upon these two rains, the falling of which depended upon the spiritual relationship of the people of God and their obedience to His commandments. If for any reason the rain did not fall in its scheduled period, the people sought the Lord most earnestly and searched their hearts and lives that they might find the reason. So dependent were they upon the two rains falling regularly and on time that everything was put aside to make way for seeking after God, that they might receive the fulfillment of His promises concerning them.

Ever since the establishment of the church in apostolic times, down to the present day, it has been of the utmost importance that the people of God see and understand the true significance of the early and the latter rain. Because of the dimness of understanding relating to this great truth, the church has been weak and impoverished far below the plans and purposes of God. And so, today, it is of first importance that we understand the true meaning of all that God has revealed concerning both the former and the latter rain.

"It is true that in the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seed-time and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time, the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church." [49]

Because of the fact that "the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church" to the end of time, some have supposed that merely believing that fact and accepting the truthfulness of it is all that is necessary in order to benefit by the gift of the Holy Spirit in this time of the latter rain. Because of this danger of misunderstanding, it is important that we study carefully the teaching of God upon this point. Although it is true that we are living in what might be termed the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, this fact diminishes naught from the necessity of the Christian to seek earnestly through much prayer and thorough

cleansing and perfect faith the outpouring of both the former and the latter rain upon his heart and life.

This is the very truth that was discovered by the disciples, who were in possession of the promise of Christ, that if they would tarry in Jerusalem they would be endued with power from on high. They had already witnessed the powerful work of God in connection with their going forth in obedience to the command of Christ. The sick had been healed and wonderful things had been wrought by and through them prior to Pentecost. (Matthew 10:8; Luke 9:2) But in spite of all this, they discovered that in order to be clothed with the promised power and in order that the Spirit might be "in them" as promised by Christ, they had some most diligent heart searching to do prior to the day of Pentecost.

Very significant is the fact that in a number of places in the Scriptures where the work of God for these last days is mentioned, the former rain and the latter rain are placed very near together, (Joel 2:23; Hosea 6:1-3) Indeed, the messenger of the Lord seems to have had this in mind when she wrote:

“The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close.” [50]

Relationship of the Holy Spirit to Soul Winning

In the great commission Christ declared, “Lo, I am with you always, I even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:20. By His Spirit Christ promised to always be with him “that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed.” This was true even before Pentecost and was fulfilled to the disciples as they were sent forth in His name. By the presence of His Spirit these men went forth, and the sick were healed, miracles were wrought, and the dead were raised. (See Matthew 10: 8; Luke 9:2) Great wonders followed in the wake of their ministry long before the promised outpouring on the day of Pentecost brought a baptism of power such as had never before been seen.

The Holy Spirit is given only to those whose lives are given to the service of Christ.” The Holy Spirit will come to all who are begging for the bread of life to give to their neighbors.” [51]

The basis of the Holy Spirit’s coming to the individual has always been that it is sought for the purpose of carrying out God’s work. But the condition of receiving the Holy Spirit is not alone activity, but also earnest seeking for this matchless gift through faith and importunate prayer. No one should sit in idleness, waiting for an impelling power to lay hold upon him for service for others’ for it is given only to those who ask; and the former and the latter rain power must be sought exactly as the apostles sought that power prior to Pentecost.

Ellen G. White has said: “We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today. Without the Spirit’s aid, our efforts to present divine truth will be in vain.” [52]

Again we read: “I beseech the members of every church to seek now for the greatest blessing heaven can bestow—the Holy Spirit. If in faith you seek for a greater measure of God’s Spirit, you will be constantly taking it in and breathing it out.” [53]

It is enlightening in this regard to note the following: “Christ has left His work in our hands, and we are to wrestle with God, supplicating day and night for the power that is unseen.” [54]

Again we have this Word, showing that this great power will not come to us through any casual attitude on our part, but only as we have experienced a complete revival and reformation of life.” The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” [55]

It is made clear in many places that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit takes place to give power for witnessing, the ability to win precious souls. The time and the place of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, after it has been sought for in God’s own way, are the time and the place most suitable for personal labor for souls.

We are told: “All occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.” [56]

This surely does not mean that whenever one is laboring for souls the Holy Spirit is bestowed, but it does mean that to the one who is seeking in God’s way for that priceless gift, the Holy Spirit is bestowed as he labors for others. That is God’s opportunity to fulfill His promise and to answer the earnest prayers of the believer for this marvelous gift. It is this that we must keep in our minds as we read such statements as the following:

“Satan is now seeking to hold God’s people in a state of inactivity to keep them from acting their part in spreading the truth, that they may at last be weighed in the balance and found wanting. I was shown God’s people waiting for some change to take place, a compelling power to take hold of them. But they will be disappointed, for they are wrong. They must act, they must take hold of the work themselves and earnestly cry to God for a true knowledge of themselves.” [57]

“Those who make no decided effort, but simply wait for the Holy Spirit to compel them to action, will perish in darkness. You are not to sit still and do nothing in the work of God.” [58]

There are two mistakes some make that are pointed out by the servant of the Lord in relationship to soul winning, or activity, and the receiving of the power of the Holy Spirit. One may make the mistake of filling his life with great activity, mere “busyness,” in God’s service, without seeking that experience in God which would make him able to pray the effectual prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit. Such a one may make service records and even stir many minds, but his work without the Spirit will not be effective. Another one may make the mistake of idly waiting for the outpouring of some great power to impel him into activity for God. Both of these are failing to follow the plan of God in soul-winning service. We read:

“There are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service.” [59]

“With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides.” [60]

“When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested. Divine power will be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts. The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and, as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lighted with the glory of the Lord.” [61]

“When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere requests. Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain.” [62]

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.” [63]

If the foregoing statements were set apart and isolated, it would seem that mere activity in God’s service ensures the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in great measure. But as with other subjects treated in Testimonies for the Church, we must take a balanced view, based upon a more exhaustive study of these helpful writings. Let us not forget the earnest counsel of the Scriptures and the Spirit of prophecy, that we earnestly seek through prayer the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There must be repentance, confession, and importunate prayer, waiting upon God for the fulfillment of His great and precious promises, if we would enjoy the fullness of His divine favor in relationship to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the same time we must give ourselves to personally carrying out the great commission of Christ, for this also is part of the conditions laid down. The Holy Spirit is not given simply that the individual may possess power, but only that he may possess power for witnessing. The individual who receives the full blessing of His promised Spirit seeks for it because he feels his desperate need of power to fulfill the divine commission to which his all is dedicated.

“Let Christians put away all dissension and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was ‘the former rain,’ and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.” [64]

We should at this point recognize that the former rain dispensation speaking, came at Pentecost. From another viewpoint there was an early rain experience which came to the church in the 1844 movement. Personally, the early rain comes at conversion. The same threefold application may be made concerning the latter rain. The church receives it at the close of the work of God in the earth. Just so this movement passes through that same experience, and also the individual.

“The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was ‘the former rain,’ and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.” [65]

The early rain experience of the great Second Advent movement in 1844 and immediately preceding that year, probably was the greatest demonstration of power the church has seen since the days of Pentecost. But there is again to be an early rain experience:

“The power which stirred the people so mightily in the 1844 movement will again be revealed.” [66] A great spiritual awakening of the church is yet to be seen, an awakening that will compare in proportions and power with the days of the midnight cry and the second angel’s message.

This is all alluded to in the writings of the minor prophets concerning the closing tip of the gospel work in the earth.

“Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he has torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:1-3.

Note how this prophet indicates that these two rains will come close together. In the second chapter of the prophecy of Joel a great spiritual awakening, a revival and reformation, is called for in which a trumpet is to be blown in Zion to arouse the people and a fast and solemn assembly are to be called in order to gather the people and even the little children. Greater earnestness is called for on the part of the ministry, and their prayers are to be heard supplicating God to spare His people. In response to this consecration and seeking after God on the part of the remnant people, the sure promise is given:

“Then will the Lord . . . pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and you shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen. . . . Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. . . . Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he has given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer worm, my great army which I sent among you. . . . And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. . . . And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call. For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel.” Joel 2:18 to 3:2.

In explanation of what happened on the day of Pentecost we read a quotation from this passage in Joel. (Acts 2:16-21) This same experience is to be repeated in these last days. [67] Let us then examine the experience of the disciples under the early rain, that we may learn lessons concerning the same experience in this our day.

When Jesus gave to His disciples the great commission, prominent among the points He emphasized was the power they would need with which to carry it out.

“Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:18-20. To implement this great commission Jesus gave that wonderful promise and counsel that we find in Luke 24:45-53:

“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it became Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry you in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.”

How overwhelmed the disciples must have been in the face of such a commission, when in their ignorance they could not understand the working out of the promised power that would accompany them as they sought to carry out the divine command of their Master. But in the midst of their disappointment at His death and in the light of His repeated statement of promised power as He ascended, they did not understand the meaning of being endued with power from on high as they tarried in Jerusalem. They still were asking according to Acts 1:6-8:

“Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

A mighty work of grace was required to bring these men, who were utterly unfitted for the task that had been given them, to the place where they would finally be willing to be what was necessary for them to be in order for Christ to do with them what He had planned. They were to be made men through whom the Holy Spirit could manifest His power, men devoid of selfishness and sin, men with hearts and minds prepared for the in filling of the Holy Ghost in Pentecostal degree.

They had heard Him say “Go you” now they hear Him say “Tarry you”; “Tarry you . . . until you be endued with power from on high.” What consternation must have filled their minds! Here was a world task to perform, and they had heard Him say that when it was performed, “then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. Now, would He have them wait, tarry? Ah! it was not altogether clear to them yet that without that promised power they were incapable of performing the commission no matter how fast or far they might “go.” Indeed the Lord has revealed to His servant that in our day the very same necessity exists:

“What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution, and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high.” [68]

“The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit, will it quicken the conscience or transform the life.” [69]

“If divine power does not combine with human effort, I would not give a straw for all that the greatest man could do. The Holy Spirit is wanting in our work.” [70]

As the disciples came back to Jerusalem from Olivet, where they had witnessed the ascension of the Lord, they were no longer filled with sorrow, confusion, or defeat. Truly their hopes were disappointed, but they somehow no longer found their hearts filled with sadness. They had been with their risen Lord, had seen Him “go away”; and echoing and re-echoing in their hearts were the two words of counsel to them, “I will come again” and “Tarry you in Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high.”

Not in full understanding but in obedience to what Christ had commanded them, they waited in Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They did not merely sit in silence, waiting in idleness, but they went “continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” Luke 24:53. They were undoubtedly going over among themselves the final counsels of the Master and the rich promises that now came readily to their memory, and “in solemn awe they bowed in prayer,” repeating the assurance, “Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name: ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:23, 24. Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument, “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.” Romans 8:34.

They continued to pray with intense earnestness not only for power but for a fitness to meet the world and to declare the gospel and lead sinners to repentance. They humbled their hearts by putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, and all unbelief, and they found growing up within their hearts a deep sorrow that they had ever grieved their Lord by any word or act. Comfort filled their hearts as they came closer and still closer to God and to one another and as they consecrated themselves with courage to go forth and face an unbelieving and hostile world, to confess Jesus as the Christ.

“They did not ask a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised. In obedience to the word of the Savior, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.” [71]

Their hearts were filled with reproach toward themselves and “like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life, they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ’s character. . . .

‘And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.’

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All Heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, ‘Herein is love.’ They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightning of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.” [72]

The importance and true significance of the Pentecostal visitation of the Holy Spirit is not comprehended until we realize that this visitation marked an event of surpassing magnitude and tremendous and far-reaching results. We read: “The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven’s communication that the Redeemer’s inauguration was accomplished.” [73] Jesus, the Lamb of Calvary, had paid the

price of sin, had passed through death, and had come forth in resurrection power and ascended to the right hand of God. The atonement had been accomplished and accepted by the Father, and now Christ desired to mark the event by the bestowal of heaven's most priceless gift.

“Christ determined to bestow a gift on those who had been with Him and on those who should believe on Him, because this was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, a jubilee in heaven. What gift could Christ bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. Christ gave His representative, the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This gift could not be excelled. The divine Spirit, converting, enlightening, sanctifying, would be His donation, because He would give all gifts in one. On the day of Pentecost Christ gave His disciples the Holy Spirit as their Comforter.” [74]

“As the divine endowment-the power of the Holy Spirit-was given to the disciples, so it will today be given to all who seek aright. This power alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, and to fit us for the courts above.” [75]

Results

By reading the second chapter of the book of Acts we learn of the marvelous results of the outpouring, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit, upon the disciples. The event could not be kept secret, and we are told that when it was noised abroad, “the multitudes came together,” and when they saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears what power was being displayed in the lives of the early believers, particularly because each one heard the gospel in his own tongue, they greatly marveled and were amazed and confounded. The church doubled its membership, yes, trebled it, and still souls came and were baptized and joined themselves to the believers in Christ, the risen Lord. Wonderful miracles were performed, great “wonders and signs were done.” They “sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need,” and God gave them “favor with all the people.” Acts 2:43-47.

Their prayers were no more powerless and listless, but when they prayed even “the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they spoke the word with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one “heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” Acts 4:31, 32. God gave such favor with the people that they-“magnified them [the apostles]. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.” Acts 5:13-16.” And the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:7.

It is of primary importance that in analyzing the results of Pentecost and the outpouring of the former rain, we remember that power was bestowed for witnessing. The disciples received power that they might become witnesses for Christ, in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. This wonderful power of Pentecost made great preachers and very successful laymen for the service of Christ. It cast out devils and caused the dumb to speak out of fullness of heart what God had done through Christ for their souls.

This great power took all backwardness away from men and yet did not make them boastful or forward. It impelled men to speak boldly yet humbly in spite of all uprising opposition, to call sin by its right name, and to rebuke religionists and non religionists because of their blindness and wickedness. The sermons of apostolic preachers were not noted so much for their logic and homiletical arrangement or their ornate rhetoric, as for their dynamic witnessing power. The apostles talked out of their own experiences, and the Spirit of God took their mere declaration of truth and drove it home to the hearts of their listeners with a convincing force that made men tremble and earnestly ask, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

When the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples He appeared like “cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them,” symbolic of the consuming power of the Holy Ghost against sin and unrighteousness. It may have had other points of significance and also signified the flaming tongues for speaking forth the truth as did the apostles following that great outpouring. If ever there was a time that called for fiery tongues with which to speak the message of God, this is such an hour. The church today needs men and women, young men and young women, with tongues loosened by the power of the Holy Spirit and set aflame for God to go forth and proclaim the truth in all of its purity and completeness. That message must be a Christ-centered message, but it must be a message suitable for this hour, unadulterated and not muffled.

Significantly the messenger of the Lord has this to say on this important point of muffling the message or hiding it and cringing in compromise with those who demand that the whole truth be not preached. God is against that strange so-called strategy that hides the truth and delivers it in a corner rather than before the multitudes, as did the early apostles. We read:

“Unless you watch, and keep your garments unspotted from the world, Satan will stand as your captain. It is no time now to hide your colors, no time to turn traitor, when the battle presses sore. . . .

“When the days come, as they surely will, in which the law of God is made void, the zeal of the true and loyal should rise with the emergency, and should be the more warm and decided, and their testimony should be the more positive and unflinching. But we are to do nothing in a defiant spirit, and we shall not if our hearts are fully surrendered to God.”

“God has no place in His work for half-hearted men and women, those who are neither cold nor hot. Christ says, ‘I will spew thee out of my mouth.’ God calls for men who are wholehearted. Let His truth be received into the heart, that you may be spiritualized by its living, sanctifying power. Then let the distinct message for this time he sent from watchman to watchman on the walls of Zion.”

“As the end approaches, the testimonies of God’s people will become more decided and more powerful, flashing the light of truth upon the systems of error and oppression that have so long held the supremacy.” [76]

Under the power of the Holy Spirit the disciples did not forbear to declare the whole truth. They did it in love, but they did not hide from the multitudes that came to hear them the whole truth regarding who was responsible for the death of their Lord. Perhaps they might have held some of the people longer if they had simply talked on the smooth things of the gospel story, but under the impelling power of the Holy Ghost they withdrew the veil and allowed the whole truth to shine forth, and many, yes, multitudes, believed. Could it be that if we would spend less time in deploying around what we consider, at times, the cutting truths of our message, and more time seeking for that power that will enable us to know how to tell the truth in love and yet not cringe before the multitudes, our evangelism would be more telling and more lasting?

We do not mean to infer that we should ruthlessly tear the hearts and ears of the multitude by cruel and sharp expressions and personal thrusts, but rather that we should faithfully and in love, with judicious words, reveal to men the warning message that is ours to give and for which we have been called into being. There is a vast difference between giving the message in love and in the power of the Holy Spirit of Christ and hiding the truth away from the multitudes who must hear it.

Great care must be taken in the presentation of the message for this hour. Christ said to His disciples: “Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be you therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Matthew 10: 16.

In giving words of caution relative to the presentation of the truth for this time, Ellen G. White says:

“What course shall the advocates of truth pursue? They have the unchangeable, eternal word of God, and they should reveal the fact that they have the truth as it is in Jesus. Their words must not be rugged and sharp. In their presentation of truth they must manifest the love and meekness and gentleness of Christ. Let the truth do the cutting; the word of God is as a sharp, two-edged sword and will cut its way to the heart. Those who know that they have the truth should not, by the use of harsh and severe expressions, give Satan one chance to misinterpret their spirit.

“As a people we must stand as did the world’s Redeemer. The course of Christ in dealing even with the adversary of souls should be an example to us in all our intercourse with others never to bring a railing accusation against any. Precious truth must be presented in its native force. The deceptive errors that are widespread, and that are leading the world captive, are to be unveiled. This message must be given; but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have.” [77]

All of this requires great wisdom, tact, and skill. Such ability can come to us only by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit-this outpouring we may have if we will earnestly seek for it. Hear the words of the messenger of the Lord further on these things:

“The message we have to bear is not a message that men need cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God.” [78]

Again we read:

“The people of the world will try to induce us to soften down our message, to suppress some of its more distinctive features. ‘We would harmonize with you if you would not say so much on this point.’ This is their invitation to compromise, and there has been a disposition on the part of some of our workers to adopt this policy. But those who favor this action entertain deceptive sentiments, are bound by false modesty and caution, and manifest a disposition to withhold the confession of our faith. But shall we permit the world to shape the messages that God has given us to bear to them? Shall we entertain the proposal of Satan, and thereby entangle our souls, and the souls of others, for the sake of policy? Shall we betray sacred trusts? If the world are in error and delusion is it not our duty to show them their sin and danger? We must proclaim the third angel’s message.”

“We should cry aloud, and spare not, and show the people their transgressions. We are not to cringe, and beg pardon of the world for telling them the truth. We should scorn concealment. Unfurl your true colors to the gaze of men and angels. Let it be understood that Seventh day Adventists can make no compromise. In our opinions and faith there must not be the least appearance of wavering. The world has a right to expect something of us, and will look upon us as dishonest, as hiding our real sentiments and principles out of policy, if we present even the semblance of being uncommitted.” [79]

We read further: “We should be alarmed at the least manifestation of a disposition to hush the voices that proclaim the third-angel’ message. That angel represents the people of God, who give the last warning to the world. Let not the fear of man, the desire for patronage, be allowed to obscure a ray of heaven’s light. Should the sentinels of truth now fail to sound the warning, they would be unworthy of their position as light-bearers to the world; but should the standard fall from their hands, the Lord would raise up others who would be faithful and loyal.” [80]

It would be well for us all who are called to proclaim the truth for this hour to reread the accounts of the preaching of the apostles after the falling of the former rain. (See Acts 2:22, 23; 4:8-12) One cannot detect any compromising here or cringing for the sake of gaining patronage and escaping certain natural results. May God give His ministry “cloven tongues like as of fire,” flaming tongues, for witnessing and declaring in the power and love of the Spirit of God the whole truth as it is in Jesus. When these new fires, these celestial fires, are rekindled in our hearts, the Lord will again bring us matchless results in souls, similar to those that were seen in apostolic times.

We must always remember that the apostolic church under the former rain was normal Christianity. These people, clothed with power from on high, coming, down from the hidden chamber to present to the multitudes clear to the far corners of the earth the great message of God for the present hour, were the church in all its pristine beauty and glory. Here we catch a glimpse of what the church of Christ was meant to be, uncontaminated, each witnessing out of his heart what God had done through Christ for his soul. It has not yet been touched by heresy or marred by compromise or deflected in any way from its original purpose. What a glorious sight is the church that the Holy Spirit founded.

That church must now appear again in its purity. Paul said: “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:27. It was soon to fall away from this experience, and as it did, the power of the Holy Ghost waned, but the apostolic church was still to be the pattern for the church of Jesus Christ in all the centuries to follow. As men became exalted and took upon themselves the glory and authority that belonged to God alone, the Holy Spirit was grieved away. Miracles became a thing of the past. Powerful prayer was no longer heard. Perfunctory worship was introduced. Compromise with paganism about them brought damnable heresies and vain and wicked counterfeits into the ritual and worship of Christ. True men and women suffered while holding up the banner of truth. They were thrown to the wild beasts and were consumed by the flaming stakes that lighted up the orgies of those who opposed the truth. Prisons were filled with the righteous. The commandments of God were obscured, and men sought to change them to meet their own sinful ways; the manifestation of the Spirit waned and was lost.

All of this came about because men forgot to continue to enter fully into the benefits of the former rain and allowed self and selfish motives to rule their hearts. Pentecost had not been perpetuated, and all the defects, deflections, imperfections, and failures that history records and that we see today in the modern churches emanate from that fact. Every blemish in the church today grows out of the fact that the experience of the former rain was not perpetuated in the life of the church and in the lives of the believers.

Christ’s prayer that His people might be one as He and the Father are one, was answered at the establishment of the church at Pentecost. This prayer of Christ reaches down to our day and must be answered again in the experience of the remnant church. Said Jesus:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. And that the world may know that thou has sent me, and has loved them, as thou has loved me.” John 17:20-23.

Such love among the brethren must come back to the church. It means a oneness in love, purpose, and sympathy, an intimacy of love analogous to that which exists between the Son and the Father. This can only be brought about in the way it came to the Pentecostal church: by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in former rain measure and by the appropriating of all the benefits promised under such a heavenly gift.

What kind of church must it be? It must be a church filled with men and women who are rid of all half warmness. Its ministry must be a witnessing ministry, preaching out of a fresh experience in the Holy Ghost. It must have local church officers whose lives witness to the fact that the business of the church comes first. It must have a laity whose hearts are warmed and aflame with the love of God and an overwhelming, impelling urge to witness for the truth that cannot be smothered by the world, by fear, or by self-seeking. It must

have the original apostolic attitude toward the unsaved multitudes at home and abroad. It must adopt the program of Jesus, the only program that He ever gave to the church, that of declaring the message to the world in such power that men would believe and be baptized. It must have the standards of Christ held highly aloft and glorified in the lives of its members.

The faith of Pentecost must be revived. The prayers of Pentecost must be restored. The earnestness, the oneness, the sacrifice, of Pentecost must return. The love of the upper room at Pentecost must again cement the lives of the believers. A repetition of the former-rain experience is indispensable for the world program of the remnant church. The sobering question is, Are the people of God willing and ready, or ready to be made willing and ready, to pay the price of such an experience? Upon the answer to this question rests the destiny of the church in our day.

Baptism of the Spirit

For a good understanding of what the baptism of the Holy Spirit means in the life of the believer we must study closely what the Scriptures say regarding this experience. The New Testament passages which refer to this baptism are as follows:

“When he [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Matthew 3:7-11.

“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands one among you, whom you know not; he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latches I am not worthy to unloose.” “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizes with the Holy Ghost.” John 1:26, 27, 32, 33.

Strange it is that the four Gospels do not speak of Christ’s being baptized with the Holy Spirit, but speak only of His anointing. We understand that the anointing was the baptism of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. John speaks of it as something beyond, which would come with the advent of Christ and which would be administered by Christ.

We may gather more concerning this baptism of the Spirit from Jesus’ word to Nicodemus: “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5. The converse, then, of course would be true, that if a man be born of water and of the Spirit he would be a candidate for eternal life. But let us follow on with the Master’s words:

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, You must be born again [“from above,” margin]. The wind blows where it lists, and thou hears the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it comes, and whither it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Verses 6-8.

Years passed by, and Jesus stood in the midst of His disciples just before His ascension and said to them: “For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” Acts 1:5. There can be no doubt that He was directing their attention to the experience that was about to come to them at Pentecost. This baptism was necessary in order that the disciples might be able to fulfill the divine commission. Baptism, in this sense, means to be filled with the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, and clothed with the Spirit. It means to be in full possession by the Spirit. We read: “The disciples felt their spiritual need, and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul-saving.” [81]

It is plain that the baptism of the Holy Spirit came as the disciples were lifted to higher planes of spirituality. Their whole beings, mind, soul, and spirit, were focused upon that one great objective of receiving from God the precious gift of His Spirit. Until the spiritual energies of God’s people are no longer torpid and a resurrection from apparent spiritual death occurs, the church will not enjoy all the benefits of the early rain and will not be prepared for the great task that is set before her.

There can be no intelligent seeking of God for the latter rain until there is a true understanding of the experience under the early rain. Indeed, we must sense that the former rain is “a teacher of righteousness” as described in the margin of Joel 2:23. Here also the falling of the early rain “moderately” is spoken of as “according to righteousness.” It is by our entering into the great truths of righteousness that our hearts are made ready for the former rain. This is just as true regarding the reception of the latter rain. The messenger of the Lord says: “We may be sure that when the Holy Spirit is poured out, those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain will not see or understand the value of the latter rain.” [82]

What, therefore, the church needs, and each one of us needs, at this time is to enter fully into the baptism of the Holy Spirit, just as did the early disciples under the former rain, for we are told, “All that the disciples did every church is to do.” This calls for a definite experience of seeking and finding beyond that of merely having the Spirit with us, as in conversion. There must be an in filling that is

real and that is lasting and that comes in answer to the prayer of faith. This experience is one that brings the individual into closer and more conscious relationship with the Holy Spirit than he was able to enter into immediately upon water baptism. This is an experience that calls for us to become partakers with Christ in a much fuller sense than is possible during the first steps of the Christian life.

“As you empty the heart of self, you must accept the righteousness of Christ. If you open the door of the heart, Jesus will supply the vacuum by the gift of His Spirit.” [83] This heavenly Guest only comes in where He is invited; He never intrudes Himself where self is yet upon the throne.

For this baptism we must now seek, plan, and pray. We need now all the results of such a baptism in our lives and in our work for God. Let us no longer delay, but let us in unity join in seeking and finding this needed preparation for the greater power which God is waiting to bestow.

The Latter Rain

“Ask you of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” Zechariah 10:1. (See Joel 2:23; Hosea 6:1-3)

This passage, as well as others, reveals the fact that before the Second Coming of Christ there will be a manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit similar to but greater than that seen on the day of Pentecost. As a result of this outpouring without measure, the loud cry of the third angel will be heard, coupled with the voice of that other angel, spoken of in Revelation 18. The messenger of the Lord writes as follows concerning this great experience yet to come to the remnant church: “At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.” [84]

Again we read:

“Near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’ ‘He will cause to come down. The rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” [85]

This marvelous outpouring of God’s Spirit adds power to the church for the finishing of the work and prepares the church for that great event. There can be no doubt but that the church has long delayed the Second Coming of her Lord by her attitude on this question. The spiritual life of the church has been low, and her urgent need of the Spirit has been taken as a light thing. God has been left waiting to bestow “heaven’s most priceless gift” while men have been following their own ways and seeking to finish the work in their own strength.

Says the Spirit of prophecy: “If God’s people had the love of Christ in the heart. If every church member was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice; if all manifested thorough earnestness, there would be no lack of funds for home and foreign missions; our resources would be multiplied; a thousand doors of usefulness would be opened, and we should be invited to enter.

“Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving the message of mercy to the world, Christ would have come to the earth, and the saints would ere this have received their welcome into the city of God.” [86]

Great neglect has been seen in the lives of church members. The work of God has been postponed because of indifference and self-seeking.” If those who claimed to have a living experience in the things of God had done their appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would have been warned ere this, and the Lord Jesus would have come in power and great glory.” [87]

Our attention is called to the experience of Israel that we may learn a lesson of how we need to follow closely the counsel of the Lord in the carrying on of His work.

“The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the Advent Movement, even as He led the Children of Israel from Egypt. In the disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen of the salvation of God. If all who had labored uniting in the work in 1844, had received the third angel’s message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.

“It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness. He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But ‘they could not enter in because of unbelief.’ Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message.” [88]

Thus it is made plain that we are living on borrowed time. God intended that we should now be in the kingdom. Just what has caused the delay has been made perfectly plain. Listen to the message God has sent to this people:

“Brethren and sisters, from the light given me, I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His word, they would to-day be in the heavenly Canaan.” [89]

“It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.” [90]

Let us allow this solemn statement from the Lord to sink deep into our minds. It should bring to us a clear realization of the need of a mighty awakening among us. The fact that Jesus desired to come, and would have come so many years ago, and we were not ready to receive the power that would have enabled us to finish His work so He could come, should startle us into a soberness we have never known before.

It is of the utmost importance that we realize the seriousness of our indifference in this “time of the latter rain.”

“To those who are indifferent at this time Christ’s warning is: ‘Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.’ Revelation 3:16. The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.

“Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding.” [91]

Over and over again does the messenger of the Lord call our attention to the fact that in this time, when God is waiting to bestow His choicest gift upon the remnant, He finds them in a state of unpreparedness. Now, when we should be receiving this added power, we must spend our time in preparing to ask for it.

“Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. But the promise is not appreciated as it should be; and therefore its fulfillment is not seen as it might be. The promise of the Spirit is a matter little thought of; and the result is only what might be expected—spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Minor matters occupy the attention, and the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in its infinite plenitude.” [92]

In many ways has the church neglected to make ready for the pouring out of the Spirit with great measure. Particularly have God’s people been slow to answer the great commission of the Master to every believing soul. The winning of souls has to a large extent been relegated to secondary place in the life of the majority of the members of the church. We are told that until this is changed the rich outpouring will be delayed. We read:

“Every truly converted soul will be intensely desirous to bring others from the darkness of error into the marvelous light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole Earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.” [93]

To be occupied with other things than the Lord’s work now is dangerous. Everything in our lives must now be directed toward the finishing of the work in all the earth. We must be living missionaries for God wherever we are. We read:

“Isaiah says, ‘Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward!’ This is the righteousness of Christ which goes before us, and the glory of the Lord is to be our reward. You churches of the living God, study this promise, and consider

how),our lack of faith, of spirituality, of divine power, is hindering the coming of the kingdom of God. Were every one of you a living missionary, the gospel would be speedily proclaimed in all countries, to all peoples, nations, and tongues.” [94]

Let no one understand by this that mere busyness or activity will assure one of the power of the latter rain. No amount of mere activity will bring to the church this great gift. What is here disclosed is that one of the conditions whereby our prayers for the Holy Spirit in latter rain proportions will be answered is that our lives are given for the salvation of our fellow men. However, there are many other conditions, and we must not become confused in our thinking, so that we forget that the latter rain comes only in answer to the importunate prayer of faith. A Christ like character is the prerequisite to the added power of the latter rain. The preparation is not only action but seeking, and seeking in prayer.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,” said the Master. No casual expectancy that under some ordinary experience of life the Holy Spirit will come in latter rain proportions is sufficient.

“Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it. The growth and perfection of the seed rests not with the husbandman. God alone can ripen the harvest. But man’s cooperation is required. God’s work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith. We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us. We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early -and the latter rain.”

“But let none think that in attending these gatherings, their duty is done. A mere attendance upon all the meetings that are held will not in itself bring a blessing to the soul. It is not an immutable law that all who attend general gatherings or local meetings shall receive large supplies from heaven. The circumstances may seem to be favorable for a rich outpouring of the showers of grace. But God Himself must command the rain to fall. Therefore, we should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working of providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend that at this very time, God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised!” [95]

Results of the Falling of the Latter Rain

The entire figure of rain falling upon seed and causing it to grow and to ripen into a beautiful harvest is given to show that the moisture falling on the newly planted grain causes it to germinate and have life, so that it might grow as well as ripen into a harvest. There is no life without the rain. This is the lesson we are to learn under both the former and the latter rain.

“In the East the former rain falls at the sowing-time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain, and prepares it for the sickle. . . . As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. . . . By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

“The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.” [96]

As these showers of both the former and the latter rain fall upon our hearts and lives, our experience becomes a living experience, our service is not lifeless, but we become living missionaries and a power that cannot be misunderstood or denied accompanies our labor. In that precious book *Early Writings*, as the messenger of the Lord comments upon the fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 18, she gives us a picture of what may be expected under the falling of the latter rain.

“The glory of God rested upon the patient, waiting saints, and they fearlessly gave the last solemn warning, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, and calling upon God’s people to come out of her that they might escape her fearful doom.

“The light that was shed upon the waiting ones penetrated everywhere, and those in the churches who had any light, who had not heard and rejected the three messages, obeyed the call, and left the fallen churches. . . . A compelling power moved the honest, while the manifestation of the power of God brought a fear and restraint upon their unbelieving relatives and friends, so that they dared not, neither had they the power to hinder those who felt the work of the Spirit of God upon them. . . . Mighty miracles were wrought, the sick were healed, and signs and wonders followed the believers. God was in the work, and every saint; fearless of consequences, followed the convictions of his own conscience, and united with those who were keeping all the commandments of God; and with

power they sounded abroad the third message. I saw that this message will close with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry.

“Servants of God, endowed with power from on high, with their faces lighted up, and shining with holy consecration, went forth to proclaim the message from heaven. . . . I heard everywhere a multitude of voices saying, ‘Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ [97]

In others of the writings of the Spirit of prophecy the Lord has given us glimpses of what will happen when the latter rain falls upon the church.

“In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God’s people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844.” [98]

“The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are ‘the times of refreshing’ to which the apostle Peter looked forward. . . . Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

“The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience.

“Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord’s side.” [99]

We read further of the results of God’s mightiest outpouring of His Spirit:

“Almost unconsciously barriers have been erected in the strait and narrow way; stones of stumbling have been placed in the path; these will be rolled away. The safeguards which false shepherds have thrown around their flocks will become as naught; thousands will step out into the light, and work to spread the light. Heavenly intelligence will combine with the human agencies.” [100]

Again we read of the wonderful evangelistic results that will follow the falling of the latter rain:

“Notwithstanding the wide-spread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord’s Second Coming.” [101]

Marvelous will be the results of the preaching and teaching of the message under the fullness of the power of the Holy Ghost. Many who have been unapproachable and hard to reach will be found and will give their hearts to God and obey His blessed truth.

“Many of the rulers are those whom Satan controls; but I saw that God has His agents, even among the rulers. And some of them will yet be converted to the truth. They are now acting the part that God would have them. . . . Thus the work will go on until the third message has done its work, and at the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble.” [102]

As the message under the ministration of the Holy Spirit in latter rain proportions speeds its way around the world and swells to the loud cry, the work of God will be finished in a mighty blaze of glory.

“Those who have held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be wide-awake during the time that the third angel’s message is proclaimed with great power. During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interpositions of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere.” [103]

One never tires of reading the descriptions the messenger of the Lord gives in her writings concerning the evangelistic results of the loud cry and the outpouring of the latter rain. Many of them must of necessity be left out of this study, but let us look at these:

“God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love revives in their hearts, His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them, and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. Then a multitude not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the Redeemer.” [104]

“In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world’s insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord’s army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God.” [105]

Preparation for the Latter Rain

The preparation to receive the latter rain is identical with the preparation to meet the Lord, so far as the individual is concerned. This preparation must not be neglected now, for only those who have fulfilled the conditions will receive this special outpouring.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets, and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father.” [106]

Wherein lies the great lack among God’s people? Why are we not now ready for the refreshing from God? The answer is given very directly through the Spirit of prophecy:

“Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. . . . At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us till the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain.”

“If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door.” [107]

To obtain “all the benefits” under the former rain calls for an experience in the Lord that few have reached. The real experience of seeking and finding God and His power is entered into under the former rain. In this experience the believer enters into a life of prevailing prayer. It is a life of walking by faith and not by sight. It brings one to the place where he abides in Christ and gains the victory in His strength over every besetment. Under the former rain we enter into the very life of Christ and His life dwells in us continually. We follow Him in service and in sacrifice and find access to the same piety and devotion that the apostles had at Pentecost. Under the benefits of the former rain the apostles were enabled to believe, powerfully believe, and because of their faith they were able to cope with the assaults of the enemy with boldness, yet in humility.

To enter into such an experience, we must all take our religious life much more seriously than we have yet done. There must come into our midst a great revival and reformation of life if we would enter into all the benefits under the former rain and be prepared for the latter rain. There must come a great awakening and a return to primitive godliness among us.

“I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity,

‘Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and you are not ready. Rend the heart, and not the garment. A great work must be done for the remnant.’ [108]

“We are upon the enchanted ground, and Satan is continually at work to rock our people to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There is an indifference, a lack of zeal, that paralyzes all our efforts.” [109]

“We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan’s enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God.” [110]

“If we have any regard for our souls’ salvation we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins that they may be blotted out. We must no longer remain upon the enchanted ground.” [111]

By a close study of Joel, chapters one and two, we may learn what God has to say to His people in preparation for the latter rain. Words could not be more explicit to tell us that a great reformation must come to the church and to each one of our lives. There must come upon us a realization of our true condition before God. We must not wait to feel it or to sense it according to our own understanding, but we must take the counsel of the True Witness and come out of our lukewarm condition. The saddest statement to the Laodiceans is, “Because thou says, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:17. Let us then acknowledge our mistakes, and believe God when He describes us, the best of us, as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” This is our only hope. Unless we believe this to the point where we are driven to seek the Lord for gold tried in the fire and white raiment, the righteousness of Christ, we shall remain unprepared for the great and final refreshing from the Lord.

We face a mighty foe. The times to Which we have come are dangerous times.

“The time in which we live is a time of intense excitement. Ambition and war, pleasure and money-making, absorb the minds of men. Satan sees that his time is short, and he has set all his energies at work, that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied, and entranced, until probation shall be ended and the door of mercy be forever shut.” [112]

As ministers and leaders we need to lead our people into this rich experience now called for.

“Meetings should be held in every church for solemn prayer and earnest searching of the word to know what is truth. Take the promises of God, and ask God in living faith for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is shed upon us, marrow and fatness will be drawn from the word of God. When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request. Then the truth of God’s word will be regarded with new interest, and will be explored as if it were a revelation just from the courts above. The Bible will be regarded as a charter from heaven. Its study will absorb the mind, and its truth will feast the soul. The promises of God now repeated as if the soul had never tasted of His love, will then glow upon the altar of the heart, and fall in burning words from the lips of the messengers of God. They will then plead with souls with an earnestness that cannot be repulsed. Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain.” [113]

As we go further into the needed preparation for the outpouring of the latter rain and search the writings of the Spirit of prophecy for the messages God has sent to this people bearing upon this very experience, our hearts are stirred to a new understanding of the deep spiritual life that is now called for. We read:

“Leaving the first love is represented as a spiritual fall. Many have fallen thus. In every church in our land, there is needed confession repentance, and re conversion. The disappointment of Christ is beyond description. Unless those who have sinned speedily repent, the deceptions of the last days will overtake them. Some, though they do not realize it---are preparing to be overtaken. God calls for repentance without delay. So long have many trifled with salvation that their spiritual eyesight is dimmed, and they can not discern between light and darkness. Christ is humiliated in His people. The first love is gone, the faith is weak, there is need of a thorough transformation.

“My brethren and sisters, humble your hearts before the Lord. Seek Him earnestly. I have an intense desire to see you walking in the light as Christ is in the light. . . . You have left your first love. Self-righteous ness is not the wedding-garment. A failure to follow the clear light of truth is our fearful danger. The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people.” [114]

“It is not because of any restriction on God’s part that the riches of His grace do not flow to men. His gift is godlike. He gave with a liberality that men do not appreciate because they do not love to receive. If all were willing to receive, all would be filled with the Spirit by resting content with small blessings, we disqualify ourselves for receiving the Spirit in its unlimited fullness. We are too easily satisfied with a ripple on the surface, when it is our privilege to expect the deep moving of the Spirit of God. Expecting

little, we receive little. . . . When the Holy Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost, it was like a rushing, mighty wind. It was given in no stinted measure; for it filled all the place where the disciples were sitting. So will it be given to us when our hearts are prepared to receive it.” [115]

How precious are the messages from God that take the veil from our eyes, that we may know and see our true condition in a time so important as this. How we should thank God that He in His great love has revealed just what we should do and be in order to receive this choice gift from His hand. Says Mrs. E. G. White:

“I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary, through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully. I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing,’ unless they obtained the victor over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love-of the world and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” [116]

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.” [117]

This is the time of testing. We are all on trial in this hour of preparation. I quote:

“Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: ‘They are joined to their idols, let them alone,’ and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits not subdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” [118]

Again, let us note this statement:

“To-day you are to give yourself to God, that He may make you vessels unto honor, and meet for His service. Today you are to give yourselves to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. Today you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work to-day to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord-fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” [119]

Of the supplications of God’s people who will be pleading for the final outpouring in the latter rain we read: “The answer may come with sudden velocity and overpowering might; or it may be delayed for days and weeks, and our faith receive a trial. But God knows how and when to answer our prayer. It is our part of the work to put ourselves in connection with the divine channel. God is responsible for His part of the work. He is faithful who bath promised. The great and important matter with us is to be of one heart and mind, putting aside all envy and malice, and, as humble supplicants, to watch and wait. Jesus, our Representative and Head, is ready to do for us what He did for the praying, watching ones on the day of Pentecost.” [120]

We must pray most earnestly, as did the early disciples. No casual praying will suffice for the bestowal of this precious gift to the church.

“All who were fully identified as disciples of Christ and associated with the apostles as evangelists, assembled together at Jerusalem. They put away all differences. Then, continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, that they might receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit; for they were to preach the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God. . . . They were waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of His promise, and were praying with special fervency.

“This is the very course that should be pursued by those who act a part in the work of proclaiming the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven: for a people are to be prepared to stand in the great day of God. Although Christ had given the promise to His disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit, this did not remove the necessity of prayer. They prayed all the more earnestly; they continued in prayer with one accord.

“Those who are now engaged in the solemn work of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord, should also continue in prayer.” [121]

New emphasis needs now to be placed upon all the light the Lord has given to His people. There must be no neglected places in our lives. The full light of heaven will be revealed to the remnant people, and it is highly important that we be found living up to that full light.

“Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” [122]

In seeking the preparation for the falling of the latter rain we must never forget that we shall also be tested in our service for Christ. The true Christian will labor for the Master at every opportunity. We read on this point:

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.” [123]

“Why has the history of the work of the disciples, as they labored with holy zeal, animated and vitalized by the Holy Spirit, been recorded, if it is not that from this record the Lord’s people today are to gain an inspiration to work earnestly for Him? What the Lord did for His people in that time, it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today. All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do. And we are to work with as much more fervor, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance.” [124]

The laymen of the church have their responsibility also in this final preparation for the outpouring of the latter rain.

“If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going on a warfare at their own charges, each seeking how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ. If our people will act upon the light that is given in these few words of instruction, we shall surely see of the salvation of God. Wonderful revivals will follow. Sinners will be converted, and many souls will be added to the church. When we bring our hearts into unity with Christ, and our lives into harmony with His work, the Spirit that fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost will fall on us.” [125]

There is much more that might be said and gathered from the messages that have come to this people on the gift of the Holy Spirit. Time will not permit us to develop this subject further. Finally, then, let us note the assurances found in the Spirit of prophecy writings regarding the kind of life that will meet the standard in preparation for the latter rain and the coming of the Lord. We read:

“Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Savior be brought to yield, the power of temptation. . . . Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ.” [126]

“It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings is destruction to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters: it only fixes them forever beyond all change.” [127]

“Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. . . . Satan did not gain the victory, over Christ. He did not put his foot upon the soul of the Redeemer. He did not touch the head though he bruised the heel. Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil-

a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them.” [128]

24. Some Questions Answered

Preaching Unfulfilled Prophecy

BY R. R. FIGUHR

Adventists are a people of prophecy. It was the earnest perusal and fervent preaching of prophecy that brought forth this people. Carefully, thoroughly, and with marked simple hearted earnestness the great prophetic outlines of Daniel and the Revelation were studied by rugged men whose sole quest was truth. Sturdy William Miller and his stouthearted companions saw the light shining from the sure word of prophecy and not only walked in it themselves but in unity did their utmost to persuade others to do likewise.

One is impressed with their thoroughness and caution. These modern pioneers of prophetic interpretation did not feel impelled, upon catching sight of the first faint glimmer of light, immediately to rush out and declare to the world new discoveries. Their very great carefulness and caution as well as hesitancy, born of a deep recognition of human limitations, resulted in a preaching, when they finally did go out, of such confidence and conviction that it clearly indicated a divine unction from on high, reminding one of what even the enemies of Christ had to admit of His ministry, that "he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The prophetic interpretations of these early Adventist preachers made a profound and lasting impact upon the people.

We note especially as we consider our theme, "Preaching Unfulfilled Prophecy," the experience of that great pioneer, William Miller. For more than twelve years he assiduously applied himself to the study of prophecy. No one knows how many thousands of hours he labored thus. He wanted to be sure of his ground. No fly-by-night interpretation for him. He recognized that he was dealing with matters of transcending importance, and extreme caution and constant reliance on God were his safeguards. We are much impressed with his hesitancy to go out and proclaim to the world what earnest, prayerful searching had revealed to him. It was with the greatest reluctance that he finally went to the public. He felt very humble, incapable of declaring the great truths that he found in God's great mine of truth. Only after a severe struggle with himself and after he had satisfied himself that God had clearly indicated that this was his task did he dare to venture out. After he had once arrived at this decision and knew that God expected him to go to the world with His message, nothing could turn him from his task. Not even the shrewd arguments of the learned could confound him or dissuade him from his mission. With moving power he proclaimed what God had foretold centuries before, and thousands were so deeply convicted that they gave up lives of sin and began marching toward the kingdom.

The preaching of unfulfilled prophecy calls for the greatest carefulness and caution. There dare be no guessing, no human prognosticating. Only God Himself can foresee and foretell with certainty coming events. This is a divine prerogative. Jehovah calls attention to this power and points to it as proof that he is the only true God.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah 46:9, 10.

Prophecy should be a mighty argument for the divine inspiration of the Bible. It should be so presented that confidence in God and His Word is deepened. How tragic when its proclamation is lightly and irresponsibly undertaken, when fanciful ideas and purely human interpretations are accepted as divinely inspired and are openly preached. It has been embarrassing to have people come asking about the soundness of some new interpretation of prophecy that a Seventh-day Adventist preacher has proclaimed. I can even remember instances in which such matters have appeared in print. I recall that in my boyhood days several evangelists clearly saw in Nahum 2:3-5 the modern railroad train with the conductor unsteadily walking down the aisle, checking his passengers, pictured in the following prophetic language: "He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk." Verse 5. This railroad prophecy made a profound impression on my young mind, especially after I had heard it a number of times. There was also the preacher who, with more fertility of imagination than serious scholarship, declared that the text, "For where so ever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matthew 24:28), found its clear fulfillment in the breaking up of the Turkish Empire, which he said was imminent. Someone had asked him the meaning of the text, and he believed it incumbent upon him to give some kind of explanation.

Other fanciful interpretations could be cited. Suffice it to say that such imaginative preaching of prophecy does not beget confidence in the Bible as God's divinely inspired word or in the prophecies therein given. It results rather in the breaking down of confidence in the Word. The preacher and his church are branded as queer and erratic.

To date, no worker has ever had a complete revelation of God's truth and plans. God gives to each worker what he needs to accomplish successfully his task in his generation. It is well to bear this in mind in our search for truth and to recognize our human limitation. The following inspired statement clearly sets this forth:

"Each has his part to act; to each is granted a measure of light, adapted to the necessities of his time, and sufficient to enable him to perform the work which God has given him to do. But no man, however honored of Heaven, has ever attained to a full understanding of the great plan of redemption, or even to a perfect appreciation of the divine purpose in the work for his own time. . . .

"Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the Spirit, did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them." [1]

Speaking of some through whom prophecies came, Peter declares:

“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

These holy men knew neither what they foretold nor the time to which it applied, and to their credit let it be said that they recognized their limitations. That they were deeply interested in what they had been directed to record is shown by their studiousness. However, they were not precipitate in declaring private opinions as to just what was meant or when the events recorded would take place. They had such confidence in God and in His guidance that they could rest their souls in the knowledge that the fulfillment would be revealed in due time. It might not be in their day, but surely the revelation would come. What an example to us who live in this great age of fulfilling prophecy, and what a rebuke to those who impatiently endeavor to tear aside the veil of the future to see what God has not revealed.

There are reasons why certain prophecies are not fully understood even though men may diligently search for their meaning. Often human prejudices and devotion to preconceived ideas blind to truth.

“Not infrequently the minds of people, and even of God’s servants, are so blinded by human opinions, the traditions and false teaching of men, that they are able only partially to grasp the great things which He has revealed in His word.” [2]

This was true not only in the experience of Israel but also in that of Jesus’ own disciples.

“Christ Himself had sent them forth with the message, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel.’ That message was based on the prophecy of Daniel 9. The sixty-nine weeks were declared by the angel to extend to ‘the Messiah the Prince,’ and with high hopes and joyful anticipations the disciples looked forward to the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom at Jerusalem, to rule over the whole earth.

“They preached the message which Christ had committed to them, though they themselves misapprehended its meaning. While their announcement was founded on Daniel 9:25, they did not see, in the next verse of the same chapter, that Messiah was to be cut off. From their very birth their hearts had been set upon the anticipated glory of an earthly empire, and this blinded their understanding alike to the specifications of the prophecy and to the words of Christ.” [3]

Still another reason why prophecy may not be understood is that it was given to be understood at a certain time and that time has not yet arrived.” Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the Spirit, did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them. The meaning was to be unfolded from age to age, as the people of God should need the instruction therein contained.” [4]

Some prophecies given centuries before, were not understood until fulfilled or in process of fulfillment. Again and again as Jesus performed some act or passed through some experience He called attention to a prophecy, saying, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.” He thus pointed out that many of the writings of holy men were prophecies that found their fulfillment in Him. In this same class is Peter’s reference to the prophecy of Joel on the day of Pentecost: “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” It is doubtful whether this scripture was known as applying to that event before it found its fulfillment in the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Yet it was a clear prophetic prediction.

Then there are the prophecies that are clearly intended to unfold future events. It is in the exploring of these that we have most of our difficulty. Men are not always satisfied with what the Scriptures reveal, and endeavor to supply what they believe is lacking. Details are filled in. Unwarranted conclusions are drawn. A structure is erected that is bound sooner or later to collapse, to the disappointment and confusion of many.

As a safeguard against such a dangerous tendency, we are given the following counsel:

“There are many who become restless when they cannot know the definite outcome of affairs. They cannot endure uncertainty, and in their impatience they refuse to wait to see the salvation of God. Apprehended evils drive them nearly distracted. They give way to their rebellious feelings, and run hither and thither in passionate grief, seeking intelligence concerning that which has not been revealed. If they would but trust in God, and watch unto prayer, they would find divine consolation. Their spirit would be calmed by communion with God. The weary and the heavy-laden would find rest unto their souls, if they would only go to Jesus. But when they neglect the means that God has ordained for their comfort, and resort to other sources, hoping to learn what God has withheld, they commit the error of Saul, and thereby gain only a knowledge of evil.

“God is not pleased with this course, and has expressed it in the most explicit terms. This impatient haste to tear away the veil from the future reveals a lack of faith in God, and leaves the soul open to the suggestions of the master-deceiver.” [5] (*Italics supplied.*)

We do well to heed this admonition and to resist the temptation to endeavor to “learn what God has withheld.” “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29. We must have sufficient faith in God to proclaim what He has revealed and patiently wait for the revelation of those things that are now still secret.

There are certain qualities that mark the careful and conscientious student and preacher of prophecy. They were evident in our forefathers in this message. The first of these is humility. William Miller and those who joined him in preaching the prophecies were humble men. They were fearful lest they might lead others astray. They had no yearning to proclaim new and sensational things just to be conspicuous and to give the impression that they were in advance of others. No such spirit actuated them.

It must not actuate us today. God reveals deep and hidden truth to simple and sincere men.” In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Luke 10:21. The attitude with which we approach the study of prophecy is highly important. A childlike faith and implicit trust in God’s will always mark the reliable student and preacher of prophecy.

There must be a surrender to and a guidance by that same . spirit that moved upon the holy men of old who wrote the Scriptures. The surrendered student and preacher of prophecy will so deeply feel the weighty responsibility resting upon him that he will be exceedingly cautious and always anxious to receive all possible counsel and help. He will not want self-confidently to stand alone. He will heed the admonition of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:3: “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” A little further on in the same chapter the apostle adds that the Lord gave prophets, together with evangelists, pastors, and teachers, to produce a beautiful, harmonious church “till we all come in the unity of the faith.” -Verse 13. This unity and complete accord among God’s people is the great unanswerable argument to the world of the genuineness of Christ’s church. Clearly the Lord does not want His ministers to each proclaim a different message. He who gave the prophetic messages certainly did not intend that they should be capable of multiple interpretations. In the case of the minister, silence would certainly be eloquence.

We dare not be impulsive, hasty, or precipitate in our conclusions when dealing with unfulfilled prophecy. Caution must be the guiding word. And surely self-confidence and speculation have no place here, Back on November 29, 1877, James White gave good advice on preaching unfulfilled prophecy, and we do well to heed it today.

“The Bible was given as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It was designed for the benefit of the people in this world and not the next. It is the sure word of prophecy that shines in this dark world. It was not designed for angels or for immortal saints. Therefore we shall not have to wait until we reach Heaven before we understand what the Lord has said to us in His word. The Bible is what God has revealed to man, and if he does not understand it the fault is because he does not search its pages as he should, or because he does not live as near Him as he should, so that he can understand what the Lord has revealed. To say that the Bible was given to be understood-and who will deny this plain proposition?-is one thing, and to say that we do understand every chapter and every verse, is quite another thing.

“Fulfilled prophecy may be understood by the Bible student. Prophecy is history in advance. He can compare history with prophecy and find a complete fit as the glove to the hand, it having been made for it. But in exposition of unfulfilled prophecy, where the history is not written, the student should put forth his propositions with not too much positiveness, lest he find himself straying in the field of fancy.

“There are those who think more of future truth than of present truth. They see but little light in the path in which they walk, but think they see great light ahead of them.

“Positions taken upon the Eastern question are based upon prophecies which have not yet their fulfillment. Here we should tread lightly, and take positions carefully, lest we be found removing the landmarks fully established in the advent movement. It may be said that there is a general agreement upon this subject, and that all eyes are turned toward the war now in progress between Turkey and Russia as the fulfillment of that portion of prophecy which will give great confirmation of faith in the soon loud cry and close of our message. But what will be the result of this positiveness in unfulfilled prophecies should things not come out as very confidently expected, is an anxious question.

“Wars, pestilence, famines, and earthquakes are not the surest signs of the end. These have ever existed. We may have war, then peace, pestilence, then health, famine, then plenty, earthquakes, then the bowels of the earth may be quiet; but the message of the third angel is given but once. The progress of this work in fulfillment of prophecy is the highest and brightest light now shining in the religious heavens. Those looking at the Eastern question will probably be disappointed; but we may bear our whole weight upon the

last message without fear of disappointment. As we now see our world-wide message extending to the nations, we see the fulfillment of prophecy, and the clearest sign of the close of the work, and the consummation of the hope of the church.” [6]

It is significant that Elder White turns from that which has a certain amount of speculation, and hence uncertainty, to a great certainty, the progress of this work in fulfillment of prophecy. This, he declares, is the bright light in the religious heavens and there need be no fear of disappointment.

Should not this be our position in preaching unfulfilled prophecy? Should we not confine ourselves to that which we know, that which is revealed? If prophecy is to be a sure word whereunto people take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place, it cannot be speculation and guessing, resulting in disappointment and confusion. Although some may have their own private ideas as to how and when certain divine predictions may come to pass, they certainly should not be publicly proclaimed. Private interpretation should be kept private.

The apostle Peter (2 Peter 1:20), speaking of prophecy, says that none of it is of “private interpretation.” Moffatt makes this a little clearer by saying, “No prophetic scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself.” Occasionally you hear someone say, “But Elder A’s explanation of that prophecy is thus and so,” and then follows Elder A’s private interpretation, something different from what this people has preached for years. The result is confusion and wonderment. It cannot be that the Lord, whose Spirit moved upon men to write these prophecies, intended that they should be capable of several interpretations. There can be but one correct interpretation. We are beautifully united in preaching the Sabbath truth, the Second Coming of Christ, the state of the dead, and our other distinctive and great truths. Here we have no private interpretations. Should we not be equally harmonious in our preaching of prophecy? Should it not be that in this field, as well as in others, we all say the same thing.”

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10.

The impression should not obtain from what has been said here that there should be any less intensive study of prophecy. We are urged to dig deeper into God’s great mine of truth. Appropriate here are the words:

“The point in question is not the depth of the exploration, but the direction. We can dig ever deeper into the mine of truth and be profited thereby, but we must be sure that we follow in the direction where the vein of gold leads, and not off into blind passages where we shall be lost in a foggy maze. Or, to change the figure, my protest is against the tendency of some to build a tall structure of fine spun deductions, capped with some mysterious or awe-inspiring conclusion and to claim that the whole edifice consists of a ‘Thus said the Lord, that every brick, as it were, in the tall structure is a text of Scripture. Afterward, when such structures collapse, as they generally do, under the impact of scrutiny, some trusting souls are led to conclude that we cannot be sure of anything in the Bible. But it was not really the Bible that was on exhibition; it was the theory of some finite mind.’ [7]

We refer again to Moffatt’s translation of 2 Peter 1:20, “No prophetic scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself.” Every student and preacher of prophetic Scripture needs help. First of all, he needs the aid and direction of the Holy Spirit, who is sent to guide men into all truth. Without His aid no scripture can be rightly understood. Second, every student and preacher of prophetic Scripture needs the help of his brethren. No man is capable of standing alone. For this reason we are bound together into a church so that the members can help one another and no one need stand by himself. As a people we are conspicuous for our interdependence and for our standing together on issues. We call meetings to decide what we shall do and how we shall do it. Then we go ahead and do the thing together. No man launches a project of any consequence by himself. Were he to try it, he would not get far. This is as it should be, for God’s people are a united people. The great system of truth that has been revealed to us and that we have accepted should produce a harmony that surprises the world and convinces it of the genuineness of the faith we profess.

This unity and harmony should be strikingly evident in our preaching of the prophecies. Here, as elsewhere, we should present to the world a united front. There should be no broken ranks. Breaks in the ranks invite the enemy to attack and enter, bringing in division and confusion. We should boldly preach only what represents the united thinking of this people. It is difficult to see how any Adventist preacher can put his whole heart into proclaiming anything less. A thousand times better hold our peace than to teach publicly what brings in discord and destroys harmony, and lays us open to the attacks of the enemy. In saying this, I do not suggest that all must think exactly alike in every detail. Manifestly this is an impossibility and too much to expect of human beings. But I do urge that in preaching unfulfilled prophecy we, as representatives of the church, refrain from putting forth prophetic interpretations that do not represent the conclusions of the entire church. The divine admonition, “That you all speak the same thing,” I believe applies to preaching unfulfilled prophecy.

This Generation

BY W. H. BRANSON

I have been asked by the brethren to talk to you a little while this afternoon on the subject of "This Generation." I hesitate to do this because I am speaking to a group of men all of whom, I am sure, have some satisfactory explanation of this text of Scripture. If you were here in my place, you could give something no doubt that would be logical and satisfactory to us all.

This touches upon a portion of prophecy that is yet unfulfilled; therefore, we cannot be too dogmatic as to just exactly what the reference here is, but I believe it is worth while that we should give some study to it. These words appear in the language of Jesus in connection with His great prophecy of the signs in the heavens and on the earth and must have been intended for us to understand, at least to some extent, as we pass through the last days.

If you have your Bible, please turn to Matthew 24, and let us read a few of the verses that are connected closely with the one we wish to discuss.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When its branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, we know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Verses 29-35.

It is verse 34 that we have been asked to discuss, in which the Lord says that this generation shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled. Just a few weeks ago I received a treatise on this subject from a certain member of our church in which he attempted to prove that the last generation began in 1833, 119 years ago. A statement was quoted in the treatise from one of our pioneer workers, which reads as follows:

"The generation witnessing the falling of the stars will not pass away until His actual coming shall take place."

I am aware of the fact that a number of our brethren, some of our ministers, have taken this position through the years, the position that some of those who were alive and saw the falling of the stars in 1833 will still be alive to see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. But we, of course, have to ask upon what this interpretation is based? Surely it is not upon the language of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24. Nowhere do we find a statement of Jesus that some of those who witnessed the falling of the stars would live until He appears. He says of those who are to constitute the last generation, "When we shall see all these things," and I want to ask which generation it is that saw all these things come to pass? That really is the crux of the question, it seems to me. No generation ever lived upon the earth long enough to see all these signs with their physical natural eyesight. It doesn't say that the one who sees the last of these signs come to pass will constitute the last generation, but that those who see all these things come to pass will.

Who, then, constitute the last generation? My answer would be, "It is those who learn a parable of the fig tree." For Jesus said, after telling of the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man. . . . And he shall send his angels" to gather His elect." Now learn a parable of the fig tree." What is the parable of the fig tree? We are not left in doubt. When his branch is yet tender and it begins to put out its leaves, what do we then know? "Summer is nigh." "So, likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near [or His coming is near], even at the doors." In the parable of the fig tree, which is to be taught to the people after the signs have been fulfilled, the nations will be led to see all these signs as signs of the coming of Jesus.

The only generation that ever sees all these signs at one time will be the ones to whom the parable of the fig tree is taught. And the parable of the fig tree represents the great threefold Advent message that is to be given to the nations of the earth. In the parable of the fig tree these signs are all taken from history and are fitted into the prophetic utterances of Jesus and the prophets, and there the people are bidden to see these signs, for they have come to pass.

According to the prophecy the sun and moon were darkened; the stars fell from heaven; and today as the nations are distressed and perplexed, while men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth, the Advent people are proclaiming these things as signs that His coming is near. They have taken place. Here is the prophecy saying they would; here is the history showing they have. Therefore we see these signs. We today see all of them. The people who lived through them did not see them at all. In fact, they saw none of them as signs of the coming of Jesus. We do see them as signs of the coming of Jesus, because the parable of the fig tree is now being taught among the nations.

I conclude that this statement by Jesus is parallel to His assertion, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." After the signs have taken place, God's messengers go out and teach the nations the parable of the fig tree. You know that when a fig tree is putting out its leaves, summer is here. It follows without question;

we have absolute assurance of it. So, when one sees these things taking place-and one can see them here in the pages of history-lie knows that the coming of Christ is near, even at the door.

Now, the generation that hears this Advent message, the people living in that period of time when this great truth concerning the signs of the times and the coming of Christ is proclaimed to the nations, who learn this parable of the fig tree-this generation shall not pass until all be accomplished.

The people who heard Noah preach that a flood was coming and saw him building the ark out on dry land were the same people who were alive when the Flood came; likewise, the people who live in the world during the time this great Advent message is sweeping over the earth will, many of them no doubt, be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. This generation to whom these signs are preached as signs, this generation that sees them through the light of prophecy as having been signs, shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled.

Somebody says, When, then, did the last generation start? Now the Lord doubtless purposely arranged the prophecy and the parable so that we wouldn't know that. Time prophecy ended in 1844, didn't it? It is not God's purpose that there should be any time prophecy beyond that period to which we can pin our faith and say, The generation began here; it must be only about so long-the coming of the Lord will be approximately at a certain date. Such speculation has all been precluded. We are now having to live by faith in the statement: "Know that he is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:33, margin. And that is just as near as the Lord has revealed the time of His coming. We shall never have another time prophecy. Until after the close of probation we shall not know the day or the hour. Just before Jesus comes He will announce the day and the hour of His coming, but until then we shall not know, but we can know that His coming is so near that it is just as though He stood at the door knocking, and was ready to open the door and come in.

25. Closing Remarks By W. H. Branson

W. H. Branson

Service In The Last Days

GLENN CALKINS: We have just come from the table of the Lord. We are told in The Desire of Ages that there were witnesses present when the disciples met with Jesus that day long ago, and that those same witnesses are present whenever we meet about the Lord's table now. The disciples partook of the bread and wine. We have met today with Jesus. We hear from His lips, as it were, precious words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. The love of Jesus with its constraining power is to be kept fresh in our memory. He who beholds the Savior's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love.

I like the name that is given to the service we have just concluded, "The Ordinance of Service." Let us keep that thought in mind. We read again in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy these words:

"In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In His life and character He not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man. He was the representative of God and the exemplar of humanity. He represented to the world what humanity might become when united by faith with divinity." [1]

May we keep that thought before us, brethren and sisters. remembering this: that. our sins were laid on Jesus, that they perished in Jesus, that they were put away by Jesus. I have in my hand a short statement from the pen of Amos Wells, one of the well-known religious writers. May I read you a portion of it:

"Said the man to the Lord, See what great things I have given Thee. Now wilt Thou do some great thing for me? Said the Lord to the man, I gave thee gold and thou has given Me copper; I gave thee years but thou has given Me hours. I gave thee infinite plenty and thou has given Me hasty thoughts; I gave thee a marvelous body and thou has given Me heedlessness of health; I gave thee a mind of boundless capabilities, and thou has given Me a mind of selfish pleasure. I gave thee love, and thou has given Me indifference; I gave thee comfort and thou has given Me complaint. I gave thee a boundless opportunity and thou has given Me a selfish ambition. I gave Myself and all of Myself, and thou has given Me only a fragment of your heart. Tell me, O man, what great thing I shall give thee for all the great things thou has given Me? Then said the man to the Lord, Give me only, O Lord, Thy forgiveness and Thy grace, that I may serve Thee faithfully all the days of my life. For I am unworthy of the least of all these mercies, and I deserve nothing at Thy hand."

May I read just a few words from the pen of Mrs. Avery Stuttle? Many who have labored on the Pacific Coast knew Sister Stuttle personally, and knew that she was a saint of God.

“Me thought I stood one well-remembered night Beside a being clad in robes of light. She weighed a balance in her mighty hand; I stood astonished at her stern command.

“Justice is satisfied, thy prayer prevails; The mighty cross of Calvary avails.”

Friends, it isn't by our works that we have the right to enter through the pearly gates into the kingdom. It is only through the precious blood of Jesus that was shed on cruel Calvary. This is our only hope. I am so thankful that these meetings are closing as they are with a few studies, or a series of studies, one by Elder Branson on “The Lord our Righteousness,” the other by Elder Dickson on “The Holy Spirit.” It seems to me, brethren, that that is the great need of every one of us today. I know it is my great need. The Lord our Righteousness, how we need Him, how we must have Him!

What shall we do? Shall we say with the man, as has been mentioned here by Amos Wells: “Then said the man to the Lord, Give me only, O Lord, Thy forgiveness and Thy grace, that I may serve Thee faithfully all the days of my life”? That, my brethren and sisters, is the life to which God is calling you and

me—a life of service. We are refreshed at these meetings. It is now coming to the time when we shall be leaving to go back to our fields again. My prayer is that because of my having been here I will be able to render better service than I have ever rendered before, because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ and because of the Spirit of the living God.

What shall we do? We are clearly told by the messenger of the Lord:

“The Lord wants us to come up into the mount, more directly into His presence. We are coming to a crisis which, more than any previous time since the world began, will demand the entire consecration of every one who has named the name of Christ. We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of His Holy Spirit.” [2]

As we go forth from this place to a life of service, my friends, we can render acceptable service to Him only as we have the unction of His Holy Spirit.

“It is our privilege to take God at His word. As Jesus was about to leave His disciples, to ascend into heaven, He commissioned them to bear the gospel message to all nations, tongues, and peoples. He told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. This was essential to their success. The holy unction must come upon the servants of God. They put away all differences. They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, that they might receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit; for they were to preach the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God.” [3]

Brethren, I believe that is what God is calling this ministry to today—to preach this message, the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit and in the power of the living God.

“They were waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of His promise, and were praying with special fervency. This is the very course that should be pursued by those who act a part in the work of proclaiming the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Those who are now engaged in the solemn work of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord should also continue in prayer.” [4]

The ten days that His disciples spent together back there were needed. For we read again:

“For ten days the disciples prayed before the Pentecostal blessing came. It required all that time to bring them to an understanding of what it meant to offer effectual prayer, drawing nearer and nearer to God, confessing their sins, humbling their hearts before God, and by faith beholding Jesus, and becoming changed into His image.” [5]

I like that statement read by Brother Dickson this morning: “We are sealed by the Holy Ghost with power for work that we are to do.” I believe that, brethren. I believe that is what God would have us enter into today, an experience in which He would seal us with power for the finishing of the preaching of this message.

In closing these few remarks I wish to read to you something that has made a great impression upon my mind and heart. You have all heard and known much about that great man of God, Charles H. Spurgeon, who in years gone by stirred the earth with his mighty preaching. He preached in the power and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. Here is a prayer of his.

First he quotes the following scripture:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues

like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4.

And then he prays: “O God, send us the Holy Ghost in this place. Give us both the breath of spiritual life and the fire, till nation after nation shall yield to the sway of Jesus. O Thou who art our God, answer us by fire, we pray Thee. Answer us both by wind and fire. Thou wilt do this when we are all of one accord, all believing, all expecting, all prepared by prayer. Lord, bring us to this waiting state, we pray. Thou art ready to work with us today even as Thou did then. Stay not, we beseech Thee, but work in us. Break down every barrier that hinders the incoming of Thy life. Overturn, overturn, O sacred wind. Consume all obstacles, O heavenly fire. Give us now hearts aflame, and tongues afire to preach Thy reconciling word, for Jesus’ sake.”

Brethren, are we ready to pray such a prayer? Are we ready to enter into such an experience as that? After these wonderful days spent together in this place, surely we want to go back different men and women from what we were when we came. We must pray, pray earnestly, that God will put His hand of blessing upon our service, and fill us with His Holy Spirit.

“Spirit of God, now take full control, Thy presence now enthroned in my soul; fullness of love O now impart. Reign Thou supreme, O Lord, in my heart.”

As I read a bit ago, when the disciples met back there in the upper room on the day of Pentecost they were praying, the record tells its, with a very special purpose in mind. I think it would be well if we would kneel together now, while Elder McElliany, Elder MacGuire, and Elder Richards pray for us this afternoon.

After these prayers we are asking you who feel impressed to do so to come to the microphone here on the platform and give your testimony as to what God has done for you during these meetings-what they have meant to you, the blessing you have received, the inspiration that has come. Shall we kneel together while the brethren stand here at the microphone?

J. L. McELHANY: Our heavenly Father, we come into Thy presence again this afternoon to thank Thee for Thy continued love and Thy great mercy. We thank Thee for Jesus, and for the way He has been lifted up during the meetings we have had here. We thank Thee for the new glimpses we have had of His love and of His infinite power to save men from their sins. O Lord, we thank Thee for the measure of Thy Holy Spirit that has rested upon us. For indeed, while we have been present here through these days, have not our hearts burned within us as we have listened and realized and meditated upon the great truths that have been presented to us.

We pray today, O Lord, that Thou would seal up to our good all these blessings. Teach us today how to live lives of righteousness by faith. Come near to us, we pray, just now. We think of the disciples of old as they gathered there in that upper chamber to seek Thee. So today we unite in praying Thee for the outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit upon us. We know that this is the greatest of all our needs. Take out of our lives, out of our work, and out of our methods everything that would hinder the free and full course of Thy Spirit in our midst. O Lord, we repent of all our sins and our shortcomings today. As we have just partaken of these emblems of the death of our precious Redeemer, we pray that we may go forth from this place to rejoice in the mighty power of our blessed risen Savior, the Jesus who gave His life for us.

Lord, bless this group of men and women here today, we pray. Be with these brethren who have come in from the ends of the earth. Go with them to their fields. And remember all our missionaries and our workers out in the fields abroad today. Bless them and protect them with Thy mercy and Thy grace. Give great power to all workers as they proclaim the truth of God for this hour. Lord now we pray as we here individually present ourselves to Thee. Here are brethren who are bearing great burdens in the cause of God. Help them, we pray. Be with our dear Brother Branson as he carries the responsibility of leadership in this cause. Oh, do Thou greatly bless Thy servant. Bless all these men who are associated with him in this work. Help them, dear God, in these trying hours to know how to meet every situation, with the fullness of Thy blessing and Thy leadership resting upon them.

Now, dear Lord, we give ourselves to Thee. Be with us and continue with us, and answer our cries to Thee today as we pray again for the outpouring of Thy Spirit upon us and upon all our co-workers and fellow believers the world around. Hear us, O our Father, hear us today in these our requests. For we plead for them all in the name of Jesus our blessed Lord. Amen.

MEADE MACGUIRE: O Lord, our dear heavenly Father, we are thankful for the privilege of uniting in prayer to the throne of grace for special help that we need in such a time as this. We do thank Thee, for the evidence of Thy grace, mercy, patience, kindness, and love during the meetings here. We have been conscious of the presence of Thy Holy Spirit, Lord, and it has stirred our hearts as we sense anew that the time is here when we should blow the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in Thy holy mountain, and turn to the Lord with all our hearts. with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning, and sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, and gather to the altar the fathers and mothers and children, and weep between the porch and the altar, and cry, Spare Thy people, O Lord.

O Lord, we repent of the delay. We are reminded again that Jesus might have come many years ago. Our hearts are appalled to think how we have grieved Thee when Thou has loved us with such an infinite love, and we have kept Thee waiting and waiting and

waiting when Thou did long to come and take us out of this old sin-cursed world. God, forgive us, have mercy on us, we pray, for our Laodicean complacency and our satisfaction with the merely human materials we have depended upon, rather than sense as we should that the work of God would never be finished except in the power of God.

And now, Lord, we thank Thee that it is not yet too late for us to seek Thee with all our hearts and claim the promise. We believe that Thou did put in the hearts of the leaders the idea to bring us together to study here. We believe Thou has been with us. We believe that Thou did have something that Thou did want us to receive here and take home with us, that we never had before. O God, help us that we may not go from this place except as we have gained that which Thou has longed to bestow upon us.

And now, Lord, Thou has told us plainly that Thou art waiting to pour out the latter rain for power to finish the work. We think of that one lone man sent off to a foreign field a few hundreds of years ago to a city of a million inhabitants in the darkest paganism, and in forty-eight hours every man, woman, and child cried to God. O God, we need that power today. We cannot depend longer upon mere human resources. God, help us to humble our hearts. to go home and pray as we never have prayed before. O help us each one to live so close to Thee that we can be filled by the outpouring of the highest influence in the universe. And then we know, Lord, that Thou wilt come to take us home. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

H. M. S. RICHARDS: O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name. We come to Thee with a great sense of Thy might and power, but we love to come to Thee as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. All these words of prayer are the words of our hearts. How much we need Thee, dear Lord. We thank Thee for the privilege of studying together. We pray that as a result we may love Thy Word and study it more, that these great truths that we have heard may grow brighter and clearer and be more emphasized as we go on. Help us, we pray, as we consider many other questions that come to us. And may the great truths, the old truths upon which this message is founded, grow brighter as they are confirmed by the Spirit of prophecy and by the events of this world.

O God, we thank Thee for bringing us together. We thank Thee for the wonderful spirit prevailing. In the words of thy servant John Wesley we can say, "And the best of all, God is with us." May we have the witness of the Spirit that we are the sons of God.

We pray, O Lord, as we kneel here, for some of the great problems about us, outside of our own lives. We think of the great Mohammedan world. O God, send forth from Thy Word the light and the power to save thousands in the Moslem world. And as the great shadow of Catholicism broadens, give us thinkers and preachers and literature to meet this tremendous issue.

Father in heaven, make us, above all, preachers of the gospel, preachers of the atoning sacrifice, of a Christ who is our surety and substitute, the only hope of a lost world. By Thy Spirit, give us, we pray, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Abide in our hearts and make us to know this great truth, greater than all other truths; by this shall the world know if we love Thee. Father, we give ourselves to Thee. We are ashamed of our failures and shortcomings. We are grieved that the years go by, that the funerals continue, the cemeteries are being filled. Oh, hasten the day of light. We pray in our hearts for consecration that now we may go forth and finish this work. Finish it in our hearts Lord, that it may be finished in the world. Lord, we bring Thy promises to Thee as little children. Give us answers in Jesus' name. Amen.

GLEINN CALKENS: And, now brethren, we are going to suggest to those who feel it in their hearts to give a testimony here this afternoon that they come quickly to the microphone here on the floor. May the Spirit of God be with each one as he gives his testimony, and may it all be to His glory.

J. L. SHULER, Seminary: I want to thank God for the inspiration, the illumination, and the heart warming that have come to me during the Bible Conference. As I have listened to these presentations and have seen Jesus in each one, it seems to me that over every presentation I've seen the six great words of Paul, "Christ is all, and in all." Many of our younger workers have often asked, "How can I preach Christ in all the doctrines?" I believe this Bible Conference is a down-to-earth, practical demonstration of how to preach Christ in the doctrines. In this Bible Conference I have felt the personal call of the Lord to me asking me to give Jesus a larger place in my life. I answer that call, I give Him all my heart today, and I want to go forth to reflect His wonderful love to the world.

E. E. ROENFELT, General Conference: The apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost declared to the Jews that the One they had crucified, God had raised from the dead and had made Him to be as Lord and Christ. The word Christ, as we all know, means "the anointed one." God the Father made Jesus the anointed Savior. And during the meetings of the past two weeks the Lord has given to me a new conception of the marvelous salvation that this One, Jesus of Nazareth, has provided for me. And my resolve is that I will enter more fully into this remarkable redemption that He has wrought for me. But I've also received the new realization of what Jesus can do through me as my Lord, and I resolve by the grace of God that Jesus Christ, more fully than ever before, shall be my Lord and my King and that He might be able to use me in harmony with His will and purpose to the accomplishment of the greatest good that He has in mind through me to accomplish.

ROBERT WHITSETT, General Conference: This has truly been one of the greatest meetings in the history of our church. My heart is overwhelmed with gratitude in being associated with such a fine body of preachers. Surely some of the greatest soldiers of the cross in

the history of the world have been gathered here in God's sight during the last two weeks. But what we have accomplished and what we should have accomplished are still too far apart. I give my heart to the Lord Jesus all over again today, that for as much as in me is, as long as life exists, there is one story to tell, the story of the Lord Jesus, that He may be lifted up, not only in preaching, but in the out flowing of the life, so that all with whom I come in contact may learn to love Him even as I love Him today.

ARTHUR ROTH, Inter-America: The Bible Conference has been a real blessing to me. My soul has been nourished and strengthened, and my heart thrills to think that God has called me to share in preaching these wonderful things to others. I go from this conference with renewed confidence and enthusiasm to tell of Jesus wherever I go.

RAYMOND HARTWELL, Middle East: I am very thankful that Brother Richards remembered the Moslems in prayer today. I ask you to remember all of my associate workers as well as myself, that we might be loving and lovable Christians, that we might not be elated by applause or dejected by censure or disappointment.

E. E. COSSENTINE, General Conference: I believe this Bible Conference has been the means and the instrument of strengthening our faith in all our beliefs. I know it has mine. I go from this conference with new confidence and a new assurance. I believe it is a milestone in our experience, and from it I expect to see great blessing flow out through all our work, the blessing that comes to me personally.

D. A. DELAFIELD, Review and Herald: I don't feel worthy to testify this afternoon, but an experience has come to me here that would make me feel recreant to my Lord and to my work if I did not speak for Christ, for the new sense of His pardoning mercy and love that has come to me, especially since the meeting last night and during the communion service this afternoon. This love is a wonderful thing, brethren, and there is nothing in all this world that will give a man power like a sense of pardon and the redeeming love of Christ experienced in his own soul. I rejoice this afternoon in the love of Jesus Christ. I praise God for the joy of reconciliation to God and love for my brethren and love for lost sinners. God has done something for me at these meetings; something has come to me. You know, we Adventist preachers are prone to say, "See what the world is coming to." I think, brethren, we ought to be able to say, "See what has come to the world. See what has come to us through Christ." I praise His holy name for a new sense of His pardoning love and His sweet presence.

D. A. OCHS, Columbia Union: I have thought seriously for some time, and perhaps more than ever as I listened to Elder Branson's talk on "Righteousness by Faith," that we as administrators, who in our many duties day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year line up the work to keep the wheels moving, are in great danger that we ourselves are living under the old covenant. It is possible to preach the new covenant, while we ourselves are living under the old. I love my brethren. I want to be of one accord with all, and wherein I have given the impression that I did not love my brethren, I want you to forgive me. Righteousness by faith through Jesus Christ must be uppermost in our ministry. I want to have it in all its fullness.

W. B. OCHS, General Conference: The evening before the Bible Conference began, I was to meet with the planning committee in the Seminary chapel at eight-thirty. I arrived there at eight twenty-five, opened the door, looked in, and saw the men who have given us these wonderful messages on their knees praying. I listened. I heard them plead with God for help, for guidance, for leadership, as they would present these messages. I was convinced then that the Bible Conference would be a success. I thank God this afternoon that it has been a success. It has been a great conference, and will mean much to unite our hearts in the great doctrines of the Advent movement. I thank the Lord that it was my privilege to attend every meeting. My own heart has been blessed, and I want to go from here to be a greater blessing to mankind.

E. C. WARD, South Atlantic: There have been three things that this conference has done for me. First of all, it has confirmed my faith in the fundamentals that comprise the everlasting gospel we are preaching. Second, it has assured me that as we go to preach, and as I go along with my brethren to preach, we are preaching what is known in the Word of God as the truth. And finally, it has been reaffirmed in my mind that the truth we preach will not die in oblivion or ignominy in some corner, but it will triumph and go to the ends of the earth, and then Christ will come a second time.

F. A. MOTE, Australia: I'm very thankful that God made it possible for us to have this Bible Conference. It has been a wonderful meeting. The influence from this meeting will radiate to the ends of the earth until Jesus comes. I'm thankful that we have one Lord, one faith, one message. We're one people. We're united. We're determined to be found faithful until the work is finished. I'm of good courage. As I go back, I ask an interest in your prayers, brethren and sisters, that God will help me to be a faithful servant. I want to be ready to meet Jesus, and I want to help others to get ready. I like these words that have been brought to our attention already: "Like a mighty army moves the church of God; brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod; we are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity."

T. E. UNRUH, East Pennsylvania: For many years I've had in my heart a genuine hunger for the privilege of participating in a conference where I could feel the uninterrupted impact of the Word of God on my heart. I hardly believed that that opportunity would come to me. I rejoice in the Bible Conference that we've just had. My confidence both in the mission and in the message of

Adventism has greatly deepened, and I go back to my section of the field with the determination that God is to have all there is of me. I mean to continue to press through to the great objective that God has set before us—the opening of our hearts to the full in filling of the Holy Spirit, that I might be able to reveal in my life the uninterrupted revelation of my blessed Master.

ANDREW FEARING, Nevada-Utah: For many years I have been standing before people in evangelism and telling them that the longer I study the Bible, and the longer I preach, the more confident I am in the message found in the Word of God. The privilege that has been mine, to assist at this Bible Conference has been very precious, for I sense the renewal of my confidence in the truth of God's words, the strength of His power, and the possibility of His taking an ordinary individual and using him to present that message. This has all been illuminated and has been reaffirmed here in the Bible Conference. My heart has been richly blessed and strengthened. I want to be a better man for God. I want more of what we have been seeking from meeting to meeting—the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord upon these precious truths, not only in my life, but in the lives of all these workers and the laity in our fields, that Holy Spirit, that companion that has been called alongside to help. I do indeed want to do more for God.

A. W. CORMACK, General Conference: First of all this afternoon, dear brethren and sisters, I would rejoice in the opportunity of yielding my life anew to the Lord Jesus. To me this Bible Conference has been a wonderful meeting. It seems to me that it would be impossible for anyone to be in attendance at it and not be assured in his heart that God has a people and that His people in these last days are the Seventh-day Adventist people. God has spoken to our hearts, I know, and His Word has been reflected in our talks. I think of one text that has recurred to me again and again as I have listened to these wonderful assurances given in the messages that have come to us day after day. It is found in the book of Proverbs where God makes an appeal to us: "Have not I written to thee," He says, "excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou rings answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" Proverbs 22:20-21. And I want, dear brethren and sisters, to be able by my life as well as in my preaching to answer the words of truth to those with whom I come in contact, and to lift up before them the Lord our righteousness.

R. A. SMITHWICK, British Columbia: I wish to say that this meeting has brought a personal blessing to me. I feel deeply grateful that the Lord has given me the opportunity of attending this wonderful Bible Conference. I don't feel at all capable, and still I feel a deep responsibility in returning to my field and, as best I can, bringing to other centers the inspiration that this great conference has brought to me.

E. E. LUTZ, Kansas: My heart is full of gratitude to God for the experience of this Bible Conference. It has renewed our faith in the fundamentals of God's message for this hour. It has brought us a clearer view of the great issues of the controversy today, and I am thankful to God for the privilege of answering His call to walk with Christ in the paths of righteousness, and to the end march to His command on the highways of the advancing kingdom of God.

H. W. KIBBLE, Lake Region: I am very happy to give my testimony along with the rest of my brethren, for this Bible Conference has brought to me a new and greater revelation of God's great plan for the preaching of the gospel, for the finishing of His work. And in spite of what the enemies might say, thank God, we are not divided. All one body we, one in hope and doctrine, and one in charity. May I add, one in the preaching of the gospel, one in fellowship. My heart fills up in praise to God. I want to be used as He sees fit, to do my bit in helping finish this work.

JOHN OSBORN, Southern California: This Bible Conference has reassured me of something that I always knew; that is, we haven't followed cunningly devised statements. This day I place my life anew in the hands of Jesus Christ to be used in the preaching of this glorious Advent message to all the world.

P. L. WILLIAMS, Far East: I want to thank God today for the blessings that have been mine during these twelve days here at the Bible Conference. I feel that the only way I can express my feeling of gratitude to God today is in the words of this beautiful hymn: "I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love; I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true; it satisfies my longing as nothing else can do. . . . I love to tell the story, it did so much for me, and that is just the reason I tell it now to thee. . . . I love to tell the story, for some have never heard the message of salvation from God's own holy word." I pray, and I ask you to pray for me, that I may be faithful in giving this story of Jesus' love to mankind.

ROBERT PIERSON, Southern Asia: Great inspiration and spiritual blessing have come to my heart as a result of attending these meetings. I determine by God's grace that a new power will come into my ministry, that I may share these blessings with the workers and laymen of my field. My heart, my life, my all, I lay on the altar of service for God.

B. R. SPEAR, Southern California: I have never doubted the message or the testimonies of the Holy Spirit. I've never been troubled with that. As I have sat through these days listening to a review of the great message, there has been a conviction in my soul that is becoming more and more pronounced, that I've been preaching a wonderful message through the years, and that it is the truth of God. With that there has also come a renewed consecration and determination. As I go back to my field I am going to throw my life into it with all that I have, as I never have before.

O. B. EDWARDS, Oakwood College: This has been the greatest denominational meeting I have ever attended, and I thank God that I was permitted to be present. I have appreciated the manner in which the leaders have magnified the love of God and how they have expressed the manifestation of that love in the unselfish spirit of Jesus Christ. I am glad also to understand better the work of the Holy Spirit in the finishing of the work, and I leave with this determination "Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted."

C. E. WENIGER, Seminary: Because my heart and my mind have been refreshed, I praise Him today. I know whom I have believed. Let us pray that Christ may be the center of every activity and every teaching in the Seminary.

W. E. NELSON, General Conference: This meeting has been a great inspiration to me, and I am sure that no one who has attended will ever say that Jesus Christ is not the center of the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine as far as this denomination is concerned. Jesus has been magnified, and I praise His name, because it is through faith in Him that we have everlasting life.

E. M. CHALMERS, Carolina: I want to praise God for the inspiration that has come down deep into my heart in this conference session to indeed follow the Lamb whither so ever He goes, even to the cross, to save a lost world.

MERLE MILLS, Southern New England: I have been greatly blessed by attending this Bible Conference. I have observed that there has been no time for the discussion of inconsequential matters or petty themes. We studied the deep, underlying principles of the plan of salvation. My faith and hope have been renewed from what I have heard here, and I leave today with a greater determination to be of service to Christ, and I long and determine to have more power to preach this great message.

J. E. EDWARDS, General Conference: As I have listened to each one of the presentations I have thought again and again of that text, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." My own heart has been stirred, my life has been made stronger in faith, and as I go into other fields of service for God with our laymen and our churches, I trust that Christ may be the center of my service the center of my life, and that He may be lifted up in all that I undertake for Him.

A. F. TARR, Northern Europe: Every hour of this Bible Conference has been a blessed one to me. I only wish that every member and every worker in our division might have been able to share these blessings with us. I came to the meeting believing that it would result in a greater unanimity in faith and in doctrine. I leave the meeting believing that it has brought a greater spirit of love and brotherhood that is going to accomplish great things for us in the days to come.

J. T. POWELL, Camp Breckenridge: For years I have been studying about the good times the pioneers of old had at the Bible conferences, and I have longed and prayed for the opportunity of sharing in one. God has answered my prayer. I am exceedingly happy. For the short time I have been in the armed forces I have been constantly on the firing line, bringing God to man and man to God. Here at this Bible Conference, God has been brought to me in a very vivid way-God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As I go forth to labor I have renewed courage, renewed spiritual strength and power. Pray that God will bless my efforts.

GOSTA BERGLUND, Sweden: My heart is filled with thankfulness to God for the privilege of attending this Bible Conference and for all the blessings that have so greatly enriched my soul. I return to my field with a new and deeper spiritual experience.

N. F. BREWER, General Conference: This Bible Conference has given me a new awareness of the beauties of this truth and the plan of salvation. I thank God for Christ, who was willing to die for me and for sinners. I give myself to Him anew, and trust that God will give me power to live out His life within mine.

L. K. DICKSON, General Conference: It was my privilege to be with the brethren as the early plans of this Bible Conference were laid, and I have known of the anxiety in the hearts of the brethren regarding the results of this conference. May I say that those results could have been much different from what they are. We are all very thankful that the objectives that were in our hearts in the laying of these plans have been realized. The expressed unity in the minds and the hearts of the brethren that we have heard here this afternoon is most reassuring. I have believed this great message ever since lily very youthful years. I have never seen the day when I doubted the message in any of its parts. But I must say that after I have gone through this Bible Conference, there has been a cumulative blessing that has come to my soul and my mind in connection with these great topics. Every one of them has been presented in a way that has touched my heart, and I believe God by His Spirit has greatly blessed in this important meeting. I go away from this Bible Conference looking back upon it as one of the greatest meetings that we have ever field so far as my knowledge has gone. My heart has a determination in it, a more fixed determination perhaps than ever before, that Christ shall be uplifted in my ministry beyond any point to which He has been lifted as yet.

C. W. GUENTHER, West Pennsylvania: My heart is full this afternoon. Somehow as I have sat through these meetings and have had the message of God brought again to my attention, my heart has been filled and filled and filled until it is overflowing today. It is a wonderful thing to me to be connected with the message and the movement that have been bound together by the eternal certainties of God's Word.

Today we are a united people; we are not divided. We are moving forward together for Christ. It is a happy thought to me as I return now to my field and to my labors in a great city that I can share with the people of that city the hope and the assurances that mean much to us here.

W. L. REYNOLDS, Florida: As I have said before, these meetings have been a great blessing to me. I prayed from the very beginning that in every message I would receive something for my own heart. The Lord has answered that. I want to return to my field, surrendering all to Him to preach the message with greater power under the influence of the Spirit of God as I never have before.

CALVIN GORDON, Mexico: The greatest privilege that could come to one of the members of God's church today, I think, would be attendance at this Bible Conference. In God's plan every privilege is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility. I have heard God's Word speaking a responsibility to me in the same words that Jesus used long ago in Galilee: Go back, and show what great things God has done for thee. I believe that is my responsibility, and my prayer is that I will live up to it, that I may see wanderers turned into the paths that lead to eternal life.

F. O. SANDERS, Arkansas-Louisiana: My heart has been thrilled during these meetings by a new glimpse of Jesus. Today I give myself completely to Him, and am determined with the apostle to know in my ministry and my life only Jesus and Him crucified.

PHILIP MOORES, Newfoundland: This conference has been a great blessing to me. I believe it will be a great help to me to be a better servant of my God.

DONALD MACKINTOSH, Baltimore, Maryland: We are sure that the message that has been given here at this Bible Conference will swell to a loud cry until the earth is lightened with the glory thereof. I thank God for the privilege of living in this most propitious hour and sharing in the privilege of giving that message.

C. M. BUNKER, Indiana: I am convinced that one of the designs of the evil one is especially with us out on the firing line of local conferences to try to convince us that God has changed, that His message has changed, and that we are not united. I go from this conference assured that God has not changed, His message has not changed, and we are united. And with you I will triumph with it.

T. R. FLAIZ, General Conference: The messages of this conference have served to bring into clearer, sharper focus the simple truths of the gospel. I am convinced as never before that the foundation of God stands sure. As I return to my work it is with just one purpose—that Christ may be more effectively, more evidently lifted up in my life and in my ministry.

V. T. ARMSTRONG, Far East: I am deeply thankful for the blessings I personally have received at these meetings. I am thankful to know that we are a united people, that we have the truth for this time. I only wish that the many workers in the Far Eastern Division could all have been here to receive these blessings. But I am sure that with the printed report to go back to the field, we can take the spirit of the meeting with us. I believe this meeting will be the turning point in the finishing of God's work in the earth.

RALPH WATTS, Southern Africa: This meeting, this conference, has done something to my heart. For a number of years Jesus has been a partner with me in all my activities. As I leave this conference the confidence that I have had in Him is certainly strengthened. I am going to uplift Him more in my whole ministry. And I know that as a result of this conference we shall soon see the work finished throughout the world.

N. R. DOWER, Texas: Many times during the seventy-three services that I have attended during this Bible Conference one text of scripture has been in my mind. It was the prayer of the psalmist; it is my prayer today: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit, Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." I want that experience in my own life, and my ministry to be that kind of ministry.

W. C. MOFFETT, New York City: One thing that has impressed me during this Bible Conference is the fact that the fundamental, perfect truth of this message that was proclaimed by the pioneers has been reaffirmed and shines with greater luster in the darkness of our day. Another thing that has impressed me over and above the study of the Word, has been the strong impression that we are coming up to the great day of God with a shortness of time. And I believe the message that concerns the outpouring of the Spirit of God to meet that issue and finish this work triumphantly and quickly is timely. And I share with you in placing my all upon the altar. I am going back to New York City believing that as our hearts are on fire for God and our faith lays hold of His power, those Jericho walls are surely coming down.

FERNON RETZER, Inter-America: I with you have found it a great privilege to be here at this Bible Conference. I have known Jesus for a number of years, but somehow as I have been here I received a new vision of Him. As I go back to the field I want to lift up Jesus, to put Him in His rightful place in my preaching. I want you to remember our field in your prayers as we meet the Catholic mind from day to day.

V. LINDSAY, South Central: I thank God for the privilege of attending this Bible Conference. I believe it has meant more to enrich my ministry than any other experience of life. And if I know my own heart, as I shall leave this conference I shall work for God as I have never worked before to advance His cause.

L. C. EVANS, Southwest: I thank God today that the brethren were led to arrange for this Bible Conference. My own heart has been warmed and stirred, and I praise God today for the glorious truth that binds our hearts together in the bonds of love and unity and Christian fellowship. Pray for us in the great Southwestern Union, that God's Holy Spirit may be poured out upon us in great measure, that His work may be speedily finished.

A. S. MAXWELL, Pacific Press: This has been not only a very wonderful meeting but, I believe, an ethical meeting. I have a feeling that from this moment this great Second Advent movement will surge forward with new power throughout all the world. And I do pray that God may use me in a little way to help forward this glorious enterprise. As I have sat in these seats through all these meetings, so many of them, I have felt wave after wave of truth bursting over my mind and my soul, uplifting me, and giving me certainly a new conviction that this is indeed the truth, the word of the living God. And it is my prayer that as I go back to my work God may greatly bless me and help me to uplift Jesus as the living Savior and Redeemer and coming King, to the glory of His name.

ROGER ALTMAN, General Conference: Truly the Lord has visited His people, and for this I joy and rejoice with you all. I am determined that the benefits and blessings of these meetings shall abide in my heart, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God in my service during the days to come." Jesus, engrave it on my heart that thou the one thing needful art; I could from all things parted be, but never, never, Lord, from thee."

J. O. WILSON, Burma: I have never had any doubts about the Advent message. I have often wished that there might be opportunity to give more study to how we can make our message more attractive to the various peoples of the earth. The 'illuminating lessons given by one of our brethren here on how to present the message to Catholics have renewed my hope that we may still, by earnest prayer and study and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit find ways and approaches by which we may make our wonderful message attractive and beautiful to Buddhists, Hindus, Mohammedans, and all the peoples of the earth, so that soon many thousands of them may share with us the saving truth, the everlasting gospel, in the setting of the Advent message. I renew today my strength and all to the finishing of the happy and great task of the Lord's work in the earth.

F. D. NICHOL, Review and Herald: My heart is very full today, full of thanksgiving to God for the privilege of having a part in preaching a message to men such as we have for them. I am thankful that in a day of darkness we can have light in our dwelling, thankful to God that in a day of uncertainty we can look with assurance to the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That coming seems more real to me as a result of this Bible Conference. And for that coming I am determined by the grace of God to be ready.

R. A. ANDERSON, General Conference: This has been a wonderful meeting, brethren. Elder Dickson has reminded us that some of us who are closer up in the planning program looked with concern on the possibilities of such a conference. We might have broken up, brethren, with all kinds of divisions. But I thank God that we are united today. The dragon must be very disappointed in the remnant church today, I think. It has been a great blessing to my own soul. And I have been thinking of what Jesus has done for my own soul. I have been led to crown Him the Lord of love." Behold His hands and side, those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified. No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight, but downward bends his wondering eye at mysteries so great." I want to move continually in the sense of that mystery that compels the adoration of the angels as they view the Lord of love whom we serve and worship.

NEAL WILSON, Middle East: Some of us came to this Bible Conference wondering just what the true purpose was, and just what the results would be. Personally, brethren, I have had a most satisfying answer to both of these questions. My soul has been stirred, and my heart has been greatly cheered and inspired by the fellowship and by the wonderful messages of spiritual enlightenment and blessing. Christ has been magnified and exalted, and as a result, self and dogma have been lost sight of. I am overwhelmingly persuaded today that what the Middle East needs, and the world for that matter, is what the Middle East and the world needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Jesus and His love. And I am resolved today, under the blessing and the power of the Holy Spirit, to have some humble part in revealing Jesus to that great part of the world field.

W. L. PASCOE, Australia: This Bible Conference has brought a great blessing to me. It has brought new courage in the task that the Lord has given us to do. My prayer is that the inspiration of this meeting will quickly radiate to every land around the globe.

GLENN CALKINS: And now, friends, it is nearly five O'clock, and there are several still standing, some thirty-five or forty. I am wondering whether it wouldn't be to your liking that we discontinue the public testimony here at this time, and ask those who have not testified publicly to write out a short testimony and hand it to Brother Rebok, one of the secretaries of the Bible Conference. Then it would become part of the written record. I am afraid some have become weary. May that meet your mind? Shall I suggest, then, that

we join in singing hymn no. 597, and make this our consecration prayer as we sing. After the singing of this song we will ask Elder Kern to dismiss this meeting with prayer.

WILLIS HYATT, California: The Bible Conference has been a great inspiration to me. I am thankful for the solidarity of our worldwide movement. I am persuaded that this message is soon to triumph gloriously. I wish to rededicate my life to the Lord and to the completion of His work of salvation. I am of good courage, and thank the Lord for the blessings received at this Bible Conference.

W. MUELLER, Germany: The Bible Conference has brought to me great blessings. I am glad that all the deliberations will soon be in print, and by this the good work done in research and unification of faith will become a blessing to all our ministers and church members. I wish with all my heart that it will serve the whole church for a more complete and successful way to proclaim the Advent message, and to finish the work. I thank the brethren who made this great Bible Conference possible.

W. E. BAXTER, JR., Mexico: This Bible Conference has been a wonderful inspiration to me. As I have sat and listened to the various speakers review the certainties of this message, my heart has been stirred. We seem to be agreed that Israel has camped on the borders of Canaan long enough, and our hearts, like Caleb's, seem to exclaim, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." As I go back to my tasks I pray that this may be the overwhelming impulse in my ministry. I want to go home!

C. LESTER BOND, Upper Columbia: This Bible Conference has brought to me a great personal blessing. It has given me a new appreciation of the love of God and of the whole plan of salvation. It has led me to dedicate my life anew to God and to the finishing of His work.

ANDREW. J. ROBBINS, West Pennsylvania: For years in home, in school, and as a worker in the cause I have believed and loved this message. This Bible Conference has magnified the message, the movement, the Word of God, and Jesus Christ as never before to me. Today the feeling in my heart is, "Where He may lead me I will go, for I have learned to trust Him so, and I remember 'twas for me, that He was slain on Calvary."

E. D. NELSON, Arkansas-Louisiana: The sweet fellowship that I have experienced here has been most precious. The unfolding of the truths we hold so dear in a greater measure, reaffirming and reassuring, prove that on Christ the solid Rock we stand, in surety. I am sorry this conference is ending. God has more than done His part in my behalf in this glorious meeting. My concern now is that I may not fail Him. My determination is to carry the torch back to my conference.

A. B. HUENERGARDT, Indianapolis, Indiana: This has been a most blessed occasion to me, drinking in the spirit of this Bible Conference. It has put an insistent urge into my heart for much greater service for my Lord who gave all for me. This very gripping quotation brought to us by Elder Dickson this morning stands out boldly to me: "The Holy Spirit will not be given to any who are not ready for heaven." How lightly we examine ourselves, and yet, in the light of this statement, how carefully we need to scrutinize our every motive, for here is really the key to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let me see myself as God sees me.

J. B. PENNER, Pacific Press: I want to praise God for the privilege of attending this great Bible Conference. He has blessed me so abundantly. It is my desire and determination to lead a closer life with Jesus every day and be a better man and servant of God by His grace! Pray for me.

KENNETH OSTER, Iran: We have heard a great deal about television and looked forward with great anticipation to seeing it. Our hopes were amply realized just a bit over two weeks ago when we saw the Faith for Today telecast for the first time. Far more than what this modern invention brings has been brought to us through the Bible Conference. Men inspired by God have turned the knobs in our minds to view far more majestic scenes than we had ever dreamed of. We have seen Jesus in visions of the past, present, and future. We have seen Jesus hanging on Calvary's cross. We have seen Jesus pleading our unworthy cases before the righteous judge. We have seen Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. Fellow believers and fellow workers, let us determine to be ready all the time until that solemn vision becomes a glorious reality.

CARL SUNDIN, General Conference: I am thankful for the privilege of being in attendance at this great Bible Conference of the church. At a time when abroad in the land are ideologies that would destroy in one fell swoop all that has meant stability and certainty, it is so good to know that the "foundation of God stands sure." This Bible Conference has re-established my faith in the eternal verities of God that make certain our hope for a future happy home in an earth where sin and evil, sickness and suffering, deterioration and death, shall never enter.

W. E. MURRAY, South America: This Bible Conference has been an epoch-making meeting. It has been inspiring and instructive. It is destined to influence the preaching of Seventh-day Adventist ministers as no other meeting of our times. This meeting will be a strong element in unifying our ministry in thought and action around the world. I personally appreciate the efforts of those who have given us these excellent studies. The direction of the sessions and the planning of the whole conference by Elder Branson and his

associates are highly commendable. I have been very glad to be here. It has refreshed my whole study of the Scriptures, and I shall do all I can to take to the workers and laity in South America all the benefits of this significant meeting.

LOUIS WALDVOGEL, Brazil: There are two blessings that are most precious to the human soul: (1) Communion with the Lord, (2) communion with the brethren. In this Bible Conference both of these blessings were abundantly present. I give thanks to the brethren and praise to the Lord for these. With His help I shall endeavor to be a better brother to my brethren and a better son for my heavenly Father.

WALTER SCHUBERT, South America: It has always been a source of great satisfaction to me to belong to the Advent movement. The lectures presented at this Bible Conference have strengthened my

faith in the irrefutable truth of the Word of God as we make it known. It has encouraged me to reach ever to a higher standard of Christian living and to put my entire life under the constant control of His Holy Spirit. Above all, it has increased my desire to do a greater work in soul winning, and thus to help hasten that day of triumph for this message.

H. O. OLSON, Emmanuel Missionary College: I cannot refrain from writing concerning my feeling relative to the Bible Conference recently held at Takoma Park. I do believe I voice the sentiment of the large majority present, if not all, when I say that the influence of this meeting will be deeply felt, both in our institutions and in the field at large, as long as probationary time lasts. It is the first time that I know of that we held a communion service near the close of such a large gathering, but I fully believe that the Holy Spirit guided those who made this change in the program. It was a wonderful experience, this, to fellowship together with workers of many countries. I cannot recall a time when I felt that heaven was closer than that Friday afternoon hour. It will be a never-to-be-forgotten experience. Many were privileged to express their feelings in the testimonies that followed, but because time did not permit all of us to speak, I am in this way adding my testimony.

Closing Remarks

BY W. H. BRANSON

It seems to me that Seventh-day Adventist workers and people have the greatest future the most glorious prospects before them-of any people who have ever lived on the earth.

While Elder Dickson was speaking I was just thanking God that I am alive and that I am connected with this great movement and that I have the privilege of looking forward to the greatest revelation of the power of God through the church that has ever been witnessed in the history of the universe. That is what is just before us. It is a wonderful thing, brethren, to be a Seventh-day Adventist. It is a wonderful thing to be a Seventh-day Adventist worker or preacher.

Now, in a few minutes we shall have the last benediction. This is the last meeting of our Bible Conference. It will soon be a matter of history. We shall be thinking about it and writing about it and telling others about it.

I believe that those of us who have been privileged to be here, and have been in attendance more or less regularly, have had a great high privilege, for through the ministry of those who have spoken to us we have had the greatest degree of light and truth arrayed before us that has ever been revealed in a Bible conference. New rays of light and power have shone upon us during these meetings.

Brethren, I know that our message to the churches and to the world has been greatly enriched by what we have heard at this conference. One young man came to me last night and said, "I am not going back to my field the same man I was when I came." I said, "No, that would be impossible; no one will." We shall either go back to shrivel up and drop out of the picture in God's work, or we shall go back to undertake and accomplish far greater things for God than ever before. I trust it may be the latter, brethren, with every one of us.

Then I am very anxious that the Bible Conference will not die with us who have been here and with the benediction that is going to be pronounced in a moment.

It is now the responsibility, I will say the solemn responsibility, of the men and women who have been in attendance at this conference to keep the spirit of the conference alive, not only in our own hearts but in the field. Brethren, we must carry this spirit to our workers back home. One brother said, "I am sorry that all our workers were not here with us. Why didn't we have them with us?" Well, brethren, there are thousands and thousands of them scattered over the earth, but you represent those workers. Many of you are going right back to them-out in the divisions, out in the unions, out in the local conferences; and you should remember that they have not had the inspiration that you have had here. You have come as their representatives. It is your responsibility now to carry the Bible Conference to them, to help them find ways of getting hold of these books when the reports come out. Every worker who can read the English language ought to have these reports. Perhaps they should be translated into some of the foreign languages. But, brethren, the

reading of these books is not going to be enough. You cannot get the same inspiration out of a book that you receive from a meeting, and so I am going to make an appeal this afternoon that you have

meetings with your workers as soon as possible after you get back to the field, and inspire them with the blessings of this Bible Conference by telling them as much about it as you can.

Brethren, let us stress in all our meetings with our workers the great importance of the message that came to the Minneapolis Conference in 1888—the message that has been repeated here in these meetings by all the speakers at this conference. I speak of the message of righteousness by faith. That will prepare us for everything else that is to follow. Let us talk about it. Let us prepare talks for the workers on this topic. We cannot possibly over emphasize the importance of receiving righteousness by faith in preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and in preparation for the loud cry of the Advent message. Let us appeal to our workers to go out to the churches and preach on this important subject. Let us raise a cry to the ends of the earth, calling our people to the reception of the righteousness of the Lord, Jesus Christ by faith. If we do, we are going to carry the blessings of the Bible Conference right out to the very ends of the world, and it will bring great revival to all our churches, it will bring added fruitage to our evangelistic efforts as we work for the lost and the unsaved.

And so, brethren, as you go home, go planning in your hearts and minds how you will present this matter to your workers. Call meetings of your workers as you have opportunity, and lay before them the special blessings of this Bible Conference, and particularly this need of getting the message of righteousness by faith before our churches, so that we may not fail where some failed in 1888. We must not repeat that experience.

Let us determine in our heart of hearts that we shall raise this cry until it is heard by workers and people everywhere and until our people learn how to enter into this blessed experience.

And now may God bless every one of you who have been here with us, accompany you as you go back to your fields, and give you success in leading the forces in the field to higher and nobler attainments and achievements in the work of God.

The end is near, brethren. Our pilgrimage in this world is soon to end. May God keep us faithful until it is all over, is my prayer.

26. The Foundation Stands Firm

Before beginning my address I wish to fulfill an exhortation or charge that was given to me a few days ago when I visited Elder Spicer. You all know, of course, that he has been very ill, and last week he inquired about the work with his usual interest and fervor. And then he said to me as I rose to go, “Please take my greetings to all the brethren, and tell them to keep on the main line and preach the message.” I think that is an exhortation that we can all be thankful for.

As Elder Branson has just explained to you, this Sabbath concludes the Bible Conference that has been in session here since the first day of the month. We have representatives here from our world divisions. These men have come to join in a renewed study of the great doctrinal principles and truths that make up the framework of the Advent message. It is a great privilege indeed to greet these brethren and to listen to their reports, as we shall during the Autumn Council, of the growth and the progress of the work in their fields. By way of anticipation I can assure you that what you will hear from these men will thrill your hearts indeed.

Now this morning I want to ask your indulgence, and also to ask you for the privilege of bearing my personal testimony regarding the work of this Bible Conference. As I have thought of this conference and of its work, as I have listened from day to day to the brethren who have conducted the studies here, my feelings could well be described by the words written of the apostle Paul. On his journey to Rome he was met by certain brethren from Rome at Appii forum, and it is recorded of that meeting, “Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.” I thank God today for this Bible Conference; and not only do I thank the Lord for it, but I have taken courage. It has been a great stimulation, as it were, to my courage. I have never for a moment doubted the triumph of this movement, for one of the things that I feel certain about today is that this message is founded on the eternal word of God and it is the development of that word and of the prophecies of that word that call for just such a movement in these latter days.

There is another thing that I feel thankful about in connection with this conference, and that is that it has held to the affirmative in connection with the great fundamental principles of this message, and that, the nonessential and secondary questions have been left aside. Every man who has led out in these studies has revealed the results of weeks and months of study. And as from day to day these men have appeared on this platform to open the Word of God to us, our faith in and our love for the great outstanding truths that make up this message have been rekindled into a bright flame. I want to assure you this morning, my dear brethren and sisters, that I pray that that same flame may be rekindled in your hearts and in your lives. I believe I can speak for all those who have attended this conference when I say that our courage has been lifted to a new and higher level. And I have no doubt but that in the days to come it will be seen that this conference has been another milestone, another epoch, in the progress of this message. As the workers attending

this Bible Conference scatter again to their fields through out the world, with their hearts aglow with deepened love for Jesus, our precious Redeemer and High Priest, with a quickened sense of the nearness of His coming, the spirit that has prevailed here will spread from heart to heart, from worker to worker. Thus the blessings of this conference will be multiplied many fold. I believe we should all pray for this result.

Deepened love for the coming of Jesus will result in a great revival of spiritual life and power in the heart and in the life of every believer. As the important truths of the third angel's message are proclaimed with increasing power, our workers and members will feel less and less inclined to spend time discussing minor matters and weaving the interests of their lives into the interests of the world. I believe the hour has come, my friends, when we must learn what it means to be a separated people, separating ourselves from the things that make up the attractiveness of this world to those who know not this message.

A number of times during this conference mention has been made of the work of the pioneers of this movement. I want to say this morning that I believe we owe a great debt to these men and women of old who laid so well the foundations of this movement. What we have heard here has only intensified, I feel sure, our respect for them and our love for the sacrificial lives they led in laying so well the foundations of this movement. As reference has been made to them I thought repeatedly of the words recorded in Psalms 44:1: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou did in their days, in the times of old."

As we see the unfolding developments of this movement and of this message I believe we shall come more and more to realize what God did for the pioneers of this movement. I am glad that we can feel that God was in their midst and helped them greatly. These words, of course, were spoken to Israel of old. They are still true today regarding the work of the founders of the Advent movement. I want to give you some illustrations of that fact, perhaps also to show, if I can, how the present developments of this movement tie in with the work of the pioneers. I shall read you an excerpt from the first number of *The Midnight Cry*, written by Joshua V. Himes. Please bear in mind as I read these words that this was published before the Advent movement as an organized entity in this world had emerged.

"Our work is one of unutterable magnitude. It is a mission and an enterprise, unlike, in some respects, anything that has ever awakened the energies of man. It is not a subservience to human institutions. It is not a conflict or a political arena-It is not the operation of a distinct religious sect. But it is an alarm, and a cry, uttered by those who, from among all Protestant sects, as Watchmen standing upon the walls of the moral world, believe the WORLD'S CRISIS IS COME." [1]

I pause for a moment to comment that if there was any reason for those men back in those days believing that the crisis of the world had come, there is a hundred fold more reason for us to believe it today.

"Who, under the influence of this faith, are united in proclaiming to the world, 'Behold, the Bridegroom comes; go you out to meet him.' It is an enterprise that swallows up all the petty peculiarities of sectarianism, and unites us upon an elevation so far above those mercenary undulations, that they are utterly lost to our view below." [2]

Passing down a little farther, to October 4, 1853, after the Advent movement had emerged and had taken shape with an organized form, we read the words of James White: "But it requires faith to go forth now, and preach the unpopular doctrines of the present truth. Brethren, pray for your preachers, and pray in faith." [3] This throws a little side light on the conditions they had to face back in those days: "As they go out into a cold world, with all hell stirred against them, they need your faithful prayers. Shall they have them? At the family altar and in the closet. O, remember the servants of Christ who are searching out and feeding the scattered flock." [4] Then he uses a term that is perhaps a little peculiar or unknown to us, but turning from this exhortation to the church at large, he gives an exhortation to the ministers. He calls them "preaching brethren." "And preaching brethren, go out leaning on the arm of your Master. Have faith! faith!! FAITH!!! a little more FAITH." [5] I believe, brethren, preaching brethren today, if we may use that term, and all our members, that we ought to learn this lesson of faith and of prayer, that as the messengers of the Lord go forth into all the world they may have success attending their efforts in greater measure even than we see now." Without it," he says, "you can do nothing. Don't go out to give light to others, while you are enveloped in darkness yourselves. Enter into the solemn -work of God, and never rest satisfied unless you feel the responsibility of your calling, and the worth of precious souls." [6]

I must not take time to read the entire statement, but I do pray, brethren, that we may be actuated by that same spirit of faith and devotion that characterized the pioneers in this movement.

During this conference I have listened to studies on the imminence of the coming of Christ and the fulfilling signs of His coming. These studies have stirred in me the memories of things that took place many years ago. I can think back at least sixty-five years ago, when I saw the first Seventh-day Adventist preacher. He was Elder J. N. Loughborough, one of the pioneers of this movement. I heard him tell the story of how he went out in evangelistic work, how he pitched his tent and preached to the multitudes. As a lad I sat under that man's preaching, and my young heart was stirred by what I heard. I not only heard him preach, but I saw him unroll his charts and from those charts explain the fulfillment of prophecy. It was that teaching that helped to make a Seventh day Adventist of me. I thank God for the work of those pioneers back in those early days. I thank God today for the blessed hope of Jesus' coming.

Many times I listened to the studies of Elder S. N. Haskell. Many times I heard him preach and give Bible studies on the subject of the sanctuary, its types and its shadows in relation to the work of Jesus, our great High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary. I have heard that same kind of preaching here in this Bible Conference, the same truth. Thank God, it has not expired by limitation. It is still present truth for this movement. Brethren, I want to emphasize that these things are still landmarks in the Seventh-day Adventist message that is being borne to the world today.

More than half a century ago I listened to many of our leaders preach on the gift of the Spirit of prophecy in the remnant church. During this conference I have heard these themes reiterated, re-emphasized. How glad I am for this great gift that God in His grace and mercy has planted in the remnant church. Many times I had the privilege of hearing Ellen G. White preach, and I have seen the power of God rest upon her in mighty measure, as right in the midst of a Sabbath sermon she stopped and delivered some message that God had given to her on some particular question or issue. We all have reason today to thank God for the gift of prophecy in the remnant church. And I commend it to your faith and confidence. There is no reason why you should allow your faith to wane. Do not allow anyone to rob you of the blessings of this gift, or allow the detractors to undermine the foundations of your faith.

In the few minutes I have this morning I cannot mention all of the precious themes of truth that have been studied in this conference. But I thank God that the foundations of this message stand firm and unshaken on the eternal Word of God. How the fathers of this message would have rejoiced if they too could have been here, and could have heard their successors in this movement emphasizing the great outstanding truths that have made this movement what it has been and is today.

I was invited to take part in the one hundredth anniversary of our Washington, New Hampshire, church. You are all familiar, I am sure, with the fact that this is our first Seventh-day Adventist church. I need not go into its history. In that anniversary service we called attention to what God had done for His people and for this movement during the existence of that church. I think it is a good thing sometimes for us to review the leadership of God in this movement during these years. We ought to go over some of the ground that has been passed over during the century, to re-establish and to reaffirm our faith. I don't know of any better way to emphasize God's leadership than to call your attention again to those words I read in the beginning, "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou did in their days."

The next day after that anniversary service several carloads of brethren and sisters started out to visit some of the places that had a prominent part in the work in those early days. We drove across from New Hampshire to Low Hampton in New York. We visited the home of William Miller, and saw his church and other places connected with his work. We drove up a little country lane to the cemetery where William Miller is buried. The driver of the first car had left his radio turned on. As we got out of the cars there burst out onto the air the theme song of the Voice of prophecy, "Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring: Jesus is coming again!" We walked over to William Miller's grave as the air gave forth the words, "Cheer up, you pilgrims, be joyful and sing; Jesus is coming again!" Yes, we stood there that day by that grave and counted ourselves among the pilgrims. It did cheer us up and cause us to thank God as the Voice of Prophecy program came on the air proclaiming the great truth of the coming of the Lord.

You can well imagine the tremendous impression made on our minds by that most singular and impressive incident. There in the grave at which we stood lay the body of the man who more than a hundred years before had started a movement that had resulted in laying the foundations of the Advent message now being given to the world. Of the hundreds of men in both the Old and the New World who joined in the proclamation of the coming of the Lord in those early days, he was the only one whose work finally resulted in the definite organization of the great Advent movement. Imagine if you can how we felt, standing by that grave that day, as we heard the strains of that song, "Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring: Jesus is coming again!" What would that man have thought, what would have been his emotions, if only he could have realized that after the lapse of that time there was being heralded out to the world to tens of millions of people the message through the air, and by the voice of living preachers, that Jesus is coming again! Shall we still that voice? Shall we cease that work? Shall we rest satisfied with what we have done up to this time? I say, No, brethren. We must press on to greater accomplishments in the heralding of this blessed message of Jesus' coming.

O let me say today to the watchmen on the walls of Zion, Lift up your voices and proclaim your tidings. Do not become fainthearted in the great work of proclaiming the coming of our blessed Lord. Never from the time of creation to the present hour have we seen so many prophecies being fulfilled or so many signs coming to pass as we see at the present time. If the pioneers had had all the evidences that we have today, how their voices would have been lifted up, perhaps even more strongly and more urgently than they lifted up their voices in their day. In our day we see the things that are nigh at hand. Listen to these words from the writings of the Lord's messenger:

"Prophecy is fast fulfilling. More, much more, should be said about these tremendously important subjects. The day is at hand when the destiny of every soul will be fixed forever. This day of the Lord hastens on apace. The false watchmen are raising the cry, 'All is well;' but the day of God is rapidly approaching. Its footsteps are so muffled that it does not arouse the world from the death-like slumber into which it has fallen. While the watchmen cry, 'Peace and safety,' 'sudden destruction' comes upon them. People are now

settling to rest, imagining themselves secure under the popular churches; but let all beware, lest there is a place left open for the enemy to gain an entrance. Great pains should be taken to keep this subject before the people.” [7]

Note the following sentence: “The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly.” [8]

I believe the time has come when we ought to add to our preaching on the coming of Christ another phase, that is, His sudden and unexpected coming. And that is what the messenger of the Lord emphasizes here.

“The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised. Let no one’s interpretation of prophecy rob you of the conviction of the knowledge of events which show that this great event is near at hand.” [9]

No wonder Jesus Himself said, “Therefore be you also ready.” And why? What is the rest of the text? Do you recall it? “For in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes.” Matthew 24:44. I sometimes wonder whether we put off too far into the future the coming of the Lord by our own interpretations of prophecy. The servant of the Lord says that we are to let no one’s interpretation rob us of the conviction that His coming is near at hand. Christ says, “Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.” Mark 13:36. We need not only the proclamation of the Advent truth but also the Advent experience. We need to be ready. We need to be living in this world as those Who look for their Lord to come.

We must not accept this truth of the Lord’s coming as a mere article of belief. We must not be Adventists in name only, but in heart experience. In our daily living we must live in constant expectation of that great event.

This is a new day. It is a new time for all of us. The demands of this day are more urgent, the calls are more insistent. Last evening Elder Branson read you a statement from Gospel Workers: “Our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths.” [10] There is only one thing that will prepare us for the coming of the Lord, and that has been brought out very clearly in the studies of the last few evenings. I wish you all might have been here last night. After Elder Branson had presented this great theme of the righteousness of Christ, he made a call to all those who by responding would say to the Lord that they would accept by faith His righteousness. And I was greatly encouraged and cheered as I saw the whole congregation rise and press to the front, expressing that faith. It is the only thing that God has provided whereby we may be made ready for the coming of our blessed Lord.

I rejoice in what I see. I rejoice in this forward movement on the part of the people of God. Brethren, the time has come when we must learn to know Jesus in all His fullness. The time has come when we must lay aside every weight that hinders us, and press forward with eagerness, with great earnestness, for the day of God is drawing on apace, and soon Jesus, our blessed Lord, whom we’ve preached, whom

we love, will appear. And oh, to be ready for Him in that great day ought to be the desire of every heart. There may be those here today who were not present last night, who had no opportunity of pressing into the precious experience that I know came to hundreds of hearts last night. You feel that somehow you ought to join hand and heart to those who are seeking for this blessed experience of preparation for the coming of Jesus, who ought to be moving forward into that kind of experience. God is waiting through Jesus our Savior to bestow the gift of righteousness upon every believing heart, waiting to forgive our sins if we will but confess them, waiting to wipe them out and cast them behind His back, and lead us on to experiences of power and victory.

I think of those words given to us by the messenger of the Lord: “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs.” [11] Then is brought to view a further thought that has been emphasized repeatedly in this conference:

“We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of His Spirit; for this is the only efficient agent in the promulgation of sacred truth. It is the Spirit of God [I want you to notice this, please] that quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul to appreciate heavenly things, and attracts the affections toward God and the truth.” [12]

That leads me to say, brethren and sisters, that another one of our great outstanding needs today is that we spend much time in praying for the outpouring of that holy unction, the Spirit of God, that we may be prepared, that our hearts may be weaned from earthly things, and that we may know what it means to have a deep soul appreciation of heavenly things.

Are there those here today who have in their hearts a longing to have this blessed and precious experience? You have traveled along in ways of the world, perhaps, and you are dissatisfied with your past experience. I believe, brethren and sisters, that we have come to a milestone in the history of this movement. From now on we must turn our faces toward Zion as never before, and we must press on.

I would like the privilege of standing with you in seeking again for such a precious experience, praying that God will take out of my life everything that would hinder me in the preparation that I need to meet my blessed Lord when He comes. May we be among those who shall with lights trimmed and burning go forth to meet the Bridegroom when He comes.

Are there any here today who would like to join again, or who have not yet had the privilege of joining, in praying that God will grant you this experience? We are going to close this service with a prayer of consecration. We want the Lord to come near to us by His blessed Spirit, and impress our hearts again with the great importance of the things that matter most at this time. Let us learn, brethren and sisters, to put first things first in our lives and in our experience. If there is anyone here this morning who desires to join with me again in seeking God for that kind of experience, will you indicate it by standing?

27. Looking Back At The Bible Conference

By D. A. Delafield

The second and last week of the never-to-be-forgotten Bible Conference was as full of spiritual power as the first. Thirteen days (Monday, September 1 to Sabbath, September 13) of intensive Bible study and prayer, deep heart searching and confession of sin, has a cumulative effect upon the minds and consciences of men, and particularly upon their lives and experience. Like the great moving sweeps of an oratorio rising to the majestic crescendo at the close, the impressions made by the Spirit of God reached their climax in the last full and busy days of the conference.

The General Conference Committee did not anticipate that the Bible Conference should simply reaffirm our faith in the great truths of the third angel's message. They also encouraged, and looked forward to, a great spiritual revival at the meetings that would reach out through the 450 delegates to our churches in all the world. The greater, more compelling result of sanctification of life through the truth was realized to a highly gratifying extent by the meetings.

The 1952 Bible Conference, which was held in the Sligo church in Takoma Park, will be remembered as one of the truly historic gatherings of Adventist Church leaders in more than a century of activity. But its chief good is not in the past. The conference looked to the future, the immediate future, when the delegates will take up the tools of inquiry and dig deeper into the mine of Bible truth.

The devotional meetings of the conference gave great emphasis to the importance of personal study into Scripture themes. These were truly seasons of Pentecostal refreshing. There were no tongues of visible flame resting upon the heads of the delegates and the speakers, but it was clear to all whose hearts were opened to the Spirit's influence that God had met with us.

In the devotional study on Monday morning, September 8, H. M. S. Richards, Voice of Prophecy speaker, urged that we set apart certain times each year to feast upon the Bible in "massive doses," then take it as a steady diet every day. He held the Book of power in his hand and invited the preachers and the teachers of the Advent movement to become better acquainted with this Book.

Pioneer workers present at this devotional meeting doubtless recalled the time when Mrs. White made one of her last appearances before our people at the General Conference of 1909. Holding the Bible in her hand before the ministers assembled, she said with quiet dignity and true conviction, "Brethren, I commend unto you this Book."

The delegates were conscious, as they listened to the different papers presented-not read, but presented more or less as sermons are given-that the men chosen to present these topics knew what they were talking about.

L. E. Froom, field secretary of the General Conference and author of the monumental volumes *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, sketched for us the absorbing picture of the temple of truth God has been building through the ages, with the Advent message firmly settled on the top as the gleaming tower of the superstructure. Our message is built upon the foundations of many generations, and our spiritual ancestors may be numbered among Jews and Christians of various persuasions who have caught glimpses of God's truth. Our prophetic faith is confirmed by historical evidences. Adventists proclaim a gospel that is everlasting by its very nature. The third angel's message did not originate in the minds of extremists, but in the mind of God. It is our business to know this message. Elder Froom climaxed his series of four lectures by quoting these words from Mrs. White:

"Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice, but a change will come. The Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring the commandment keeping people of God to notice. Every position of our faith will be searched into, and if we are not thorough Bible students, established, strengthened, settled, the wisdom of the world's great men will be too much for us." [1]

As we listened to the various speakers through seven full meetings each day, our heads rapidly filled with facts and our hearts began to overflow with a love for the truth, which had been so clearly reaffirmed before us. We all felt that we should know the message better if we are to meet acceptably the challenge of these times.

Adequate Reasons for Our Faith

One of our older workers remarked, referring to a statement by Eugene Farnsworth, ‘When I was young in my ministry, I could tell all I knew about a subject in an hour’s lecture. Now I have come to the place where I feel a man should know ten times as much about his subject as he can present in an hour.’ As we record our impressions of the lectures, we feel that the different speakers knew twenty or thirty times more about the subjects they offered to us than they had covered in the time allotted. This is an age when we must be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us with meekness and fear.

In between meetings were intermissions of ten to fifteen minutes, when the workers gathered together in small friendly groups and discussed the conference or rehearsed briefly the message presented by the speaker of the past session. There were differences of opinion expressed on small points, but in none of these small groups could we hear any word of doubt concerning the great fundamentals of the Advent message. And these men had come from many distant places around the circle of the world. Representatives of the world divisions were present, and ministers from the ten unions of North America. We walked across Flower Avenue to the new parking lot on the Washington Missionary College campus, and as we glanced at the license plates, we noted twenty-one different States of the United States and several provinces of Canada represented. Doubtless there were many more.

The delegates were well cared for as far as personal needs were concerned. Three cafeterias supplied warm, refreshing meals three times a day, but many of the delegates were so filled with spiritual food that they felt very much like Jesus at the well of Samaria when He said, ‘I have meat to eat that you know not of.’ Rooming houses in the Takoma Park area were packed with these delegates and their families. Good weather prevailed for most of the days of the conference, and the sun shone down in benediction upon the gathering.

The hunger of the workers for more light and truth was anticipated in the preparation of the large literature display in the foyers of the church. Some of the delegates spent all their money on books. It was a good omen of the desire to get down to original sources and know true facts on the Bible and history and other great themes of truth.

Democratic Spirit Prevails

A democratic spirit was present at the conference in spite of the absence of general discussion from the floor. The question box periods allowed for free expression, but the speakers who answered the questions humbly recognized their own limitations. They felt as Ellen G. White did when she wrote her preface to *The Desire of Ages*, ‘I walk with trembling as I present the great truths of the atonement.’ A spirit of consecrated humility was apparent. ‘Who is sufficient for these things?’

The delegates did not lose interest in the conference at any time. The meetings moved steadily onward and upward. One General Conference vice-president was heard to remark at the close of the meetings that he had attended all of the eighty-two sessions. An overseas division president said that he had been to eighty meetings, missing only two because of emergencies. The president of a local conference in North America testified publicly that he had attended seventy-eight of the meetings and had enjoyed them all. The glowing smile on his countenance spoke fluently on behalf of his testimony.

How could the brethren do otherwise than enjoy the meetings, which were so filled with spiritual power? If there was need for a diversity in the order of service, there was always music-glorious gospel music at hand to lift our spirits and inspire devotion to God. Charles Keymer and C. H. Lauda prepared most excellent musical offerings. Not only vocal solos and duets and quartets but instrumental music brightened our days. The Faith for Today quartet added much to the services, and everyone was talking about the inspiring organ meditations of Bradford Braley, who played for the conference on the electronic organ especially installed for the occasion.

Every activity moved forward progressively toward a successful conclusion. The very best seemed to be saved until the last. L. K. Dickson’s series of studies on ‘The Holy Spirit and the Latter Rain’ and W. H. Branson’s stirring messages on ‘The Lord Our Righteousness’ elevated us into the presence of God Himself.

Tracing the work of the Holy Spirit in the human life from the moment when the soul first becomes convicted of sin and onward to the early and latter rain experience, Elder Dickson made clear to all that the work of preparation for heaven and the finishing of God’s work on earth can never be accomplished without the conscious presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. But we cannot receive the Spirit unless we earnestly seek for the gift. Particularly solemn were the words from Mrs. White quoted by the speaker:

“In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, ‘Have you received the Holy Ghost?’ A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building. ‘Your size as a human being is nothing,’ he said. ‘But if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb. And through the eternal ages, you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you.’ ” [2]

One of the most helpful features in Elder Branson’s messages was the direct earnestness with which he spoke. Righteousness by faith is an experience, and no man can talk about it in the power of the Holy Spirit who does not know what it means in his own heart. Two excerpts from these Spirit-filled revival services are typical.” We are not saved by what we do for God. We are saved wholly and completely by what God has done for us.” “The law is a standard of righteousness, but it has never been an instrument of righteousness.” If we receive righteousness at all, we must receive it by faith from the only source, Jesus Christ.

The services on the second and last Friday afternoon sealed the conference to our everlasting good. The celebration of the ordinance of humility and the Lord’s Supper were a high mark of the conference. Then came an inspiring testimony meeting. These services lasted for three hours from two in the afternoon until five. Then the delegates hurried on to their rooms to prepare for the Sabbath-the last glorious day of all.

Friday night Elder Branson spoke. At the conclusion of his revival sermon the workers seemed compelled by the power of God to dedicate themselves to the work of reaffirming the great truths of the Bible to our churches and to the world.

Sabbath morning at eleven o’clock the Sligo church was packed as J. L. McElhany, former General Conference president, offered his impressions of the conference. The attendance in the afternoon and in the evening service was likewise overflowing. When finally the inspiring Voice of Prophecy rally was ended, the workers left the building with the messages ringing in their ears and welling up in their hearts. When the brethren finally return to their fields, what will they bring to their churches and to the world? This is the great unanswered question of the conference. The meetings were a great success. Everyone is agreed upon that. But what will the results be? Will our ministers restudy the great truths of inspiration for themselves? Will they urge our people to do the same? What message will come from this conference to our people around the circle of the earth to hasten the preparation for the climactic event of the ages and the finishing of the work? What will the answer be? It depends upon the delegates, who have the responsibility of taking home with them the radiant glory of spiritual revival and power that attended this historic conference.

The Bible Conference in Retrospect

BY F. D. NICHOL

Now that the great company of the brethren who encamped at Takoma Park for most of September have gone their way, we would take a little time in quietness to evaluate the historic Bible Conference that occupied the first half of that month. What did it accomplish? What did it reveal concerning the doctrines of the movement and the relationship of the Advent ministry to those doctrines? These and other questions come to us from the field. We are glad to give here a forthright and most cheering answer.

First and above all else the Bible Conference revealed in the words of the old hymn,

“We are not divided,

All one body we,

One in hope and doctrine, One in charity.”

We are aware that someone may remark that the speakers were all carefully chosen and their studies written out and previewed by a committee; further, that only written questions were considered in the hours devoted to discussion. That was true. But it was also true that the speakers represented a good cross section of our ministry, as to office, temperament, training, and geography. Nor could it be known in advance what they might say in their papers. Did their written studies, when sent in ahead, reveal wide divergence on the primary Advent doctrines? The answer is emphatically, No.

The principal task that confronted the counseling committee that pre-examined the speakers’ papers was the elimination of overlapping of subjects. In some instances speakers were requested to enlarge on certain points so as to compass most fully the subject assigned. There were also a few instances, only a few, where the committee suggested to a speaker that he eliminate from his paper an observation on unfulfilled prophecy or a personal view on a point of Scripture not presently clear. We may all rightly have personal views on such matters without in any way affecting our belief in the great doctrines, but obviously those personal views are hardly worthy of time and space in a general meeting on denominational teachings.

No Doubts Revealed

We repeat, these papers failed to give any suggestion of doubt or uncertainty concerning those teachings that have made us a distinctive people. This is not a point to be passed by hurriedly or casually. In the years that the Advent movement has been growing, the religious world has gradually been abandoning the great truths of revelation. But though, of necessity, we have had to live in this world of theological change and outright apostasy, we continue to preach the same great truths that have marked the movement from its earliest days. No exhibit of differing views on obscure Scriptures or on unfulfilled prophecy on the part of some of us can hide this most impressive fact that we have not changed our theology.

True, the only discussion possible in so large a conference was by written questions, but it is no harder to write a dissenting question than to ask it from the floor. If anything, it is easier. But did the questions sent up for answer at the question hours disclose wide difference of view on the primary truths of the movement? The answer again is emphatically, No. The questions largely sought for a clarification of points presented by the speakers.

The Bible Conference has come and gone, and the pillars of the temple are still standing, unmoved and erect. Nor is this strange or unexpected. God laid the foundations of this Advent temple and guided the hands of those who up reared the pillars.

Time Has Not Weakened Message

The conference revealed to us anew that time has not weakened the significance of our distinctive doctrines. On the contrary, the passing years have only added power and importance to those teachings. Particularly is this true regarding our exposition of the prophecies. This is a most impressive fact and one of the best proofs of the truth of our claim that God gave us a message for a particular time in earth's history. Such a message ought to gain increasing force and timeliness as events move toward the great climax. And thus it is proving true with our teachings.

The conference impressed us anew with the fact that the primary doctrines of this movement are interlocked. They are not isolated, unrelated beliefs, any one of which might be undermined or discarded without damage to the others. On the contrary, the whole structure of truth is affected if even one of them is attacked. For example, to give up the sanctuary truth would be to repudiate our teaching that God raised up a prophetic movement in 1844. To give up the Sabbath truth would be to abandon our beliefs regarding creation and the moral law, and our preaching of the third angel's message, which in turn is tied in to other great prophecies we have preached. To give up the Second Advent doctrine would mean giving up our teaching on the literal resurrection, the millennium, and the new earth. Thus we might continue with our illustrations.

To use a new figure of speech: Our prime doctrines are a tapestry, whose beautiful pattern presents a picture of God's plan for saving man out of a sinful world and finally remaking this world. Each doctrine is a colorful strand necessary to the symmetry and detail of the picture. I low vital, then, that we faithfully guard each truth.

Christ the Center of Our Message

We realized with new force that Christ is the heart and center of all our teachings, and that without Him those teachings have no meaning. We saw Christ riding forth as King of kings as the Second Advent truth was presented. We saw Him as our great High Priest as the sanctuary doctrine was set forth. We saw Him as the One through whom all things were created as the doctrines of creation and the Sabbath were discussed. We saw Him as the only Source of our life as the doctrines of the nature of man and the physical resurrection were expounded. In brief, we sensed anew that our doctrines are not so many abstract, theoretical ideas on theology; instead, they all glow with the light from the throne and illumine our steps to the Savior of men.

Advanced Education for Ministers

As we listened to different presentations of truth, studiously prepared and documented, we were struck with the fact that many fields of learning make an impact on our doctrines. Geology, biology, physics, history, archaeology, ancient languages, and other fields of learning that might be mentioned, all may contribute something to the proper understanding and exposition of our teachings in this present age. We live in a different world from that of the Advent pioneers a century ago. Today the range of human knowledge has vastly increased and the general level of education of the public has risen sharply. This combination, guided by the naturally rebellious hearts of sinful men, has resulted in much of the apostasy that marks religion today.

Furthermore, the apostate positions in religion seem plausible because they are apparently

supported by science and various other findings of learned men. We cannot turn our backs on learning, nor should we wish to do so. Our task is to show that the findings of science and other fields of learning, when rightly interpreted, give only added proof of the great truths of revelation.

All this simply means that the Advent ministry in these last days, which are to bring all our teachings under searching scrutiny, must be better trained than ever before. That was the conviction that came upon us as the conference proceeded and we saw ancient history, archaeology, and other special fields of learning employed to enrich our understanding of truth. And as that conviction took hold on us we thanked God for our Theological Seminary, which now opens the way for the young ministerial graduates from our colleges to secure advanced training.

The Power of the Message

The final and greatest result of the Bible Conference was the renewed conviction in all our hearts as to the power that resides in the great truths of the Advent movement. You had to sit in the conference day by day to sense the cumulative effect of the presentation of those truths.

Those of us who were born in the message have not had the thrill of attending an evangelistic effort and for the first time coming under the divine spell of the mighty truths of the message. But we believe we felt something of that same thrill as we listened to the presentation of the whole truth of God presented at the conference. There were no committee meetings to distract, no problems of budgets, no material questions to hold our thoughts to earth. We did something different, something that had not been done for thirty-three years: we saturated our minds and hearts for two full weeks with nothing but the Word of God.

We came from that conference with two thoughts, old yet new, standing out above all others: first, that our major, distinctive doctrines are all important and that by comparison the minor points on which some of us might have liked to consume time seemed insignificant and exceedingly unimportant. Second, that we are the bearers to the world of a message that has saving power for our own lives and for the lives of all who will accept it. We are the bearers to men, not of the dry husks of theological opinions, but of the redeeming grace of Heaven in the setting of a prophetic message increasingly timed for these last days.

We left the conference with two exclamations on our lips: Thank God for the Advent message! Thank God for the Bible Conference that made that message stand out more brightly than ever before!

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Chapters 13 to 27

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