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# 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

VOLUME I

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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 saith 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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## **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 ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye 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 Saviour, 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 bended knees. Every topic was prepared in a humble attitude of prayer and heart searching. Every speaker was present on bended knees the night before the conference began, when men's hearts were opened for the infilling 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 care-

fully 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.*

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## 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 confer-

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\* 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.

ence. Let me state them in what I believe is their relative order:

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

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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 shineth 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?

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\* 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, et cetera, 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, ye 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

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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

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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

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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."<sup>1</sup>

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 waymarks 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."<sup>2</sup>

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 some-

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 258, 259.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, p. 59.

times 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 A.M. to 9:30 or 10:00 P.M. 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 Services*.—H. 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*.—D. 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:

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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 lightnings 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."<sup>7</sup>

"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."<sup>8</sup>

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.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 31, 32.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196.

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.

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## Delegates to the Bible Conference

The action of the 1951 Autumn Council of the General Conference designated the representation from all parts of the world field to be present at the Bible Conference. The actual naming of the individuals who were to come as delegates rested with the division and union conference committees. Thus Seventh-day Adventist leaders came from each overseas division except one, and from all the union conferences and major institutions in the North American Division.

As a part of the permanent record of the Bible Conference we present the names of the delegates by conferences and institutions:

### General Conference

<u>Adair, R. H.</u>	<u>Brown, Henry F.</u>	<u>Ham, A. L., and wife</u>
<u>Altman, Roger</u>	<u>Buckwalter, J. A.</u>	<u>Hare, Eric B.</u>
<u>Amundsen, Wesley</u>	<u>Cormack, A. W.</u>	<u>Harris, William J.</u>
<u>Anderson, R. A., and wife</u>	<u>Cossentine, E. E.</u>	<u>Huse, George A.</u>
<u>Barrows, H. W.</u>	<u>Cummins, J. F.</u>	<u>Johnson, Alvin W.</u>
<u>Bergherm, W. H.</u>	<u>Dick, E. D., and wife</u>	<u>Kaplan, S. A.</u>
<u>Bloum, H. P.</u>	<u>Dickson, Louis K.</u>	<u>Klaser, H. W.</u>
<u>Bozarth, C. W.</u>	<u>Dunn, N. W., and wife</u>	<u>Kleuser, Louise C.</u>
<u>Bradley, W. P.</u>	<u>Edwards, J. E.</u>	<u>Knight, F. B.</u>
<u>Branson, W. H., and wife</u>	<u>Elliott, H. T.</u>	<u>Lorntz, E. J.</u>
<u>Brennwald, Frederic</u>	<u>Esteb, Adlai A.</u>	<u>Lowe, H. W.</u>
<u>Brewer, N. F., and wife</u>	<u>Ferren, J. R.</u>	<u>Mathews, G. M.</u>
	<u>Figuhr, R. R.</u>	<u>McAdams, D. A.</u>
	<u>Flaiz, Dr. T. R.</u>	<u>McElhany, J. L.</u>
		<u>McFarland, Dr. J. W.</u>

Moffitt, L. L.	Rulkoetter, A. H.	<b>Specially Invited Guests</b>
Moseley, C. E.	Scharffenberg, W. A.	
Nelson, W. E., and wife	Soper, Francis	
Ochs, W. B., and wife	Sundin, Carl, and wife	
Olson, A. V.	Teesdale, W. H.	
Oswald, T. L.	Thompson, J. C.	
Peters, G. E.	Torrey, C. L.	
Read, W. E., and wife	Wagner, B. E., and wife	
Rebok, D. E.	Walde, Elmer R.	
Reynolds, K. J.	White, Arthur L.	
Robison, J. I.	Whitsett, R. M.	
Roenfelt, E. E.	Wickman, Paul	
Rudy, H. L., and wife	Williams, W. H.	
Ruhling, R.		

**North American  
Division**

*Atlantic Union*

Branson, E. L.  
Coon, Lester O. -  
Fisel, Fernand  
Lenheim, L. E.  
Mills, Merle  
Moore, Roscoe W.  
Perry, Carrol E.  
Reiswig, J. J., and  
wife  
Senecal, Beaman, and  
wife  
Sohlman, Charles  
Wilson, Thaddeus  
Wright, Orville  
Vine, K. L.

*Canadian Union*

Bothe, J. W.  
Bureaud, M. J.  
Collins, V. W.  
Green, E. L.  
Henriksen, H. D.,  
and wife  
Jones, G. Eric, and  
wife

Kuester, W. E., and  
wife  
Moores, Philip  
Nelson, W. A.  
Neufeld, Don F.  
Reeves, C. A., and  
wife  
Smithwick, R. Allen,  
and wife  
Taylor, L. W.  
Taylor, George E.

*Central Union*

Bland, F. L.  
Bradford, C. E.  
Campbell, M. V.  
Carter, Glenmore R.,  
and wife  
Cross, C. G.  
Deming, M. W., and  
wife  
Dittberner, J. L., and  
wife  
Fattic, G. R.  
Furst, B. J., and wife  
Joyce, R. S., and wife

Leiske, LeRoy J.  
Lutz, E. E.  
Mohr, W. B., and wife  
Petersen, N. C. and  
wife  
Rees, Don R.  
Reiner, D. E., and wife  
Schlotthauer, B. L.,  
and wife

*Columbia Union*

Anderson, C. V.  
Bunch, Taylor G.,  
and wife  
Calkins, Harold L.,  
and wife  
Coon, C. J., and wife  
Eleagle, David G.  
Guenther, C. W.  
Hershberger, O. S.  
Hill, W. B.  
Jayne, Stuart R., and  
wife  
Johnson, Miss Ethel  
Kelly, C. H.  
Koch, E. F.

<u>Loewen, M. E., and wife</u>	McKinley, L. L.	Johns, Varner
Mansell, L. R.	Millner, A. E., and wife	Martin, H. K.
Mellor, G. M.	<u>Osmunson, E. R., and wife</u>	Nelson, Mrs. Ruth N.
Mitchell, J. G.	Schander, Harley, and wife	Osborn, John
<u>Ochs, D. A.</u>	Smith, Jere D., and wife	Place, Ernest L.
Patzer, A. J.		Retzer, Helmuth C.
Paully, Stephen		Rustad, G. H.
Powell, J. T.		<u>Schmidt, E. A.</u>
Reinhard, R. M.		Schnepfer, E. W.
Robbins, Andrew J., and wife	<i>North Pacific Union</i>	<u>Spear, B. R., and wife</u>
Robbins, W. M.	<u>Biggs, L. E.</u>	Troy, Owen A.
Robertson, E. A.	<u>Bond, C. L., and wife</u>	<u>Tucker, J. L.</u>
<u>Ruf, A. F.</u>	Carcich, Theodore	<u>Venden, D. E.</u>
Unruh, T. E.	<u>Cole, T. M., and wife</u>	Venden, M. L.
Wagner, J. H.	Engstrom, R. W., and wife	Webb, A. E.
<u>Walsh, Mary E.</u>		<i>Southern Union</i>
Webster, F. C.	Fresk, E. G., and wife	Anderson, V. G.
Wood, K. H., Jr.	Garner, O. T.	Carman, E. E., and wife
	Gordon, A. J.	Cemer, R. K.
	<u>Heubach, Paul</u>	Chalmers, E. M., and wife
<i>Lake Union</i>	Kozel, J. C.	Crider, C. C.
Anderson, D. W.	Robbins, Leon, and wife	Dewald, J. A.
<u>Boothby, R. L.</u>	<u>Sage, A. O.</u>	Evans, I. M.
Bunker, C. M., and wife	Scriven, C. A.	Gernet, B. P.
Capman, H. J.	Westermeyer, H. E.	Grotheer, W. H.
Hutches, G. E.	Zumwalt, A. L.	Johnson, W. B.
Johns, Alger H.		<u>Lauda, C. H.</u>
Kiesz, Arthur	<i>Pacific Union</i>	Lorenz, Felix A.
Kibble, H. W.	Andross, C. E.	Marley, E. L.
Kinney, C. Ray, and wife	<u>Baker, R. C.</u>	<u>Nash, G. R., and wife</u>
Locke, O. F.	<u>Bauer, C. L.</u>	Nightingale, R. H., and wife
<u>McConaughy, J. L., and wife</u>	<u>Becker, Carl</u>	Pingenot, E. L.
Rice, M. L.	<u>Bietz, R. R.</u>	Reynolds, W. O.
Rowe, T. M.	<u>Bohn, A. D.</u>	Siemsen, Walter H.
	Christman, Donald	Singleton, H. D.
	<u>Fearing, A. C., and wife</u>	Strickland, W. E., and wife
<i>Northern Union</i>	<u>French, W. R., and wife</u>	Tindall, J. H. N.
Amundson, Earl W.	Guthrie, W. E.	<u>Walker, Allen</u>
Brewer, R.	<u>Hicks, H. H.</u>	<u>Walker, H. W.</u>
Butherus, D. C.		

<i>Southwestern Union</i>	Gordon, C. G.	Nelson, Edmond D., and wife
Cox, J. E., Jr.	Hewitt, F. H., and wife	Perry, E. E.
Dower, N. R.	Klement, H. C., and wife	Sanders, F. O.
Evans, L. C.	Moore, E. L.	Winders, R. L.
Fordham, W. W.		
<b>Overseas Divisions</b>		
<i>Australasian Division</i>	Williams, P. L.	Lindsay, G. A.
Butler, George, and wife		Lohne, Alf
Cook, A., and wife	<i>Inter-American Division</i>	Meade, J. D., and wife
McMahon, B. H.	Bull, Stanley	Tarr, A. F.
<u>Mote, F. A.</u>	Baxter, W. E., Jr., and wife	Voorthuis, F. J.
Murdoch, W. G. C.	Baxter, W. E., Sr.	Welch, H. J., and wife
Pascoe, W. L.	<u>Bohner, L. F.</u>	
Ulrich, C. F. L.	<u>Calkins, Glenn, and wife</u>	<i>South American Division</i>
<i>Central Europe</i>	Manuel, P. W.	Alberro, S., and wife
<u>Mueller, W., and wife</u>	Reile, Lloyd L.	Blake, O. A., and wife
<i>China</i>	Retzer, Fernon	Feder, Daniel
Lindt, S. H., and wife	<u>Roth, Arthur H.</u>	Krause, Oswaldo
Morse, H. H., and wife	Sickler, M. W.	<u>Murray, W. E.</u>
Tsao, James	White, S. E.	Olson, L. H.
		Riffel, Benj.
		Scarcella, Francisco
		<u>Schubert, Walter</u>
	<i>Middle East Division</i>	Tabuenca, Jose
<i>Far Eastern Division</i>	<u>Appel, G. J.</u>	Waldvogel, Luis, and wife
Anderson, John, and wife	<u>Geraty, T. S.</u>	
Armstrong, V. T., and wife	Hartwell, R. H., and wife	<i>Southern Asia Division</i>
Cleveland, C. C., and wife	Morris, C. C.	Brodersen, R. H.
Gibb, A. E., and wife	Oster, K. S., and wife	Brown, K. S., and wife
Martin, Wayne, and wife	Russell, J. S.	Hardin, L. F.
Nelson, A. N., and wife	<u>Wilson, Neal C.</u>	Kemmerer, M. E.
Pogue, A. L.	<i>Northern European Division</i>	<u>Mattison, H. H., and wife</u>
<u>Sorensen, C. P.</u>	Banks, G. N.	Meleen, E. M., and wife
Wallace, E. H., and wife	Berglund, G.	<u>Pierson, R. H.</u>
<u>Wangerin, Theodora</u>	Cowin, D. V.	Scott, F. R., and wife
	Emmerson, W. L.	Sorensen, E. L.
	Keslake, Edgar	White, Miss Ina
		Wilson, J. O., and wife

<i>Southern European Division</i>	<u>Nussbaum, Dr. J.</u>	Lemon, Philip
<u>Beach, W. R.</u>	Schuberth, Otto	Marter, E. W.
<u>Brennwald, Dr. F.</u>	<i>Southern Africa</i>	Robison, Milton, and wife
Fridlin, M.	Bickley, B. R.	Siebenlist, J. R.
Gerber, R.	Brown, L. D., and wife	Tarr, E. L.
Lanares, P.	Clifford, F. G.	Watts, R. S.
Lorencin, A.	Eva, W. D.	

## Institutional Workers

<i>Atlantic Union College</i>	<u>Heppenstall, Edward, and wife</u>	Crandall, Walter T.
<u>Minchin, G. H.</u>		Delafield, D. A.
<u>Werline, A. W.</u>	<i>Oakwood College</i>	Fox, Dr. J. DeWitt
	Edwards, O. B.	Lee, Frederick
<i>Canadian Watchman Press</i>	Richards, C. T.	Morrison, H. A.
Revert, Miss Jeanne	<i>Pacific Press</i>	Nichol, F. D.
Youngs, Dallas	Chaij, Nicholas, and wife	Palmer, C. E.
	<u>Christman, Harry K.</u>	Snider, J. D.
<i>Canadian Union College</i>	Fayard, M. I.	Thurber, M. R.
Balharrie, Gordon, and wife	Maxwell, A. S., and wife	Tippett, H. M.
Neufeld, Don F.	Neff, Dr. Merlin L.	<i>Theological Seminary</i>
	Penner, J. B.	Horn, Dr. S. H.
		Loasby, Dr. R. E.
<i>College of Medical Evangelists</i>	<i>Pacific Union College</i>	Weniger, Dr. C. E.
Pease, N. F.	Caviness, Dr. L. L.	Wood, Dr. L. H.
	<u>Hartin, L. H.</u>	Yost, Dr. F. H.
<i>Emmanuel Missionary College</i>	Quimby, P. E., and wife	<i>Southern Missionary College</i>
<u>Christensen, Otto H.</u>		Banks, E. C.
Olson, H. O.	<i>Pine Forge Junior College</i>	Westermeyer, H. E.
Thiele, Edwin R.	Newman, R. N.	Wittschiebe, C. E.
		Wright, Kenneth A.
<i>La Sierra College</i>	<i>Riverside Sanitarium</i>	<i>Southern Publishing Association</i>
Airey, Dr. Wilfred J., and wife	Lindsay, V.	Evans, H. P.
Haussler, J. C., and wife	<i>Review and Herald</i>	Finnéy, R. E.
	Christian, R. J.	Holland, Kenneth J., and wife
		Reynolds, L. B.

<i>Southwestern Junior College</i>	<u>Wearner, Alonzo J., and wife</u>	<i>Washington Missionary College</i>
Lewis, Morris D.	Williamson, J. J.	Hardinge, L. Jemison, T. H., and wife
<i>Union College</i>	<i>Walla Walla College</i>	McComb, W. J.
Wallenkampf, A. V.	<u>Heubach, P. C.</u>	Rees, C. N.



**Objectives of the Bible Conference**

By

W. H. BRANSON



## 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 ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions [“schisms,” margin] among you; but that ye 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 ye all speak the same thing.” Of course that doesn’t mean, I am sure, that there will never be any slight divergencies 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 con-

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ference 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 proclama-

tion 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 8, 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 ye in it." It is when the Word of God is proclaimed before men that a new life is born in the soul.

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“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 saith 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 Cor. 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.”<sup>1</sup>

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.”<sup>2</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 17.

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.'"<sup>3</sup>

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."<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 258, 259.

<sup>4</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 595.

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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.”<sup>5</sup>

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.”<sup>6</sup>

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.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 38, 39.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 20, 1903, p. 8.

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 (No. 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."<sup>8</sup> Then the appeal is, "Dwell upon questions that concern our eternal welfare."<sup>9</sup>

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."<sup>10</sup> Every truth that is essential for us to bring into our practical

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1901, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> E. G. White letter 16, 1903.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

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.”<sup>11</sup>

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.”<sup>12</sup>

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

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 13, 1901, p. 517.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 156.

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."<sup>13</sup>

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, ye 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. Possi-

<sup>13</sup> *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1877, p. 172.

bly 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?”<sup>14</sup>

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.

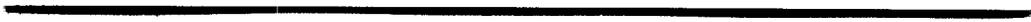
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<sup>14</sup> E. G. White letter 40, 1892.

# Recent Discoveries Confirm the Bible

By

SIEGFRIED H. HORN



## Recent Discoveries Confirm the Bible

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.<sup>1</sup>

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,

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<sup>1</sup> W. F. Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible*, 3d ed. (New York, 1935), pp. 176-177; Albright, "The Biblical Period," *The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion*, L. Finkelstein, ed. (New York, 1949), pp. 3, 4; Harry M. Orlinsky, "Studies in the St. Mark's Isaiah Scroll," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 69 (1950), p. 152.

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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 collaborators in the middle of the nineteenth century, brought to light the name of the Assyrian king Sargon, a king known from the Bible (Isa. 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 B.C., 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 B.C. 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.<sup>2</sup>

Excavations carried out in such famous cities as Nineveh, Babylon, Jerusalem, Gezer, Megiddo, Taanach, 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

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<sup>2</sup> A good survey of the explorations carried out in Bible lands during the nineteenth century is given by H. V. Hilprecht, *et al.*, *Explorations in Bible Lands During the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1903), 810 pp.; the work as carried on in this field until 1936 is admirably described by experts in *The Haverford Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible*, Elihu Grant, ed. (New Haven, 1938), 245 pp. George A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible* (7th ed.; Philadelphia, 1949), 596 pp., presents also a good survey and translations of many texts, but is not up to date any more. The best publication on ancient texts, dealing with the Old Testament, is a collection of translations made by experts in each field, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (henceforth referred to as *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*), James B. Pritchard, ed. (Princeton, 1950), xxi and 526 pp.

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 B.C. 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.<sup>3</sup>

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:

<sup>3</sup> Code of Hammurabi, sec. 146. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 172.

"Eminent names among scholars can be cited for regarding every item of Gen. 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."<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup> 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. (Gen. 31:28, 43.) Later on sons must have been born to Laban (Gen. 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

<sup>4</sup> Albright, "The Biblical Period," *The Jews; Their History, Culture and Religion*, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cyrus H. Gordon, "Biblical Customs and the Nuzu Tablets," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 3 (1940), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

when they left him, a fact which was recognized by Jacob as well as by Laban. (Gen. 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,<sup>7</sup> in the same way as Jacob received a handmaid with each one of his wives as Laban's gift. (Gen. 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 civilisation 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 civilisation 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.'"<sup>8</sup>

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

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Alfred Jeremias, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East* (New York, 1911), vol. 2, p. 45.

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."<sup>9</sup>

The Bible tells us that the population of Palestine at the time of Abraham consisted of Amorites (Gen. 15:16) and that also Hittites lived in south Palestine (Gen. 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 B.C. 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-'Aamu and Sasa'-'Anu,<sup>10</sup> and one had the Hittite name Puti-Hepa.<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Leonard Woolley, *Ur of the Chaldees* (New York, 1930), pp. 168, 169.

<sup>10</sup> Albright, "The Egyptian Empire in Asia in the Twenty-first Century B.C.," *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*, 3 (1928), pp. 247, 248.

<sup>11</sup> In the Amarna Letters, Nos. 286-290. The most recent translation of these letters, made by Albright, is found in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 487-489. The name of the king of Jerusalem is frequently given as 'Abdu-Hepa or 'Abdu-Heba instead of Puti-Hepa, since the right transliteration has not yet been determined. This uncertainty does not influence the meaning of the name, which is perfectly clear, "Servant of the (Hittite) goddess Hepa (or Heba)."

The Bible mentions iron in the patriarchal period. (Gen. 4:22; Deut. 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 B.C. 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 B.C.) and the Amarna Letters (fourteenth century B.C.) give literary evidence for the use of iron in the patriarchal and Mosaic age in Mesopotamia and Egypt.<sup>12</sup>

The same can be said of the camel. Abraham possessed camels, according to the Bible (Gen. 24:10), and they were also found in Egypt during his time (Gen. 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.<sup>13</sup> It is true that according to our present evidence the domesticated camel cannot have been widely used in the third and second millennia B.C. But we have abundant evidence that it was sporadically used throughout the

<sup>12</sup> No single published work can be quoted as containing all evidence for an early existence of iron objects. A forthcoming study of the writer will present the available evidence, of which the following summary can be given: Iron beads appear in the earliest predynastic tombs in Egypt. But they are made of meteoric iron fashioned by a cold process of hammering. The first objects made of terrestrial iron were found in two 4th dynasty pyramids at Gizeh, and in a 6th dynasty tomb at Abydos, all from the third millennium B.C. The tomb of Tutankhamen contained several iron objects, among them weapons and tools. Literary evidence about various iron objects is also found in the Amarna Letters coming from the same period (fourteenth century B.C.), which is the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites. Iron objects of the third millennium were found in the following excavations in Mesopotamia: Tell Chagar Bazar, Tell Asmar, and Mari, and literary evidence about the use of iron comes from texts of the Hammurabi period preceding the Mosaic age. The first evidence about iron from Asia Minor comes from the thirteenth century B.C., and from the Palestine-Syria region from the nineteenth century B.C. (Byblos), and the thirteenth (Qatna). This evidence allows us to declare emphatically that iron had been known and used long before the Mosaic period, and that the statements made in the Pentateuch about the early use of iron is in agreement with the facts as they have recently come to light.

<sup>13</sup> Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), p. 154.

patriarchal period, and before, as a beast of burden in Egypt, Syria-Palestine, and Mesopotamia.<sup>14</sup>

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,<sup>15</sup> 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 (Gen. 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.<sup>16</sup>

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 I, but more material has come to

<sup>14</sup> A forthcoming study of the writer, presented at the meeting of the American Oriental Society at Boston in April, 1952, will contain the available evidence for an early existence of the domesticated camel, of which the following summary is given here: First dynasty tombs at Abydos and Abusir el-Meleq in Egypt brought to light clay figurines of camels. A rope made of camels' hair was found in a 3d or 4th dynasty context in the Fayum, and another figurine of a camel came from the 19th dynasty at Rifeh. This evidence shows that the camel was known as a beast of burden in Egypt during the third and second millenniums B.C. From Mesopotamia come pictorial representations of the camel in the form of figurines or on seals from the very earliest historical period of Uruk-Warka, from the Ur III level at Eshnunna (about 2000 B.C.), and from other places from the middle of the second millennium B.C. One eighteenth-century figurine of a camel was found at Byblos in Syria, and a fifteenth-century one at Gezer in Palestine, showing that the camel was in use throughout the Near East in the patriarchal period.

<sup>15</sup> The evidence for the occurrence of patriarchal names in extra-Biblical sources is spread over many scholarly publications, and the material has not yet been collected. For some of the patriarchal names see Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands," Appendix to Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, pp. 26, 29; and "The Names Shaddai and Abram," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 54 (1935), pp. 193-204.

<sup>16</sup> Albright, "The Biblical Period," *The Jews, Their History, Culture and Religion*, p. 56.

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 B.C. 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.<sup>17</sup> 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 B.C. as we have it today, something which no one hitherto believed to be possible.<sup>18</sup> 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 Transjordan. 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

<sup>17</sup> The earliest Semitic inscriptions from Palestine are conveniently collected by David Diringer, "The Palestinian Inscriptions and the Origin of the Alphabet," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 63 (1943), pp. 24-30; on the Sinai inscriptions see Herbert G. May, "Moses and the Sinai Inscriptions," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 8 (1945), pp. 93-99; and Albright, "The Early Alphabetic Inscriptions From Sinai and Their Decipherment," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (henceforth abbreviated to *Bulletin*), 110 (April, 1948), pp. 6-22.

<sup>18</sup> Claude F. A. Schaeffer, "Reprise des recherches archéologiques a Ras Shamra-Ugarit," *Syria*, 28 (1951), p. 10, Fig. 4; Albright, "The Origin of the Alphabet and the Ugaritic ABC Again," *Bulletin*, 119 (Oct., 1950), pp. 23-24.

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.<sup>19</sup> 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,

<sup>19</sup> John Garstang and J. B. E. Garstang, *The Story of Jericho* (London, 1940), pp. 133-135.

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' (vi,24)." <sup>20</sup>*

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."<sup>21</sup> 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 vindicated by modern excavations, the date of the fall of the city is still somewhat disputed. The excavators date it at about 1400 B.C., 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

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

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 B.C.<sup>22</sup> A new tablet from the Amarna archive mentions a certain chief of the Habiru in Palestine without revealing his name,<sup>23</sup> and the recently discovered Memphis stela of Amenhotep II speaks of the Habiru prisoners he made in Palestine.<sup>24</sup> 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 rôle of the 'Apiru and that of the Hebrews in the earliest biblical sources that it is scarcely possible to doubt some relation."<sup>25</sup>

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 B.C.), 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."<sup>26</sup> 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

<sup>22</sup> Albright, "The Smaller Beth-shan Stele of Sethos I," *Bulletin*, 125 (Feb., 1952), pp. 24-32.

<sup>23</sup> The latest translation of this letter by Albright is found in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 487. See also his remarks on this letter in *Bulletin*, 125 (Feb., 1952), pp. 31, 32.

<sup>24</sup> The latest translation of this text is made by John A. Wilson in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 245-247.

<sup>25</sup> Albright, "The Smaller Beth-shan Stele of Sethos I," *Bulletin*, 125 (Feb., 1952), p. 32.

<sup>26</sup> See Wilson's translation of this broken inscription in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 251.

of refuge. The inscription is from the middle of the fourteenth century B.C., 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 B.C. 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,<sup>27</sup> a practice which was therefore prohibited to the Israelites. (Ex. 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.<sup>28</sup> They reveal that snake worship and human sacrifices were rife, and that ritual prostitutions 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

<sup>27</sup> Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature* (Rome, 1949), p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> Translations of all mythological texts from Ugarit are contained in Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature* (Rome, 1949). The best discussion of the texts is found in Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (Baltimore, 1946), pp. 84-94.

and Canaanite customs during the middle of the second millennium B.C. 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.<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>30</sup> 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 B.C. 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 chrono-

<sup>29</sup> Gordon, "Biblical Customs and the Nuzu Tablets," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 3 (1940), pp. 1-12; E. A. Speiser, "Ethnic Movements in the Near East in the Second Millennium B.C.," *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (New Haven, 1933), vol. 13, pp. 13-54.

<sup>30</sup> Albright, "Some Important Recent Discoveries: Alphabetic Origins and the Idrimi Statue," *Bulletin*, 118 (April, 1950), pp. 14-20.

logical statements as well as all those made in Ellen G. White's writings.<sup>31</sup>

### 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 destructions 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 chariotry of Solomon in that section of the country.<sup>32</sup> Megiddo is one of the cities mentioned in the Bible in connection with Solomon's extensive building activities to provide fortified cities for his chariotry. (1 Kings 9:15; 10:26; 2 Chron. 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 Chron. 8:17.) It states furthermore that gold, silver, and bronze were more plentiful during his reign than ever before or later. (2 Chron. 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 Ezion-geber 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

<sup>31</sup> Mrs. E. G. White states that "for fifteen long centuries, the Passover lamb had been slain" when Christ died as the "Lamb of God" (GC 399), and that the work of inspired revelation continued for "sixteen hundred years," from Moses the historian to John the revelator (GC v). Other statements perfectly fitting into this chronological scheme are found in: PP 204, 514, 627, 628, 703; PK 229, 230; GC 23.

<sup>32</sup> P. L. O. Guy, *New Light From Armageddon* (Oriental Institute Communications No. 9, Chicago, 1931), pp. 37 ff.

were fabricated in this great industrial center, in Solomon's Pittsburgh, as Ezion-geber was called by Nelson Glueck.<sup>33</sup>

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.<sup>34</sup>

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.<sup>35</sup> 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 commen-

<sup>33</sup> The excavations of Ezion-geber have been published only in preliminary form by Nelson Glueck in *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 1 (1938), pp. 13-16; 2 (1939), pp. 37-41; 3 (1940), pp. 51-55, and in the *Bulletin*, 71 (Oct., 1938), pp. 13-16; 72 (Dec., 1938), pp. 2-13; 75 (Oct., 1939), pp. 8-21; 79 (Oct., 1940), pp. 2-18.

<sup>34</sup> Clarence S. Fisher, *The Excavation of Armageddon* (Oriental Institute Communications No. 4, Chicago, 1929), pp. 12, 13.

<sup>35</sup> Pierre Montet, "La nécropole des rois tanites," *Kemi*, 9 (1942), pp. 1-96.

tators 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.<sup>86</sup> They are the remnants of the spoil the Assyrians took when they conquered Samaria in 722 B.C. 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.<sup>87</sup>

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 B.C. 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.<sup>88</sup> Among them we find such well-known names as Abibaal, Baalzamar, Baalazakar, Baalmeoni, Meribaal, and Baala, to give a few examples of names

<sup>86</sup> J. W. Crowfoot and Grace M. Crowfoot, *Early Ivories From Samaria* (London, 1938), xv and 62 pp., 25 plates.

<sup>87</sup> R. D. Barnett, "The Nimrud Ivories and the Art of the Phoenicians," *Iraq*, 2 (1935), pp. 179-210.

<sup>88</sup> J. W. Jack, *Samaria in Ahab's Time* (Edinburgh, 1929), pp. 37-64, 98-101, 145.

that were connected with Baal. Names containing the divine name Jehovah were, Jedaiah, Jehoiadah, 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, Egeliau, 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.<sup>30</sup> 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 con-

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<sup>30</sup> *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 284-286.

queror 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.<sup>40</sup>

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.<sup>41</sup> 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 "Halbishu 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.<sup>42</sup> 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

<sup>40</sup> Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Chicago, 1951), pp. 122-128.

<sup>41</sup> Johannes Friedrich, *et al.*, *Die Inschriften vom Tell Halaf*, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Beiheft 6 (Berlin, 1940), pp. 61, 62.

<sup>42</sup> May, "The Ten Lost Tribes," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 6 (1943), pp. 55-60.

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? B.C.) our Assyrian sources stop. Many of our history books give us the date 606 B.C. 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 B.C. They conquered one city after another and destroyed the Assyrian Empire. This tablet clearly shows that Nineveh was destroyed in the year 612 B.C., and that the Assyrian Empire was divided between the two conquering powers during that year.<sup>48</sup> 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 regnal 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 (Dan. 1:1) with absolute certainty in the year 605 B.C. In the same way Jehoiachin's captivity is dated at 597 B.C., and the fall of Jerusalem in July, 586 B.C. 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

<sup>48</sup> C. J. Gadd, *The Fall of Nineveh* (London, 1923); the latest translation of this text is made by A. L. Oppenheim in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 303-305.

accepted date 598 B.C. for the captivity of Jehoiachin and 587 B.C. 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. Hölscher 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.<sup>44</sup> 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.<sup>45</sup> 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.<sup>46</sup> Seals inscribed with the name of King Jehoiachin found in Debir and Beth-shemesh prove the

<sup>44</sup> G. Hölscher, *Hesekiel, Der Dichter und das Buch*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift der Alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft, vol. 39 (Giessen, 1924), p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> C. C. Torrey, *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 17, 18, 59-61.

<sup>46</sup> Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (Penguin Books, 1949), pp. 141, 142.

existence of this ephemeral king.<sup>47</sup> 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 Jehoiachin, king of Judah, his five sons, and their Jewish tutor appear as recipients of oil and wine.<sup>48</sup> This proves that Jehoiachin was a captive in Babylon during the time when these tablets were written (592 B.C. 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 B.C. 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."<sup>49</sup>

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.<sup>50</sup> 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.<sup>51</sup> 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 defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah."

<sup>47</sup> Albright, "The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Preëxilic History of Judah. With Some Observations on Ezekiel." *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 51 (1932), pp. 77-106.

<sup>48</sup> Albright, "King Joiachin in Exile," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 5 (1942), pp. 49-55.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>50</sup> Harry Torczyner *et al.*, *Lachish I, The Lachish Letters* (London, 1938), 223 pp.  
<sup>51</sup> Lachish Ostrakon IV. Latest translation of this text is made by Albright in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 322.

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.<sup>62</sup> 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 pr[inces] are not good, (but) to weaken our hands [and to sl]acken the hands of the m[en] who are informed about them."<sup>63</sup>

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

<sup>62</sup> Lachish Ostrakon III, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Lachish Ostrakon VI, *ibid.*

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.<sup>54</sup>

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. (Jer. 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.<sup>55</sup>

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. (Jer. 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 B.C. would have

<sup>54</sup> Torczyner, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30, 198, 214, 215.

<sup>55</sup> H. L. Ginsberg, "An Aramaic Contemporary of the Lachish Letters," *Bulletin*, 111 (Oct., 1948), pp. 24-27; John Bright, "A New Letter in Aramaic, Written to a Pharaoh of Egypt," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 12 (1949), pp. 46-52.

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.<sup>56</sup>

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 regnal year had transferred the kingship to his son Belshazzar when he himself left for Têmâ in Arabia, where he spent many years of his

<sup>56</sup> See the writer's articles, "The Aramaic Problem of the Book of Daniel," *The Ministry*, 23 (May, June, July, 1950), Nos. 5-7.

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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.<sup>57</sup>

Prof. R. H. Pfeiffer, who does not believe that the book of Daniel was written in the sixth century B.C., 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."<sup>58</sup>

For us who believe that the book of Daniel was written in the sixth century B.C., 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 (Dan. 5:31; 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

<sup>57</sup> Raymond P. Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar* (New Haven, 1929), pp. 199, 200.

<sup>58</sup> Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), pp. 758, 759.

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 Postexilic Period

Most of the problems connected with the postexilic 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,<sup>59</sup> 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

<sup>59</sup> Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible* (3d ed.; New York, 1935), p. 227.

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.<sup>80</sup>

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.<sup>81</sup> 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

<sup>80</sup> Hermann Gunkel, "Estherbuch," *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 2, col. 381.

<sup>81</sup> Rudolf Kittel, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Stuttgart, 1929), vol. 3, pp. 518, 519; E. Ebeling, *Aus dem Leben der jüdischen Exulanten in Babylon* (Berlin, 1914).

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.<sup>62</sup> 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 B.C.). 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's time (465-424 B.C.) 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.<sup>63</sup> All of them

<sup>62</sup> See the writer's article "Important Archaeological Discoveries," *The Ministry*, 21 (Nov., 1948), No. 11, p. 8.

<sup>63</sup> H. V. Hilprecht and A. T. Clay, *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur*, The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, *Cuneiform Texts*, vol. 9 (Philadelphia, 1898), pp. 47-74.

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 B.C.) the name Mordecai does not appear.<sup>64</sup> 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 calendation. 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 regnal year of a Persian king.

Before the cuneiform sources had revealed to us the true calendation 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 B.C.<sup>65</sup> 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 regnal 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 B.C., the events described in Ezra 7 have been

<sup>64</sup> Clay, *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur*, Babylonian Expedition, Cuneiform Texts, vol. 10 (Philadelphia, 1904), pp. 37-72; *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur*, University of Pennsylvania Publications of the Babylonian Section, vol. 2, No. 1 (Philadelphia, 1912), pp. 9-44.

<sup>65</sup> Statements made by Hales (1830), Pusey (1868), Leathes (1880), and Goode (1891) to the effect that the events described in Ezra 7 have to be dated into the year 457 B.C. are quoted in *Source Book for Bible Students* (Washington, 1922), pp. 39, 554-556.

put in the year 458 by most scholars who have written on this subject in recent years.<sup>66</sup> We have been practically the only ones who still hold tenaciously to 457 B.C. as the year in which the decree of Artaxerxes I went into effect, basing our argument mainly on Nehemiah's statements (Neh. 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.<sup>67</sup> 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, but cannot explain why so many of the dates do not agree with the Babylonian dates.<sup>68</sup>

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 calendaration just as Nehemiah did, although it was not in harmony with the Babylonian calendar,

<sup>66</sup> George Rawlinson, *Ezra (Pulpit Commentary)*, p. 101; L. W. Batten, "Ezra," in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* (New York, 1908), vol. 1, p. 820; Julian Morgenstern, book review of Parker-Dubberstein's *Babylonian Chronology* (Chicago, 1942), *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 2 (1943), p. 130; A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago, 1948), p. 306. However, those scholars who believe that Ezra came to Palestine after Nehemiah, and who identify the Artaxerxes of Ezra 7 with Artaxerxes II (404-359 B.C.), date the events described in Ezra 7 in the year 398 B.C. See Emil G. Kraeling, "New Light on the Elephantine Colony," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 15 (1952), p. 66.

<sup>67</sup> A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1923), xxxii and 319 pages.

<sup>68</sup> The latest studies of the dates were made by M. Sprengling, "Chronological Notes From the Aramaic Papyri," *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 27 (April, 1911), pp. 233-266; Richard A. Parker, "Persian and Egyptian Chronology," *ibid.*, 58 (July, 1941), pp. 285-301.

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 regnal year of Artaxerxes I from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 B.C. 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 calendation. 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 regnal years of a Persian king according to their own fall-to-fall calendar.<sup>69</sup> 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 B.C. If Nehemiah counted the regnal years of a Persian king according to a fall-to-fall calendation, 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

<sup>69</sup> Since the newly discovered papyri have not been published, and the writer has had only confidential knowledge of their dates, nothing more can be revealed about these extremely important documents than what is said in the text. A forthcoming article entitled "The Fifth Century Jewish Calendar at Elephantine," written jointly by L. H. Wood and the present writer, will appear in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. A detailed presentation of the available evidence for the statements made in the text above will be made there. Since the information given above was written, Prof. Emil G. Kraeling has published a popular account of the newly discovered papyri, in which he endorses and uses the dates as worked out for him by Dr. Wood and the writer. See Emil G. Kraeling, "New Light on the Elephantine Colony," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 15 (1952), pp. 50-67.

Geshem the Arabian. (Neh. 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.<sup>70</sup> 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.<sup>71</sup> 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 B.C.<sup>72</sup>

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

<sup>70</sup> The most recent translation of the papyrus mentioning Sanballat as governor of Samaria was made by H. L. Ginsberg, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 491, 492.

<sup>71</sup> Hugo Gressmann, "Die Ammonitischen Tobiaden," *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Berlin, 1921), pp. 663-671.

<sup>72</sup> Gus W. Van Beek, "Recovering the Ancient Civilization of Arabia," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 15 (1952), p. 6.

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." Matt. 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 back-

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ground 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 Alexan-

drinus, 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.<sup>73</sup>

Through the work of Tischendorf the gap between the apostles and the early manuscripts had been narrowed to a

<sup>73</sup> Constantin von Tischendorf, *Codex Sinaiticus* (8th ed.; London, 1934), 88 pp.; Carl Bertheau, "Tischendorf," in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 3d ed., pp. 788-797.

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.<sup>74</sup>

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 A.D., and have preserved for us a New Testament text which was one hundred years closer to the original manuscripts than we had possessed before.<sup>75</sup> 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 A.D., 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

<sup>74</sup> Adolf Deissmann, *Light From the Ancient East* (new ed.; New York, 1927), xxxii and 535 pp.

<sup>75</sup> Frederic G. Kenyon, *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*, New Testament section, 7 vols. (London, 1933-1937).

A.D. When this fragment was published in 1935, scholars realized that they might have to revise their opinion regarding the Gospel According to John.<sup>76</sup>

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.<sup>77</sup> If the Gospel According to John was already known and copied shortly after the beginning of the second century A.D. 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 A.D., 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

<sup>76</sup> H. Idris Bell and T. C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London, 1935), vi and 63 pp.

<sup>77</sup> C. H. Roberts, *An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel* (Manchester, 1935), 34 pp.

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 B.C., containing the Decalogue. 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 authori-

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ties in ancient Semitic texts.<sup>78</sup> 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.<sup>79</sup>

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 Père 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.<sup>80</sup> 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

<sup>78</sup> John C. Trever, "The Newly Discovered Jerusalem Scrolls," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 11 (1948), pp. 45-57; Mar Athanasius Y. Samuel, "The Purchase of the Jerusalem Scrolls," *ibid.*, 12 (1949), pp. 26-31.

<sup>79</sup> Prof. Solomon Zeitlin is the champion of those who do not recognize the antiquity of the scrolls. He has consistently maintained that the scrolls were forgeries of a comparatively recent date. Needless to say, no scholar of name has followed him in his arguments. Of the numerous articles of Zeitlin only the first two are mentioned: "Scholarship and the Hoax of the Recent Discoveries," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 39 (April, 1949), pp. 337-363; "The Alleged Antiquity of the Scrolls," *ibid.* (July, 1949), pp. 57-78.

<sup>80</sup> O. R. Sellers, "Excavation of the 'Manuscript' Cave at 'Ain Fashkha," *Bulletin*, 114 (April, 1949), pp. 5-9.

of Chicago. All these jars, archaeologists tell us, were made either during the Hellenistic period, which ended in 61 B.C., when Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans or during the early Roman period.<sup>81</sup>

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 A.D.? 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.<sup>82</sup> 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.

<sup>81</sup> Sellers, "Archaeological News From Palestine," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 12 (1949), pp. 53-56; Carl H. Kraeling, "A Dead Sea Scroll Jar at the Oriental Institute," *Bulletin*, 125 (Feb., 1952), pp. 5-7. Père de Vaux found during recent excavations at Khirbet Qumran, ruins in the neighborhood of the cave, the same pottery as in the cave, and is now inclined to date the cave jars in the first century A.D., believing that the cave was closed before A.D. 70. (This conclusion does not affect the higher date of the scrolls, which show in their worn state that they had been in use for a long time before they were put into the cave. See J. van der Ploeg, "De in 1947 bij de dode zee gevonden oude handschriften," *Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux*, 12 (1951-1952), pp. 222, 223.

<sup>82</sup> Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. II, The Loeb Classical Library (London, 1932), pp. 51, 53.

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.<sup>83</sup>

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 B.C. 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 A.D., 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.<sup>84</sup>

In the meantime the scientific method of dating ancient

<sup>83</sup> O. Eissfeldt, "Der Anlass zur Entdeckung der Höhle und ihr ähnliche Vorgänge aus älterer Zeit," *Theologische Literatur-Zeitung*, 74 (1949), pp. 597-600.

<sup>84</sup> Trever, "A Paleographic Study of the Jerusalem Scrolls," *Bulletin*, 113 (Feb., 1949), pp. 6-23; Albright, "On the Date of the Scrolls From 'Ain Feshkha and the Nash Papyrus," *ibid.*, 115 (Oct., 1949), pp. 10-19; Solomon A. Birnbaum, "The Dates of the Cave Scrolls," *ibid.*, pp. 20-22; Birnbaum, "The Leviticus Fragments From the Cave," *ibid.*, 118 (April, 1950), pp. 20-27; Millar Burrows, "The Dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *ibid.*, 122 (April, 1951), pp. 4-6; Paul Kahle, "The Age of the Scrolls," *Vetus Testamentum*, 1 (1951), 38-48; G. R. Driver, *The Hebrew Scrolls* (London, 1951), pp. 47, 48. On Zeitlin's articles which declare the scrolls to be forgeries, see references given in note 79 of this paper.

organic material by its radiocarbon contents has been perfected, so that material up to 2000 B.C. 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 A.D. 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 B.C. to A.D. 233.<sup>85</sup> 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.<sup>86</sup>

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

<sup>85</sup> Sellers, "Date of the Cloth From the 'Ain Fashkha Cave," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, 14 (1951), p. 29; "Radiocarbon Dating of Cloth From the 'Ain Fashkha Cave," *Bulletin*, 123 (Oct., 1951), pp. 24-26.

<sup>86</sup> Millar Burrows, John C. Trever, and William H. Brownlee, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, Vol. I (New Haven, 1950), xxiii pp., 61 plates.

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.<sup>87</sup>

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 B.C., 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

<sup>87</sup> Trever, "Identification of the Aramaic Fourth Scroll From 'Ain Feshkha,'" *Bulletin*, 115 (Oct., 1949), pp. 8-10.

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 B.C., although other scholars, among them Albright, think that they come from a more recent copy made during the second century B.C., 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 *pièce de résistance* 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 con-

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tinued 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 B.C. 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."<sup>88</sup>

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."<sup>89</sup>

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

<sup>88</sup> Burrows, "Variant Readings in the Isaiah Manuscript," *Bulletin*, 111 (Oct., 1948), pp. 16, 17.  
<sup>89</sup> Albright, "The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery," *Bulletin*, 118 (April, 1950), p. 6.

taught us to regard that text as constituting far more reliable historical source material than the generations preceding our own realized."<sup>90</sup>

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.<sup>91</sup>

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.

<sup>90</sup> Orłinsky, "Studies in the St. Mark's Isaiah Scroll," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 69 (1950), p. 152.

<sup>91</sup> John Bright in a book review of Roberts' *The Old Testament Text and Versions*, in *Interpretation*, 6 (1952), pp. 116, 117.

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 *École 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

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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 A.D. 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.<sup>92</sup>

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.

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<sup>92</sup> Albright, "From the Acting President's Desk," *Bulletin*, 126 (April, 1952), p. 2.

**Christ the Center of All True Preaching**

By

M. K. ECKENROTH

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# Christ the Center of All True Preaching

## Part I

### 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 variableness. 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 dis-coloring 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 reapings.

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, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth 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 saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." John 21:15-17.

It was a fundamental lesson Christ wished His ministers

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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 "sheepshearing" 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."<sup>1</sup> 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."<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> Austin Phelps, *The Theory of Preaching*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Gerald Kennedy, *His Word Through Preaching*, p. 8.

analysis, we are not employees at all, but unworthy (voices) of the living God."<sup>3</sup> 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."<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, it is obviously much easier to show what is not a sermon than what is. A sermon is more than informa- tive. 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 extravaganzas 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 labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Col. 1:25-29.

How can we read these words without sensing the moving

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *The Shepherd-Evangelist*, by Roy Allan Anderson, p. 49.

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." Eph. 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." Phil. 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 liveth) 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." Gal. 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."<sup>5</sup> How shall we otherwise say it but that the preacher speaks for God as His ambassador when he is completely identified

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 135.

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 wheresoever 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.’”<sup>6</sup>

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

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

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 ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who

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knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 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 ye 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 Saviour 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."<sup>7</sup>

### *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."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 31.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 38.

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 Saviour, and the victory is won."<sup>9</sup>

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."<sup>10</sup>

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.

<sup>9</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 298, 299.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895, p. 177.

*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 Saviour 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 mockings, the deridings, 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!”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1888, p. 578.

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, ye can do nothing.'" <sup>12</sup>

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." <sup>13</sup>

### 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

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1888, p. 546.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, April 17, 1888, p. 242.

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 Saviour, 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 Saviour."<sup>14</sup>

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 Saviours 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."<sup>15</sup>

#### *A Cruciform Message*

Christocentric preaching cannot avoid the moving, impelling domination of the cruciform message. This is the heart-throb, the very life, of true Christianity. It is the heart, the

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 160.

<sup>15</sup> Gaines S. Dobbins, *Evangelism According to Christ*, p. 34.

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."<sup>10</sup>

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 Saviour. We should be noted in the world as outstanding expositors of the blessed Saviour! 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 tithe—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

<sup>10</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 156.

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."<sup>17</sup>

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.*"<sup>18</sup>

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."<sup>19</sup>

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."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 7, 1890, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, June 18, 1895, p. 385.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 22, 1892, p. 723.

<sup>20</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 226.

*The Secret of Winning Men*

This is the secret of winning more men to the truth. A cruciform 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."<sup>21</sup>

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel'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.

"E'er 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

<sup>21</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 2, 1903, p. 8.

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.”<sup>22</sup>

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 Saviour 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.”<sup>23</sup>

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.”<sup>24</sup> (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

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, May 26, 1903, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 170.

<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Colporteur Evangelist*, pp. 60, 61.

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."<sup>25</sup>

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."<sup>26</sup>

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."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92.

<sup>26</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 199.

<sup>27</sup> Powhatan W. James, George W. Truett, *A Biography*, pp. 270, 271.

# Christ the Center of All True Preaching

## Part II

“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 Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath 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 Tim. 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 Saviour. "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." 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 saith 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 us 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 hundredfold. 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."<sup>28</sup>

### *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.”<sup>29</sup>

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

<sup>28</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 119.

<sup>29</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 68.

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.<sup>70 30</sup>

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 debative, 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. Rev. 21:6.
6. The root and the offspring of David. Rev. 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. Rev. 22:16.
11. The way, the truth, and the life. John 14:6.

<sup>30</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 254.

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 *materia* 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."<sup>31</sup> 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."<sup>32</sup>

"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."<sup>33</sup>

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."<sup>34</sup> And yet for all of this He became:

<sup>31</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 485.

<sup>32</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 144.

<sup>33</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 144.

<sup>34</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 663.

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

"A MAN of sorrows." Isa. 53:3.

"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." Phil. 2:8.

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

He was both Son of God and Son of man.

The Son of God: Matt. 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; Rom. 1:9; 5:10; 8:3, 29, 32; 1 Cor. 1:9; Gal. 1:16; 4:4, 6; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 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: Matt. 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; Rev. 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, reincarnate 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 Christlike tenderness and love possible into the voice.

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The higher a minister's position, the more circumspect should he be in word and act."<sup>35</sup>

### *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."<sup>36</sup> 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."<sup>37</sup>

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:

<sup>35</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 174.

<sup>36</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 13, 1912, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 636.

"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."<sup>38</sup>

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."<sup>39</sup> 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.*

Col. 1:17—"He is before all things."

Prov. 8:23—"I was . . . from the beginning."

Micah 5:2, margin—"Whose goings . . . from the days of eternity."

Heb. 1:10—"Thou, Lord, in the beginning . . . laid the foundation of the earth."

<sup>38</sup> Ellen G. White in *Signs of the Times*, July 1, 1889, p. 886.

<sup>39</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 58.

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.*

Heb. 1:9—"Anointed . . . above thy fellows."

Phil. 2:9—"A name which is above every name."

Eph. 1:20, 21—"Set him . . . far above all principality."

*He is OVER all things.*

Matt. 11:27—"All things are delivered unto me."

Rom. 9:5—"Christ . . . , who is over all, God bless for ever."

John 3:35—"The Father . . . hath given ALL things into his hand."

### 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 ye 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 Cor. 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."<sup>40</sup>

### *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 Christocentric 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."<sup>41</sup>

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.'<sup>42</sup> (Italics supplied.)

<sup>40</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 140.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

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."<sup>48</sup>

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 Saviour. 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 Saviour's life.

### The Divine-Human Nature of Christ

#### *The DIVINE Nature*

##### *As Jehovah:*

Gen. 22:14—Jehovah JIREH: Jehovah will provide.

Ex. 17:15—Jehovah NISSI: Jehovah my banner.

Judges 6:24—Jehovah SHALOM: Jehovah send peace.

Jer. 23:6—Jehovah TZIDKENU: Jehovah our righteousness.

Eze. 48:35—Jehovah SHAMMAH: Jehovah is there.

Ps. 23:1—Jehovah R'OI: Jehovah my shepherd.

Ex. 15:26—Jehovah ROPHEKA: Jehovah my healer.

Isa. 40:3-5 with Luke 3:4-6—"Prepare ye the way of Jehovah."

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Isa. 41:4 with Rev. 2:8—"Jehovah, the first, and with the last."

Isa. 42:6, 7 with Luke 2:32; 1:79—"Jehovah . . . a light of the Gentiles."

Isa. 6:1-3 with John 12:41.

Isa. 8:13, 14 with 1 Peter 2:8.

Isa. 40:11; 44:6 with Rev. 1:17.

Isa. 48:12-16 with Rev. 22:13.

Jer. 23:5, 6 with 1 Cor. 1:30.

Joel 2:32 with Acts 2:21; 1 Cor. 1:2; Mal. 3:1 with Mark 1:2.

Heb. 13:20; James 2:1.

Eternal God:

Ps. 45:6; 102:24-27 with Heb. 1:8, 10-12; Isa. 9:6.

*Creator:*

John 1:1-3; Rom. 9:5; Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:21.

*Judge:*

Eccl. 12:14; 1 Cor. 4:5; Jer. 10:10; John 15:20; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; John 5:20, 22.

*Saviour:*

Hosea 1:7; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8; Acts 20:28; John 20:28; 1 John 5:20; Isa. 9:6; Rom. 9:5; John 5:25, 26.

Equal With God:

Zech. 13:7; John 5:17, 23; 16:15; Phil. 2:6; 1 Thess. 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:16, 17; John 1:1-3.

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

Gen. 2:3; Matt. 12:8; Acts 10:36; Rom. 10:11-13; 1 Cor. 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; John 5:19; John 5:21; John 5:26.

*Sends Spirit With God:*

John 14:16; John 15:26.

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*Fullness of the Godhead:*

Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:3.

*Eternal, Omnipotent:*Ps. 45:3; Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matt. 18:20; 28:20; John 16:30; 21:17; Phil. 3:21; 1 Tim. 1:17.*The HUMAN Nature**Conception:* Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:31; Matt. 1:16, 25; 2:2; Luke 2:7, 11; John 1:14; Heb. 2:14.*Human Soul:* Matt. 26:38; Luke 23:46; Acts 2:31; Isa. 53:10, 12.*Physical Characteristics:*

Circumcision—Luke 2:21.

Wept—Luke 19:41; John 11:35.

Hunger—Matt. 4:2; 21:18.

Thirst—John 4:7; 19:28.

Sleep—Matt. 8:24; Mark 4:38.

Weariness—John 4:6.

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

Buffeted—Matt. 26:67; Luke 22:64.

Felt indignities—Luke 23:11.

Scourged—Matt. 27:26; John 19:1.

Nailed to cross—Luke 23:33 with Ps. 22:16.

Death—John 19:30.

Pierced side—John 19:34.

Buried—Matt. 27:59, 60; Mark 15:46.

Resurrected—Acts 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:8.

*Like Us in All Things, Except Sin:* Acts 3:22; Phil. 2:7, 8; Heb. 2:17.*(Without sin):* John 8:46; 18:38; Heb. 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:* Rom. 6:15, 19; 1 Cor. 15:21; Gal. 4:4, 5; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 2:17.*Was of One Seed of the Woman, Abraham, David:* Gen.

3:15; Isa. 7:4; Jer. 31:22; Luke 1:31; Gal. 4:4; Gen. 22:18 with Gal. 3:16; Heb. 2:16; 2 Sam. 7:12, 16; Ps. 89:35, 36; Jer. 23:5; Matt. 22:42; Mark 10:47; Acts 2:30; 13:23; Rom. 1:3.

Thus the divine-human aspects of the Saviour 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 Christocentric 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."<sup>44</sup> 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."

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

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"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."<sup>45</sup>

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."<sup>46</sup>

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 taketh away the sin of the world.'"<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 158, 159.

<sup>46</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 134.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

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."<sup>48</sup>

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."<sup>49</sup>

"Let me look at the crowd as my Saviour did,  
Till my eyes with tears grow dim,  
Let me look till I pity the scattered sheep,  
And love them for love of Him."

<sup>48</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

<sup>49</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92.

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.”<sup>50</sup>

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.”<sup>51</sup>

Here, then, is the secret: Christ in the law, Christ in the Sabbath, Christ in the plagues, Christ in the valley of death.

<sup>50</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 13, 1912, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, March 11, 1890, p. 146.

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 ye love me," ye 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 *such* 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 taketh away the sins of the world.' Strong and earnest appeals should be made to the sinner to repent and be converted."<sup>52</sup> (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

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1887, p. 114.

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 knowest 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!”<sup>53</sup>

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.”<sup>54</sup>

#### 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.”<sup>55</sup>

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

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, May 5, 1896, pp. 273, 274.

<sup>54</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 396.

<sup>55</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, April 23, 1908, p. 8.

the foundation of the gospel. Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness.<sup>56</sup>

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."<sup>57</sup> 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."<sup>58</sup>

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."<sup>59</sup>

### 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."<sup>60</sup>

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

<sup>56</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 158, 159.

<sup>57</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 350.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>60</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 220.

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."<sup>61</sup> O glorious hope! Let us tell it with all the fervor of our souls! Herein is the hope of the world!

"Tis 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.'"<sup>62</sup>

The wise minister will never lose sight of the inherent potential worth of the youth and the primary position that

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 208.

Christ should occupy in the hearts of young people. He who said, "Except ye 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."<sup>63</sup> "In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ."<sup>64</sup> 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."<sup>65</sup>

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

<sup>63</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 65.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 396.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

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 Saviour 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."<sup>66</sup>

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

<sup>66</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 157, 158.

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."

—ST. PATRICK.

# Christ the Center of All True Preaching

## Part III

### Introduction

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 maladjustments, 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 Christocentric 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

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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 come wars, and fightings among (you?) come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye 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 ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth 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, ye sinners; and purify your (hearts), ye 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 Saviour. "For that ye 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 waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth 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 intreated, 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 hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew 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:* Deut. 15:11; Matt. 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8.

*Their mental and physical condition:* Job 24:4; Prov. 13:8; 14:20; 18:23; 19:4; 30:9; Eccl. 9:15; James 2.

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

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

*Oppression condemned:* Ex. 22:25; Deut. 15:7; 24:12-15; Job 24:9; Ps. 12:5; 14:6; Prov. 14:31; 17:5; 22:16, 22; 28:3; Eccl. 5:8; Isa. 3:14; Jer. 22:3; Amos 2:6; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4; Zech. 7:10; James 2:2-6.

*Kindly treatment:* Ex. 23:11; Lev. 19:10; 23:22; 25:25; Deut. 15:7; Ps. 41:1; 82:3; Prov. 14:21; Isa. 58:7; Gal. 2:10.

*Their right to justice:* Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19; Prov. 24:23; 28:21; James 2.

*God's consideration:* Job 5:15; Ps. 9:18; 68:10; 69:33; 72:2; 102:17; 113:7; 132:15; Zech. 11:7; Matt. 6:26-34.

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

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

*"Blessed be ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God."* Luke 6:20. (See Matt. 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 Saviour, 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 Cor. 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." Col. 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." Rev. 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 ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39.

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

*In the time of creation:*

God—Gen. 1:27.

Lord God—Gen. 3:22.

*In the time of the Flood:*

Lord—Gen. 7:16.

God—Gen. 8:1.

Me—Gen. 9:12, 13.

*In the time of Abraham:*

Lord—Gen. 15:6.

Me—Gen. 17:2, 7.

*In the time of Sinai:*

Lord—Ex. 19:3, 9.

Me—Ex. 19:5.

God—Ex. 19:17.

Lord thy God—Ex. 20:7.

*In the time of the Red Sea:*

Lord—Ex. 12:23.

Who—Ex. 12:27.

*In the time of Sodom:*

Lord—Gen. 19:24.

*In the time of Isaac:*

God—Gen. 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 Saviour, and over the prophecies that pointed Him out. After dwelling upon

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these until the specifications were distinct in the minds of all, and they knew that they were to have a Saviour, he then presented the fact that this Saviour 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."<sup>67</sup>

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."<sup>68</sup>

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 Saviour was to come.
5. Pointed out the fact that the Saviour had come in Jesus Christ.

#### *To the Gentiles*

1. Warmed hearts with presentation of Christ.

<sup>67</sup> Ellen G. White, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 121, 122.

<sup>68</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies to Ministers*, Series A, No. 6, p. 55.

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 fact and discretion in the presentation of the truth."<sup>69</sup>

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 Saviour, 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."<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 68, 69.

<sup>70</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

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."<sup>71</sup> 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 'dwelleth 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."<sup>72</sup>

Here is a beautiful picture of the function of the law. It points to the gospel and reveals Jesus as the Saviour.

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 reasonings, preached arguments."<sup>73</sup>

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.

<sup>71</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 231.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 232.

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."<sup>74</sup>

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."<sup>75</sup>

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."<sup>76</sup>

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

<sup>74</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890, p. 146.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1902, p. 7.

<sup>76</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 57.

"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 fact and patient effort are needed by those who shall present the truth in any manner."<sup>77</sup>

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" (vol. 3, p. 36)*

1. "We may be compelled to withhold some of them."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 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.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

5. "Truth presented in an (easy style), backed up with a few strong proofs, is better."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 36.

6. "All points of our faith are not to be borne to the front and presented before the prejudiced crowds."—*Testimonies*, vol. 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*, Dec. 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*, vol. 9, pp. 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."<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 13, 1912, p. 4.

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."<sup>79</sup>

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."<sup>80</sup>

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

<sup>79</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 36.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 426.

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, aftermeetings, and personal interviews. It is not within the purview of this address to discuss the techniques of the aftermeeting, Bible classes, and other methods, but all are outlined in the Spirit of prophecy.

Striking, indeed, was the Saviour'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 spake 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."<sup>81</sup>

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 Saviour 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.

<sup>81</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 23, 24.

"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."<sup>82</sup>

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.'"<sup>83</sup>

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."<sup>84</sup>

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 ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye 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 ye 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.

<sup>82</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 140.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 653, 654.

"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."<sup>85</sup>

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:

"Ye 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. Matt. 13:24-43.

"Thou hast (hid) these things." Matt. 11:25.

Paul:

"Hitherto ye were not able to bear it." 1 Cor. 3:2.

"When I became a man, I put away childish things."  
1 Cor. 13:11.

"May grow up into him in all things." Eph. 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

<sup>85</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 11, 1900, p. 785.

off. If we would be Christlike we must reach men where they are."<sup>86</sup> There is no alternative to this approach.

This is a vital part of preaching the Christocentric message. Any spirit other than that of genuine Christlike 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."<sup>87</sup>

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 tenderest 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."<sup>88</sup>

It is interesting to note that this principle of dealing tenderly and sympathetically with men was demonstrated in the Saviour'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."<sup>89</sup>

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;

<sup>86</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 249.

<sup>87</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 9, 1892, p. 82.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1898, p. 69.

<sup>89</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 148.

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."<sup>90</sup>

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."<sup>91</sup>

"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."<sup>92</sup>

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."<sup>93</sup> (Italics supplied.)

Here is self-mastery made manifest in the ultimate. To treat some archcritic 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,

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 148.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>92</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 303.

<sup>93</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 122.

how much more Christlike 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.”<sup>94</sup>

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.”<sup>95</sup> (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

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 121, 122.

<sup>95</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 374, 375.

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."<sup>96</sup>

#### *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."<sup>97</sup>

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.

<sup>96</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 574.

<sup>97</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 243, 244.

"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."<sup>98</sup>

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

<sup>98</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 13, 1912, p. 3.

of Christ is revealed in all your efforts, you will be able to sow the seed of truth in some hearts."<sup>99</sup>

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."<sup>100</sup>

#### *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."<sup>101</sup>

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

<sup>99</sup> *Historical Sketches*, p. 122.

<sup>100</sup> *Colporteur Evangelist*, pp. 60, 61.

<sup>101</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 226.

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."<sup>102</sup>

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."<sup>103</sup>

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."<sup>104</sup>

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 Saviour, Let His melting love, His rich grace, flow forth from human lips. You need not present doctrinal points unless questioned."<sup>105</sup> Here is a revolutionary concept for preaching the Advent message; yet it was given more than half a century ago—1895!

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 246, 247.

<sup>104</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 119, 120.

<sup>105</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 443.

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."<sup>106</sup>

#### *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 Christocentric. Every sermon should be Christocentric. 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 Christocentric 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*, pp. 179, 180.
2. Repentance. *Evangelism*, pp. 179, 180; *Gospel Workers*, p. 158.
3. Confession. *Evangelism*, pp. 179, 180.
4. Christ Crucified. *Gospel Workers*, p. 159; *Evangelism*, p. 187; *Review and Herald*, Feb. 22, 1887; *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 485.

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5. Christ Risen. *Gospel Workers*, p. 159; *Evangelism*, p. 187; *Review and Herald*, Feb. 22, 1887.
6. Christ Ascended. *Gospel Workers*, pp. 154, 159.
7. Faith. *Gospel Workers*, p. 158; *Review and Herald*, Feb. 22, 1887.
8. Intercession. *Evangelism*, p. 187; *Gospel Workers*, p. 154.
9. Holy Spirit. *Evangelism*, p. 187.
10. Pre-existence. *Evangelism*, p. 187.
11. Second Coming. *Evangelism*, p. 187.
12. Personal Dignity. *Evangelism*, p. 187.
13. Holy Law. *Evangelism*, p. 187.
14. Conversion. *Review and Herald*, Feb. 22, 1887.
15. Mercy and Regeneration. *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.
16. Salvation and Redemption. *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

1. "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."<sup>107</sup>

2. "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."<sup>108</sup>

3. "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."<sup>109</sup>

4. "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."<sup>110</sup>

5. "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."<sup>111</sup>

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179, 180.

<sup>108</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 159.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>110</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 187.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

6. "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."<sup>112</sup>

7. "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."<sup>113</sup>

8. "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."<sup>114</sup>

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 Saviour, and the victory is won."<sup>115</sup>

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

<sup>112</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 22, 1887, p. 114.

<sup>113</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 154.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>115</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 298, 299.

shakes the world. Let us arise and match the magnificence of such an attainment. Let us forever be wearry 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 infilling 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!"

—RALPH SPAULDING CUSHMAN.

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# **The Spirit of Prophecy in the Remnant Church**

By

D. E. REBOK



# The Spirit of Prophecy in the Remnant Church

## 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 waymarks 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.”<sup>1</sup>

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 “waymarks” 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.”<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Editors and Writers* (1946 ed.), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 26, 1905, p. 9.

*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" (Hab. 2:20), "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 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 Tim. 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 Thess. 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

Saviour than with the fact of the sinfulness of the human race, for not every sinner is ready to acknowledge his need of a Saviour. (Rom. 3:23; 7:24.)

*Fourth, by faith we are convinced that Jesus Christ is man's Deliverer and Saviour.* The answer to man's desperate appeals for a Saviour 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." Rom. 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 Saviour. 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 Saviour, and their faith in God and God's Word causes them to rejoice in His plan for their salvation. (John 1:12; Acts 16:31; 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 Saviour 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 ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour 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.” Num. 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 prophesyings. 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 Thess. 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.

## Part I

### 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 spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Heb. 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." Gen. 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 innocency, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and His holy angels."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> James White, Introduction in Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 7.

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* (Gen. 20:6, 7); but also at times through *priests* (Gen. 14:18), and through *angels* (Gen. 16:7-13). (See also 2 Chron. 36:15; Jer. 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 intrusted 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.”<sup>4</sup>

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.”<sup>5</sup>

### **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.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pp. vi, vii.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 46.

- 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" (Rev. 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 prophesyings," but rather to "prove all things," holding "fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:20, 21.)

Jesus Himself, looking down to our day, said, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets," and they shall "shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 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 Chron. 36:16.)

However, not all of the people rejected all the prophets,

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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 in 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. (Jer. 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." Jer. 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 Sam. 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 liveth, 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 Sam. 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 Sam. 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 taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

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Heb. 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 thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isa. 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 Chron. 9:29; 15:8; 1 Cor. 13:8.
- b. Word of God. 1 Sam. 9:27; 1 Kings 12:22.
- c. The Lord's message. Haggai 1:13.
- d. Testimonies. 2 Kings 17:15; Neh. 9:30.
- e. Counsel. Isa. 44:26.
- f. Burden. Jer. 23:33, 38; Isa. 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."<sup>6</sup>

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;

<sup>6</sup> J. Peter Lange, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, p. 44.

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and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Eph. 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. (Eph. 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. (Eph. 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 upbuilding, 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 Cor. 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 "upbuilding, 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 fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children" (Eph. 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 Saviour, 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 Saviour, and Jesus Christ is that Saviour 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," "waymarks," "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."<sup>7</sup>

Ellen G. White says:

<sup>7</sup> G. C. Joyce, *The Inspiration of Prophecy*, p. 139.

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“When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: . . . and he will shew 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.”<sup>8</sup>

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 (Isa. 11:11); distinguished from others (Micah 5:7, 8); keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 12:17); be saved from sin (Zeph. 3:13); and enter the kingdom of God (Rom. 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 ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 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.”<sup>9</sup>

*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

<sup>8</sup> *The Great Controversy*, Introduction, p. viii.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 147, 148.

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.

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## Part II

### God Chose Ellen G. White as His Messenger for the Remnant Church

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 Gould 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."<sup>10</sup>

The infilling 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.<sup>11</sup> 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.'"<sup>12</sup>

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,

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<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 64.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 14-20.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

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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."<sup>13</sup>

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."<sup>14</sup>

#### **Reactions of Early Pioneers to the Claims of 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."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>14</sup> *Signs of the Times*, June 7, 1843, p. 107.

<sup>15</sup> James White in *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 22.

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.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> J. N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, pp. 257, 258.

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.'" <sup>17</sup>

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." <sup>18</sup>

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 Bro. and Sr. 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 ye 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

<sup>17</sup> A. L. White, *Prophetic Guidance in Early Days*, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> James White in *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 13.

did not believe with them. While we were visiting at Bro. N's., R. and S. came from Boston to obtain a favor of Bro. N., and said they had come to have a visit, and tarry over night with him. Bro. 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. Bro. 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. Sr. N. answered, 'I believe it.' R. told my sister that I could not have a vision where he was."<sup>19</sup>

### 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 nonchurch members as well. Some of the brethren were afraid that the "visions" and "testimonies" intended primarily for the church members (1 Cor. 14:3, 4, 22) would prejudice the nonchurch 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:

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<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 75-79. (See Item 1 in the Appendix, p. 274.)

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"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 prophesyings, prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' 1 Thess. 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.*'"<sup>20</sup>

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,

<sup>20</sup> James White in *Review and Herald Extra*, July 21, 1851.

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 Sabbathkeepers 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."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Report of conference in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 4, 1855, pp. 78, 79.

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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."<sup>22</sup>

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 Nov. 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."<sup>23</sup>

#### **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

<sup>22</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 113.

<sup>23</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 10, 1856, p. 118.

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."<sup>24</sup>

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

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<sup>24</sup> Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 211.

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[Bates] erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than upon the other nine.”<sup>25</sup> 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.”<sup>26</sup>

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.”<sup>27</sup>

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

<sup>25</sup> *Life Sketches*, p. 95.

<sup>26</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 75.

<sup>27</sup> E. G. White letter 2, 1874.

commandments of God as the apple of the eye, and that in response to this warning many would embrace the Sabbath of the Lord."<sup>28</sup>

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 prophesyings, but rather "prove," test, and try them. As a result of such a process we are to "hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 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." "<sup>29</sup>

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.

<sup>28</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 77.

<sup>29</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 26, 1905, pp. 5, 6.

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:

- (1) Secret things belong to God. (Deut. 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. (Jer. 28:9.)
- (4) Some prophecies are conditional. (Jer. 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 fulfillments. 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.<sup>30</sup> 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

<sup>30</sup> *Life Sketches*, p. 125.

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."<sup>31</sup>

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."<sup>32</sup>

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."<sup>33</sup>

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

<sup>31</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 43.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>33</sup> *Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (James White ed.), pp. 5, 6. (See *Early Writings*, p. 87.)

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."<sup>84</sup> Ask any old resident in San Francisco and Oakland and he will tell you how this prediction was fulfilled.<sup>85</sup>

*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!"<sup>86</sup>

In 1910 she warned, "Soon strife among the nations will break out with an intensity that we do not now anticipate."<sup>87</sup> 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.

<sup>84</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 403.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> April 21, 1890, p. 242.

<sup>87</sup> *Review and Herald*, Nov. 17, 1910, p. 8.

*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." (Isa. 58:11.)
- (2) He instructs us in the way we should go. (Ps. 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

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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."<sup>38</sup>

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."<sup>39</sup>

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."<sup>40</sup>

A. F. Ballenger, then secretary of the Religious Liberty

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<sup>38</sup> White Publications Document File No. 107f.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

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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.” Isa. 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. Deut. 13:1-4. He will exalt the true God.
2. 2 Chron. 24:19, 20; Deut. 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 Ye 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 rearoused 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 Saviour 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 Saviour, 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.'"<sup>41</sup>

*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 Saviour of the fallen race, then the fruit of that teaching throughout the full seventy years of her labor can be found on every page

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in *Life and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, pp. 120, 121.

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 Saviour, 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 Saviour.”<sup>42</sup>

*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 organiza-

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<sup>42</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 160.

tions, 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 twoscore 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

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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.<sup>43</sup>

*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."'"<sup>44</sup>

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

<sup>43</sup> Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, pp. 386-390.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in *Divine Predictions of Mrs. Ellen G. White Fulfilled*, compiled by F. C. Gilbert, p. 340.

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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 Coorانبong, 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 Coorانبong, 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."<sup>45</sup>

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 "Sunnyside." 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 devisings 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

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<sup>45</sup> White Publications Document File No. 170.

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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.”<sup>46</sup>

In the same year she again declared, “My views were written independent of books or the opinions of others.”<sup>47</sup>

#### *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

<sup>46</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867, p. 260.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in A. L. White, *The Prophetic Gift in Action*, p. 14.

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.”<sup>48</sup>

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 fulfilment, while others are still future. As to those relating to the past or present events, I know not of a single instance of failure.”<sup>49</sup>

“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.”<sup>50</sup>

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

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, Supplement, Aug. 14, 1883, p. 12.

<sup>49</sup> J. N. Loughborough, *The Prophetic Gift in the Gospel Church*, p. 72.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

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."<sup>51</sup>

*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 opposer 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 Saviour 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."<sup>52</sup>

"I have read many books, but never one which has interested me so intensely and impressed me so profoundly as Vol. IV. of 'The Great Controversy,' by Sr. 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."<sup>53</sup>

In 1877, ten years before he finally turned his back on the

<sup>51</sup> Page 52. (See Item 2 in the Appendix, p. 275.)

<sup>52</sup> January 6, p. 16.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Adventist Church, the Adventist message, and Ellen G. White, he wrote:

“As to the Christian character of Sr. White, I beg leave to say that I think I know something about it. I have been acquainted with Sr. 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 Bro. and Sr. 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 Sr. 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 pretensions, full of pride, ready to give their opinion, boastful of their holiness, etc. But I have ever found Sr. 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.”<sup>54</sup>

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 antivision party now. . . .

“Mrs. White’s trances are simply the result of disease and religious

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<sup>54</sup> *Review and Herald*, April 26, 1877, p. 132.

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*, Vol. II, 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."<sup>55</sup>

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."<sup>56</sup>

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

<sup>55</sup> D. M. Canright, "No. 4, Mrs. White and Her Visions," pp. 2-7, in *Adventism Refuted in a Nutshell* (1889).

<sup>56</sup> D. M. Canright, *Life of Mrs. E. G. White*, p. 15.

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."<sup>57</sup>

*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."<sup>58</sup>

The following year (1878) a book was published entitled

<sup>57</sup> W. A. Spicer, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, p. 127.

<sup>58</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 275.

*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."<sup>60</sup>

#### *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:

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<sup>60</sup> Quoted in A. L. White, *Ellen G. White—The Human-Interest Story*, pp. 18, 19.

3, 4; 2 Samuel 23:2; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4. 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."

### Part III

## 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 practise. 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."<sup>60</sup>

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.'"<sup>61</sup>

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:

<sup>60</sup> Reprinted in *Early Writings*, p. 78.

<sup>61</sup> Spicer, *Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, p. 90.

- 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,

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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."<sup>62</sup> 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."<sup>63</sup>

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."<sup>64</sup>

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. . . .

<sup>62</sup> *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 97.

<sup>63</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, p. 57.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

“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.”<sup>65</sup>

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*.”<sup>66</sup> (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.”<sup>67</sup>

#### 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

<sup>65</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 664, 665.

<sup>66</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 20, 1903, p. 15.

<sup>67</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 84.

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."<sup>68</sup>

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."<sup>69</sup>

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."<sup>70</sup>

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."<sup>71</sup>

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

<sup>68</sup> Page 61.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Page 173.

<sup>71</sup> *Review and Herald*, Feb. 15, 1870, p. 64.

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."<sup>72</sup>

By 1887 Uriah Smith spoke out with great positiveness 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:—

"Some one 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.'" <sup>73</sup>

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

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, June 9, 1874, p. 202.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1887, p. 649.

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."<sup>74</sup>

### 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.

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<sup>74</sup>Talks to the Students of the "Special Course" at Battle Creek College, White Publications Document File, 105f.

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.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> For her letter see Item 4 in the Appendix, p. 278.

## Part IV

### 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 Doth 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.”<sup>76</sup>

#### 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 Saviour, 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;

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<sup>76</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 23. (See Item 5 in Appendix, p. 281, for full statement.)

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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 believeth 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.*"<sup>77</sup> (Italics supplied.)

My faith in Christ as my personal Saviour 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. 'Ye are not your own; for ye 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."<sup>78</sup>

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 Tim. 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

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 287.

<sup>78</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566.

Christ, and He then comes into our hearts by faith and takes up His abode. (Eph. 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.”<sup>79</sup>

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

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<sup>79</sup> *Review and Herald*, Feb. 21, 1888, p. 113.

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."<sup>80</sup> (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 Saviour, 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.*"<sup>81</sup> (Italics supplied.)

No, my salvation does not depend upon the twenty-five million words written by Ellen G. White, but *upon Jesus*

<sup>80</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 158-162.

<sup>81</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

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."<sup>82</sup>

"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."<sup>83</sup>

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.*"<sup>84</sup> (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

<sup>82</sup> *Review and Herald*, May 24, 1892, p. 322.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>84</sup> *General Conference Bulletin*, Jan. 27, 28, 1893, p. 16.

the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject.'"<sup>85</sup>

### 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."<sup>86</sup> 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.

<sup>85</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 116. (See Item 6 in the Appendix, p. 283, for a full statement.)

<sup>86</sup> E. G. White letter 10, 1895.

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."<sup>87</sup>

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."<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> E. G. White manuscript 24, 1886, quoted by F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, pp. 16-18.

<sup>88</sup> E. G. White, *Review and Herald*, Aug. 30, 1906, p. 8.

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.”<sup>89</sup>

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,” “encouragements,” “messages,” “testimonies,” “cautions.”

I think of her writings as the detailed specifications which the Master Architect places in my hands along with the blue-print—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.”<sup>90</sup>

“I am very busy with my writing. Early and late, I am writing out

<sup>89</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867, p. 260.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, June 14, 1906, p. 8.

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.”<sup>81</sup>

#### *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.*”<sup>82</sup> (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.”<sup>83</sup>

“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.”<sup>84</sup>

#### *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:

<sup>81</sup> Ellen G. White in *Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, p. 15. (See Item 7 in the Appendix, p. 284, for a complete statement from Mrs. White herself on this subject.)

<sup>82</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 665. (See Item 8 in the Appendix, p. 288, for more valuable quotations on this topic.)

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 661.

<sup>84</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 26, 1882, p. 790. (See Item 9 in the Appendix, p. 290.)

“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.”<sup>95</sup>

#### *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 in-

<sup>95</sup> E. G. White letter 73, 1903.

directly 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*, vol. 1, pp. 119, 120; vol. 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*, vol. 1, pp. 327-329.

c. Do not use the visions as a rule to measure all. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 382, 383.

d. Do not use the Testimonies as an iron rule or club. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 369.

e. Do not take the extreme meaning of what has been shown in the visions. *Testimonies*, vol. 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 criticising 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 criticise, 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

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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.”<sup>96</sup>

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 saith 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.”<sup>97</sup>

It is interesting that when writing on the subject of diet she declared: “I make myself a criterion for no one else.”<sup>98</sup>

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

<sup>96</sup> Ellen G. White in the *Review and Herald*, Aug. 27, 1889, p. 530.

<sup>97</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 284.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

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.”<sup>99</sup>

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 Bro. and Sr. “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.”<sup>100</sup>

*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.”<sup>101</sup>

*Caution Concerning Dairy Products (1899):*

“The light given me is that it will not be very long before we

<sup>99</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 400.

<sup>100</sup> Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 320.

<sup>101</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 162.

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."<sup>102</sup>

"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."<sup>103</sup>

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 an unperverted 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."<sup>104</sup>

"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."<sup>105</sup>

"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 milch cows, a Jersey and a Holstein. We use cream, and all are satisfied with this."<sup>106</sup> (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

<sup>102</sup> Ellen G. White in *Australasian Union Conference Record*, July 28, 1899.

<sup>103</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 135.

<sup>104</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 47.

<sup>105</sup> E. G. White letter 39, 1901.

<sup>106</sup> E. G. White letter 45, 1903.

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."<sup>107</sup> (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.*"<sup>108</sup> (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 innocency 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 intensest hate, and most malignant bitterness. Worldlings and formal professors of all denominations, join in one general outcry against them of vituperation

<sup>107</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 162.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 135.

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 Saviour, 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."*<sup>100</sup> (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

<sup>100</sup> June 12, p. 9.

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:

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“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 Sr. 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.”<sup>110</sup>

### **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

<sup>110</sup> Feb. 15, 1870, p. 65.

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.<sup>111</sup>

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 Decalogue," 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*,

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<sup>111</sup> See Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 67.

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*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 encouragements. 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.”<sup>112</sup>

“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.’ ”<sup>113</sup>

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

<sup>112</sup> Volume 5, p. 666. (See Item 13 in the Appendix, p. 296.)

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 681.

none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' [Prov. 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."<sup>114</sup>

### 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.

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<sup>114</sup> E. G. White letter 12, 1890.

## 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 Bro. 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 worshipping 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<sup>†</sup> of their feelings.'"<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 76-79.

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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 effectually 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 quicksands 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 ye.

"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?"<sup>2</sup>

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. . . .

"Men 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."<sup>3</sup>

"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."<sup>4</sup>

"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

<sup>2</sup> Page 52.

<sup>3</sup> E. G. White letter 16, 1888.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

and becoming conformed to His likeness, they say: 'Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee.'"<sup>5</sup>

"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."<sup>6</sup>

"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."<sup>7</sup>

For further study on this phase of the topic, kindly read the following references: *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 384; *Gospel Workers*, p. 249; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 329; *Mount of Blessing*, p. 77; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 454, 455, 605-607; vol. 5, pp. 665-667, 674; vol. 6, pp. 402, 403; Introduction to *The Great Controversy*; *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 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

<sup>5</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 192.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 246.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.

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

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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."<sup>8</sup>

ITEM 5.—E. G. White's statements on "What Doth 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 copartnership with Jesus Christ. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."<sup>9</sup>

"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

<sup>8</sup> S. M. I. Henry letter, *Sanitarium*, Dec. 19, 1897.

<sup>9</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 422.

own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us.”<sup>10</sup>

“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 believeth in Jesus.’” Rom. 3:26.<sup>11</sup>

“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.”<sup>12</sup>

“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.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 311, 312.

<sup>13</sup> *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 10, 1906, p. 3.

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 shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'" <sup>14</sup>

"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." <sup>15</sup>

"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." <sup>16</sup>

"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." <sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Review and Herald*, Nov. 25, 1884, p. 738.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, April 25, 1893, p. 258.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, July 13, 1897, p. 434.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1898, p. 581.

"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."<sup>18</sup>

"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."<sup>19</sup>

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."<sup>20</sup>

"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."<sup>21</sup>

"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

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1, 1902, p. 193.

<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White. *Historical Sketches*, p. 197.

<sup>20</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 658, 659.

<sup>21</sup> *Review and Herald*, July 18, 1907, pp. 8, 9.

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."<sup>22</sup>

"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?"<sup>23</sup>

"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."<sup>24</sup>

"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 ye in it.' In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a 'Thus saith 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."<sup>25</sup>

"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."<sup>26</sup>

"I am deeply concerned in regard to the disregard of warnings and

<sup>22</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 64-67.

<sup>23</sup> E. G. White letter 206, 1906.

<sup>24</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 69.

<sup>25</sup> E. G. White letter 90, 1906.

<sup>26</sup> E. G. White manuscript 172, 1899.

appeals that have been made by the Spirit of God through the humble instrument."<sup>27</sup>

"What you have done is not against me, but against my Saviour, who has given me my work to do."<sup>28</sup>

"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."<sup>29</sup>

"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."<sup>30</sup>

"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."<sup>31</sup>

"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

<sup>27</sup> E. G. White letter 5, 1895.

<sup>28</sup> E. G. White letter 10, 1895.

<sup>29</sup> E. G. White letter 13d, 1890.

<sup>30</sup> E. G. White letter 164, 1901.

<sup>31</sup> E. G. White letter 58, 1906.

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."<sup>32</sup>

"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 intelligences, I may have a clear perception of spiritual and eternal things."<sup>33</sup>

"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.'"<sup>34</sup>

"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."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> E. G. White letter 86, 1906.

<sup>33</sup> E. G. White letter 170, 1906.

<sup>34</sup> E. G. White manuscript 61, 1906.

<sup>35</sup> E. G. White letter 64, 1894.

"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."<sup>36</sup>

"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."<sup>37</sup>

"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."<sup>38</sup>

"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."<sup>39</sup>

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."<sup>40</sup>

"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

<sup>36</sup> E. G. White manuscript 29, 1897.

<sup>37</sup> E. G. White letter 146, 1902.

<sup>38</sup> E. G. White letter 197, 1902.

<sup>39</sup> E. G. White letter 11, 1903.

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 606. (See also vol. 5, p. 665.)

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.”<sup>41</sup>

“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.”<sup>42</sup>

“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.”<sup>43</sup>

“They [repentant sinners] have only to follow His counsel and do His will, to inherit eternal life.”<sup>44</sup>

“The Lord reproves 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, reproves, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to His own throne.”<sup>45</sup>

“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?”<sup>46</sup>

“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

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 454, 455. (See also vol. 5, p. 663.)

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 323. (See also vol. 5, pp. 663, 664.)

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 654.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 15. (See also vol. 5, p. 661.)

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 453. (See also vol. 5, p. 662.)

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 483, 484. (See also vol. 5, pp. 662, 663.)

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."<sup>47</sup>

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."<sup>48</sup>

"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?"<sup>49</sup>

"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 reprov'd. 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

<sup>47</sup> *The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, pp. 13-16.

<sup>48</sup> *Review and Herald*, July 18, 1907, p. 9.

<sup>49</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 298.

any lasting impression upon them. Just according to the light, the privileges, and opportunities which they have slighted will be their condemnation."<sup>50</sup>

"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."<sup>51</sup>

"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."<sup>52</sup>

"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."<sup>53</sup>

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."<sup>54</sup>

"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 con-

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 74-76.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 20. (See also vol. 5, p. 677.)

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 257. (See also vol. 5, p. 682.)

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 119, 120.

fidence 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 encouragements. 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.”<sup>55</sup>

“The *Testimonies* can have no weight with those who know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases.”<sup>56</sup>

(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

<sup>55</sup> Ellen G. White in *General Conference Bulletin*, April 13, 1891, p. 257.

<sup>56</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 669.

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."<sup>57</sup>

(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* No. 8 [Volume 1], pp. 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 reproved 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."<sup>58</sup>

(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

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 327-329.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 382, 383.

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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.”<sup>50</sup>

(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.”<sup>60</sup>

(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.”<sup>61</sup>

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 Saviour 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

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>61</sup> Ellen G. White in *The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, p. 26.

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 Saviour, 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.'

"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 Saviour, 'Why, what evil hath he done?' "<sup>62</sup>

ITEM 12.—E. G. White statements on which my personal attitude toward her life and work are based. Referred to on page 271.

"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."<sup>63</sup>

"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."<sup>64</sup>

"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."<sup>65</sup>

"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

<sup>62</sup> *Review and Herald*, June 12, 1866, p. 9.

<sup>63</sup> *The Youth's Instructor*, Jan. 23, 1902, p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1893, p. 33.

<sup>65</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

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.”<sup>66</sup>

“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.”<sup>67</sup>

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.”<sup>68</sup>

“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

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>67</sup> *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 102.

<sup>68</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 607. (See also vol. 5, p. 667.)

could not appreciate the spirit of the *Testimonies*, because they knew so little of the Spirit of God.”<sup>69</sup>

“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.”<sup>70</sup>

“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.”<sup>71</sup>

“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.”<sup>72</sup>

“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?”<sup>73</sup>

“It is a lack of moral courage—a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits.”<sup>74</sup>

“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.”<sup>75</sup>

“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.”<sup>76</sup>

“Many now despise the faithful reproof given of God in testimony. . . . But opposition to God’s threatenings will not hinder their execution.”<sup>77</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 672, 673.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98. (See also p. 674.)

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234. (See also p. 674.)

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 255. (See also vol. 5, p. 674.)

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 32. (See also vol. 5, p. 675.)

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32. (See also vol. 5, p. 675.)

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 255. (See also vol. 5, p. 675.)

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 232, 233. (See also vol. 5, pp. 675, 676.)

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80. (See also vol. 5, p. 678.)

"God has set me as a reprove 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."<sup>78</sup>

"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."<sup>79</sup>

"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."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 232. (See also vol. 5, p. 679.)

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 391. (See also vol. 5, p. 681.)

<sup>80</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 466.

# The Gospel in Type and Antitype

By

W. G. C. MURDOCH

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## The Gospel in Type and Antitype

The subject of these three studies is the gospel in type and antitype. 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 eyesalve, these great gems of truth shine with dazzling brilliance. As the myriads 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 "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 eat 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."<sup>1</sup>

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 giveth 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 treasurehouse of God's word."<sup>2</sup>

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?" (Gen. 3:9.) We have here brought to view, sinful man fleeing from a sinless God. We also have a picture of a Saviour 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.

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, pp. 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, pp. 125, 126.

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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 כְּתוּנֶת (*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."<sup>3</sup>

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 under-

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<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 68.

stand 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." Heb. 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 long-suffering 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." Gen. 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."<sup>4</sup>

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

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

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 seed-time or harvest would not fail as long as the earth remained. (Gen. 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

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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?" Gen. 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." Heb. 11:19. His only answer to the lad was, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Gen. 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."<sup>5</sup>

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 Saviour caused his heart to

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 154, 155.

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 honour, 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 honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Rev. 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. (Gen. 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 Saviour 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

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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." Ex. 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 ye shall hearken." Deut. 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 rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage." Ex. 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 nought. 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." Ex. 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 doorposts 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 signifi-

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cance 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." Ps. 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 first-born, 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 fastnesses 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 antitype 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 ἔξοδος (*Exodos*), "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 cometh down from heaven. . . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I shall give

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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 Sabbathkeeping.

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. (Num. 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 Saviour. 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 believeth 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 unforgiven. "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."<sup>6</sup>

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."<sup>7</sup>

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

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 326, 327.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

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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 Cor. 3:11.) It pointed to the Redeemer, the Saviour, 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."<sup>8</sup>

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 errone-

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 63.

ous 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."<sup>9</sup>

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?"<sup>10</sup>

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."<sup>11</sup>

Truly did the psalmist exclaim, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary." Ps. 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 shewbread, as the Bread of Life; and in the golden candlestick, as the Light of the world.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 303.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1905, p. 17.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 17.

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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 antitypical 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 antitype 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." Heb. 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."<sup>12</sup> 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.

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<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 23.

## 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.”<sup>13</sup>

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 candlestick, 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.”<sup>14</sup>

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

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<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 133.

<sup>14</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 349.

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." Isa. 53:2. As the natural man looks at the Saviour, 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 ye know that ye 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 Antitype**

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 toucheth them shall be holy." Ex. 30:26-29.

Moses carried out this instruction in every particular. (Num. 7:1.) He first anointed the tabernacle, including the ark, the table of shewbread, the candlestick, and the golden altar, then the altar of burnt offering and the laver. Last of all he poured anointing oil on Aaron. (Lev. 21:12.) All this served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." Heb. 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. (Dan. 9:24.) The Hebrew for most holy is קדש קדשם (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. (Lev. 9:24.) It was never to be extinguished. (Lev. 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, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4:3.

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. (Ex. 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." Rev. 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.

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### 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 substitutionary 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 ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices." Deut. 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. (Ex. 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. (Lev. 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 (Eph. 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

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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. (Num. 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."<sup>15</sup>

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 *θλιψις* (*Thlipsis*) (2 Cor. 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." Eph. 2:14-17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 352, 353.

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." (Isa. 9:6.) When He comes the second time "he maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth." Ps. 46:9.

### *The Sin Offering*

The sin offering was so closely connected with sin that the same Hebrew word חַטָּאת (*chatta'th*) is used for both. This offering availed for what was called sins of ignorance. The connotation of the Hebrew word for ignorance שִׁגְגָה (*Shagha-ghah*) 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."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 34.

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. (Lev. 6:2-5.) The Hebrew word אָשָׁם (*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." Lev. 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 rememberest 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." Matt. 5:23, 24.

Christ was indeed the antitypical 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 hath put him to grief: when thou shalt 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." Isa. 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 substitutionary 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." Rom. 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 shewbread, 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." (Ex. 30:7, 8.) The lamps also were to burn continually (Lev. 24:2-4), and the loaves on the table were termed the continual shewbread (Num. 4:7).

The Hebrew word תמיד (*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 fre-

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quently 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 "abideth a priest continually." (Heb. 7:3.) He "continueth ever," He "ever liveth," 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 ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye 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 antitype 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." Rev. 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."

Isa. 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." Zech. 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, saith 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."<sup>17</sup>

#### *The Table of Shewbread*

Twelve new loaves were placed upon the table of shewbread each Sabbath day. (Lev. 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 shewbread on this sacred day. (1 Chron. 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

<sup>17</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 418, 419.

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earth He was born in Bethlehem, בית לחם (*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 quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Verse 63. The priests' eating of the shewbread 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 proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4. Well did Jeremiah the prophet exclaim, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." Jer. 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. (Ex. 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."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 353.

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.” Num. 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 odours, which are the prayers of saints.” Rev. 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.” Ps. 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 shewbread, 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.

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So it is in the antitype. 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." Heb. 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 continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Heb. 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; ye 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 firstfruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 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."<sup>19</sup>

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

<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 489.

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 administration already examined was 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

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could enter into the most holy place. So Christ, our great antitypical 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."<sup>20</sup>

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."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 260, 261.

<sup>21</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 154.

## 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. (Lev. 23:4-8; cf. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.)
2. *The Feast of First Fruits*, which was a presentation before the Lord of the first ripe sheaf, and met its antitype in Christ's resurrection and His ascension to His Father. (Lev. 23:9-14; cf. 1 Cor. 15:20.)
3. *The Day of Pentecost*, which was fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the early church. (Lev. 23:15-21; 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 antitypical work of judgment. (Lev. 23:23, 24; cf. Rev. 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. (Lev. 23:26-32; cf. Dan. 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. (Lev. 23:33-44; cf. Matt. 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. (Isa. 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 Cor. 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. (Ex. 12:5.) Of the antitypical Lamb it was stated even by the vacillating Pilate, "I find in him no fault at all." John 18:38. (Cf. John 19:4, 6; Luke 23:14, 15; Matt. 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."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 761.

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 cometh, 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 (Ex. 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 (Ex. 12:46); neither was there a bone of the Saviour broken (John 19: 33-36). The Passover lamb was not to see corruption (Ex. 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. (Ex. 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 antitype. 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." Heb. 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 sac-

rifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, 'It is finished.'"<sup>28</sup>

### 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." Lev. 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, ye 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 (Lev. 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 (Matt. 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 liveth to make intercession for us. (Heb. 7:25.)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 764.

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“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.”<sup>24</sup>

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.”<sup>25</sup>

“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.”<sup>26</sup>

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.”<sup>27</sup>

### Pentecost

Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the wave sheaf had been presented. (Lev. 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 antitypical 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,

<sup>24</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 56.

<sup>25</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 261.

<sup>26</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 14.

<sup>27</sup> S. N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 113.

taking with Him the multitude of captives who had been raised from the dead. What a welcome awaited the Saviour! 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 hast 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 honour, and glory, and blessing!'"<sup>28</sup>

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 antitype, 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 hath 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 hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ [i.e., the Anointed One]." Verses 32-36.

The demonstration on the day of Pentecost was to the

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<sup>28</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 834.

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.”<sup>29</sup>

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?”<sup>30</sup>

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 ye 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 unfallen worlds, sang anthems of praise to God and the Lamb when this triumph was assured.”<sup>31</sup>

### The Blowing of Trumpets

The first day of the seventh month was a day of blowing of trumpets for the children of Israel. (Num. 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. (Lev. 23:24.) This ceremony took place ten days before the solemn Day of Atonement. The Jews still call

<sup>29</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 39.

<sup>30</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 286.

<sup>31</sup> Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 154.

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. (Lev. 16:16-34.) On this day all Israel awakened early, and the morning sacrifice was offered as usual. (Num. 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. (Lev. 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

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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 Antitypical Day of Atonement*

We have noticed that the Passover met its antitypes 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 antitypes 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 antitypical 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 B.C. and ended in A.D. 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." Rev. 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." Rev. 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."<sup>32</sup>

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

<sup>32</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358.

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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." Heb. 10:3. 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."<sup>33</sup>

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 ye 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 turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die." Eze. 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 righteousnesses alone will be remembered. (Verse 22.)

It is made clear in the book of Hebrews that as the earthly

<sup>33</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 251.

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." Heb. 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 Cor. 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 hath 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." Heb. 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

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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; Jer. 4:23-26.)

*Why Is the Antitypical 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."<sup>34</sup>

It is evident then that the reason the antitypical 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 Zeboim?" 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. (Deut. 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 writeth up the people [when He examines the books], that this man was born there." Ps. 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

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

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 delayeth his coming" (Matt. 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. (Matt. 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 ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." Lev. 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." Matt. 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 doth 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." Rev. 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." Ps. 122:2. Again, "The Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Isa. 12:2, 3.

### Other Gospel Types

#### *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.

"Ye 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 ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Lev. 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 Saviour. Those who have been bound by sin will in the antitypical 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.” Isa. 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 Saviour 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.” Heb. 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 long-suffering 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. (Matt. 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

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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." Rom. 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. (Heb. 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] liveth, 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 myriads 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.

**The Atonement and the Cross**

By

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 Cor. 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 Saviour'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 communings. 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 shineth 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.”<sup>1</sup>

“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.”<sup>2</sup>

“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 gleamings. 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, shoreless sea. Such study has vivifying power. The mind and heart acquire new strength, new life.”<sup>3</sup>

Let us all hope and pray that the studies and experiences of this Bible Conference will take us in spiritual vision beyond the mere “gleamings” 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

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 317, 318.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 171.

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

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embrace the whole world.”<sup>4</sup> 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 lighteth every man that cometh 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.”<sup>5</sup>

“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.”<sup>6</sup>

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.”<sup>7</sup>

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

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 377.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, p. 242.

<sup>6</sup> *Education*, p. 263.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 494, 495.

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."<sup>8</sup>

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."

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<sup>8</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 713, 714.

## 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 fore-saw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency.”<sup>9</sup>

“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 hast given me, be with me where I am.”’ ”<sup>10</sup>

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

<sup>9</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 834.

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 intelligences. 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 believeth 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 'passeth 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, outmeasured even the anguish and sacrifice of the Prince of life. Through the celestial courts echoed the first strains

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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.’”<sup>11</sup>

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 shalt bruise his heel.” Gen. 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.” Heb. 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

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 63-65.

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 gar-

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ment 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."<sup>12</sup>

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 maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev. 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 speaketh." Heb. 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

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<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 310-312.

“yet speaketh” 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 Immanuel? 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 fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine 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 intelligences 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 understood more clearly the wonderful provision that God had made for man's salvation."<sup>18</sup>

"Abraham had greatly desired to see the promised Saviour. 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

<sup>18</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 153-155.

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."<sup>14</sup>

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." Rev. 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."<sup>15</sup>

"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."<sup>16</sup>

"Through the teachings of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be

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<sup>14</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 468, 469.

<sup>15</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 366, 367.

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."<sup>17</sup>

"The rites of the Jewish economy were instituted by Christ Himself. He was the foundation of their system of sacrificial offerings, the great antitype 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."<sup>18</sup>

"There was virtue in the symbolic service, only as it directed the worshippers to Christ as their personal Saviour."<sup>19</sup>

"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 Saviour'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 sealed 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."<sup>20</sup>

"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."<sup>21</sup>

"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 Saviour. . . . 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 Bethle-

<sup>17</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 126.

<sup>19</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 82.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

hem, 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."<sup>22</sup>

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 antitypical 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 shewbread, 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 heathenism, 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."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 210-212.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36.

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"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."<sup>24</sup>

"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."<sup>25</sup>

Modern Israel faces the same danger. It is tragic indeed that so many today see only what the Jews saw, the literal types rather than the spiritual antitypes. 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

<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 399.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 398.

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 feareth God, and escheweth 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 thine." 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

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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."<sup>26</sup>

From the beginning, Satan was determined to make his rulership 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 counterwork 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.'"<sup>27</sup>

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 unfallen 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 unfallen 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 every world, and through

<sup>26</sup> A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (2d ed.), vol. 6, p. 384.

<sup>27</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 236.

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 intelligences of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration."<sup>28</sup>

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" (Jer. 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 Cor. 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."<sup>29</sup>

"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."<sup>30</sup>

"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."<sup>31</sup>

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

<sup>28</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 69, 70.

<sup>29</sup> Albertus Pieters, *The Lamb, the Woman and the Dragon*, p. 162.

<sup>30</sup> Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 356.

<sup>31</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 381.

of Christ," and He can have but one body of which He is the head. (See Eph. 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 Rev. 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."<sup>32</sup>

"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."<sup>33</sup>

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."<sup>34</sup>

"It must then be the CHURCH; the church not simply as Jewish, but in a more generic and theocratic sense—the people of God."<sup>35</sup>

"The Woman is the Old and New Testament Church of God in undivided unity."<sup>36</sup>

"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."<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 283.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 366.

<sup>34</sup> George W. Davis, *The Patmos Vision*, p. 178.

<sup>35</sup> Moses Stuart, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, p. 252.

<sup>36</sup> John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, on Revelation 12:1.

<sup>37</sup> I. T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, pp. 621, 622.

"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."<sup>38</sup>

"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."<sup>39</sup>

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 deceiveth the whole world." That it also represents Satan's earthly rulership 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

<sup>38</sup> H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (3d ed.), pp. 148, 149.

<sup>39</sup> J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, vol. 2, p. 277.

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."<sup>40</sup>

"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."<sup>41</sup>

"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."<sup>42</sup>

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."<sup>43</sup>

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 expect-

<sup>40</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*, "Homilies by Various Authors," on Revelation 12:3 (R. G[reen], p. 324).

<sup>41</sup> W. Lamb, *Studies in the Book of Revelation*, pp. 220, 221.

<sup>42</sup> C. W. M. Turner, *Outline Studies in the Book of Revelation*, p. 68.

<sup>43</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 686.

tancy 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."<sup>44</sup>

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

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<sup>44</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 130.

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.”<sup>45</sup>

“The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries.”<sup>46</sup>

This is also the viewpoint of the angelic host and the inhabitants of unfallen worlds. The death of Christ was the great event that completed the process of reconciling the un-fallen 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 First-born and Lord of all creation. For in Him was created the universe of

<sup>45</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

<sup>46</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 652.

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 unfallen 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, ye heavens, and ye 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 sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth 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 knoweth 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 unfallen 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 cometh, and hath 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

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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."<sup>47</sup>

"To the angels and unfallen 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 unfallen 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 unfallen 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 Saviour'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.'"<sup>48</sup>

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

<sup>47</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 679.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 758-764.

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 thralldom 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." Rom. 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. . . .

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“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 Saviour.”<sup>49</sup>

“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.”<sup>50</sup>

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.”<sup>51</sup>

“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.”<sup>52</sup>

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

<sup>49</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 187.

<sup>50</sup> *Education*, p. 28.

<sup>51</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83.

<sup>52</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 59, 60.

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.

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“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.”<sup>68</sup>

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 Saviour 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.

<sup>68</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 203.

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 Saviour'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 Saviour. They saw the angel bending over their prostrate Master. They saw him lift the Saviour's head upon his bosom, and point toward heaven. They heard his voice, like sweet music, speaking words of comfort and hope."<sup>54</sup>

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

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<sup>54</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 690-694.

co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake.”<sup>55</sup>

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 “dyed garments” that would be “red” “like” those of “him that treadeth in the winefat,” 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.” Heb. 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.”<sup>56</sup>

The French historian Mézeray 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.”<sup>57</sup>

A number of cases of this sort were collected by Dr. William Stroud, one-time president of the Royal Medical

<sup>55</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 43, 44.

<sup>56</sup> Voltaire, *Oeuvres Complètes*, vol. 18, pp. 531, 532.

<sup>57</sup> De Mezeray, *Histoire de France*, vol. 3, p. 603.

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!”<sup>58</sup>

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

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<sup>58</sup> David Russell, *Letters, Chiefly Practical and Consolatory*, vol. 1, p. 7.

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 standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh 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.” Isa. 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 pre-arranged 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.”<sup>50</sup>

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

<sup>50</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 694.

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,

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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." Ps. 18:4. "They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards." Ps. 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." Isa. 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 Lev. 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 evi-

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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?' " Matt. 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 maketh himself a king speaketh 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,

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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 saith 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 clamour 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."<sup>60</sup>

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."<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Rosadi, *The Trial of Jesus* (1905), p. 301.

<sup>61</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 214, 215.

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 faileth me," and, "Reproach hath broken my heart." (Ps. 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 hast 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."<sup>62</sup>

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."<sup>63</sup>

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."<sup>64</sup>

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

<sup>62</sup> William Stroud, *Chiefly Practical and Consolatory*, vol. 1, pp. 7-9.

<sup>63</sup> J. C. Geikie, *The Life and Words of Christ* (1889), p. 788.

<sup>64</sup> Joseph Renan, *Life of Jesus* (People's ed.), pp. 182, 183.

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 waterlike 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 Saviour 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."<sup>65</sup>

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

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<sup>65</sup> Stroud, *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, pp. 155, 156.

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 Saviour 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."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 752, 753.

## 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 hast a name that thou livest, 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."<sup>67</sup>

The Ephesians had lost their first love and relaxed their love works, and the Sardians had a mere form of religion

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<sup>67</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 98-100.

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?"<sup>68</sup>

"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."<sup>69</sup>

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."<sup>70</sup> 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."<sup>71</sup>

"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

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 538, 539.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 600, 601.

<sup>70</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 25, 1902, p. 113.

<sup>71</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 204.

than the vilest profligate; for the latter does not disguise his true character; he appears what he is."<sup>72</sup>

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."<sup>73</sup>

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."<sup>74</sup>

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."<sup>75</sup>

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*

<sup>72</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 226.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 535.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 114.

<sup>75</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 29, 279, 280.

*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.*"<sup>76</sup> (Italics supplied.)

Only spiritual people can discern and understand spiritual things. To others they may even appear as foolishness. "But the natural man receiveth 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 Cor. 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."<sup>77</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 49.

<sup>77</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 494, 495.

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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 Christlike 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 worldling. 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."<sup>78</sup>

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

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<sup>78</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 21.

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 believeth 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.” Rom. 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

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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 believeth 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."<sup>79</sup>

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."<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

<sup>80</sup> H. C. B. Moule, in *The Cambridge Bible*, on Romans 3:26.

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 commendeth 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." Rom. 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 liveth to make

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intercession" for us. 'The life of Christ lived out in us 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 "passeth 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 ye 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 Cor. 5:18-21. "Hath geven 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 hast 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."<sup>81</sup>

"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

<sup>81</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

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."<sup>82</sup>

This is almost too good to be true. 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." Eph. 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 crossless 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 unfallen universe is evident from Colossians 1:20-22:

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<sup>82</sup> Ellen G. White in *The Review and Herald*, Nov. 4, 1890, p. 673.

“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 unproveable 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.” (Heb. 3:12.) Paul declared that “the carnal mind is enmity against God” (Rom. 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 unfallen 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 unproveable 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 justifieth,” and the question, “Who is he that condemneth?” 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 maketh 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 Rom. 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 behoved 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 hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." "In order to atone for the sins of the people," is the Weymouth translation. Christ became Immanuel, 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." Heb. 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 ye 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 our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 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

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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 ye 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."<sup>88</sup> In John's statement there is no

<sup>88</sup> Brook Foss Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, on 1 John 2:1.

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 lighteth every man that cometh 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 Rom. 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 thine 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."

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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." Gal. 2:19-21, R.S.V.

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 Heb. 2:9; 2 Cor. 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" us, and therefore "death hath 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 labours. Here he tells us *how* that life was lived, and *why* those labours were undergone. A full record of his teaching has been preserved to us. Here is a summary of it all."<sup>84</sup>

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." Rom. 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."<sup>85</sup>

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.

<sup>84</sup> E. H. Perowne, in *The Cambridge Bible*, Appendix, pp. 90, 91, on Galatians 2:20.

<sup>85</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 9, p. 62.

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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.”<sup>86</sup>

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 maketh 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

<sup>86</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312.

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."<sup>87</sup>

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 nought. 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 availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Gal. 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 Cor. 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.

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<sup>87</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*, "Homilies by Various Authors," on Galatians 2:20, 21. (W. F. A[dene]y, p. 116).

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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 saith 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 glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith 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."<sup>88</sup>

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 intercrucifixion came about through his union with Christ, and that union was effected by the cross. Well, therefore, might the apostle glory in the cross!"<sup>89</sup>

"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."<sup>90</sup>

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 Saviour'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 fulness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain."<sup>91</sup>

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

<sup>88</sup> E. H. Perowne, in *The Cambridge Bible*, on Galatians 6:14.

<sup>89</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*, "Homiletics," on Galatians 6:14 (p. 323).

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, "Homilies by Various Authors," on Galatians 6:14 (W. F. A[deney], p. 342).

<sup>91</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 209, 210.

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 shew 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."<sup>92</sup>

"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."<sup>93</sup>

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."<sup>94</sup>

"Reflections of Calvary will awaken tender, sacred, and lively emotions in the Christian's heart. Praises to God and the Lamb will be

<sup>92</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 158.

<sup>93</sup> Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 183.

<sup>94</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 163.

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 Saviour'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."<sup>85</sup>

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 Saviour's character.

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<sup>85</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 212, 213.

. . . 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 maketh intercession for us.' The Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of Jesus Christ."<sup>96</sup>

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."<sup>97</sup>

"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 marchings 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."<sup>98</sup>

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

<sup>96</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 92-95.

<sup>97</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 75, 76, 94, 160.

<sup>98</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 293.

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 believeth 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 Cor. 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." Heb. 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."<sup>99</sup>

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,

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 430, 431.

and they "pressed forward," buoyant and hopeful. Of the mighty giants and impregnable fortresses the Lord said, "Ye 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."<sup>100</sup>

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 antitype 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 antitypes of the ancient Balaam is

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 435, 436.

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."<sup>101</sup>

"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."<sup>102</sup>

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

<sup>101</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 133, 202.

<sup>102</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 431, 432.

One "altogether lovely," "the chiefest 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.

# The Covenants and the Law

By

EDWARD HEPPENSTALL



## The Covenants and the Plan of Redemption

### I—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 Decalogue, we are told, was abrogated at the cross, and is part of that covenant which "gendereth to bondage."

It is further believed by some that although the Decalogue 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 Decalogue 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.

## II—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

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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 ye shall be my people." Lev. 26:12. "They saw God, and did eat and drink." Ex. 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 ye drink it, in remembrance of me." 1 Cor. 11:25, R.V.

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 fellowship of love and unity.

### III—The Sinaitic Covenant

#### *Two Covenants or One*

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."<sup>1</sup> 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?

#### *God's Purpose and Approach to Israel at Sinai*

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." Ex. 2:24. In calling Moses to lead the children of Israel, He states that His purpose in delivering Israel is to establish "my covenant." (Ex. 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

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White in *The Southern Watchman*, March 1, 1902, p. 142.

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" (Ex. 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." Ex. 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 ye spake 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." Deut. 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 Decalogue, 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." Ex. 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. (Ex. 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

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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. (Deut. 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." Deut. 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. (Deut. 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 Saviour'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 Saviour, 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."<sup>2</sup>

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 Deut. 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 pre-

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 365-367.

viously 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."<sup>3</sup>

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.)

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 466.

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." Deut. 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, "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

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dereth to bondage"? Gal. 4:24. And again in Hebrews, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old." Heb. 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 ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. 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. (Heb. 8:6-8; Rom. 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 Phariseism 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."<sup>6</sup>

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."<sup>7</sup>

The Sinaitic covenant, then, from the manward 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

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (1900 ed.), p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 36.

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."<sup>8</sup>

Why did the Lord see it needful for a redeclaration 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 pro-

<sup>8</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 364.

vided 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 Decalogue. They used the ceremonial law in the same way they used the Decalogue. 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 hair-splitting 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." Ps. 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."<sup>9</sup>

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

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

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."<sup>10</sup>

#### V—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, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel"? Jer. 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

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 713, 714.

is the force of Paul's words: "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Heb. 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." Dan. 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." Rom. 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."<sup>11</sup>

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 sealing "the law among my disciples." (Isa. 8:16.) The whole of Hebrews 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

<sup>11</sup> *Mount of Blessing*, p. 114.

apostasy and rebellion, God gathers out a people that are true to Him,— a people 'in whose heart is his law.'<sup>12</sup>

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."<sup>13</sup>

"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."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 338.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 373.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 127.

# The Law in Christian Doctrine and Experience

## I—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 Decalogue as an essential part of the everlasting gospel. This particular position receives its strongest support from dispensationalists.

1. Those who declare that the Decalogue 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 presseth into it."

#### **John**

John 1:16, 17. "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

#### **Paul**

Gal. 2:19. "For I through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God."

Gal. 3:18-25. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. . . . Wherefore then serveth 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."

Gal. 5:14, 22, 23. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Rom. 3:21. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."

Rom. 6:14. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Rom. 7:1-6. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? . . . Wherefore, my brethren, ye 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."

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2 Cor. 3:7. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly 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."<sup>15</sup>

"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."<sup>16</sup>

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." (Gal. 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.

## II—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

<sup>15</sup> E. G. White letter 96, 1896. (See *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1952, p. 6.)

<sup>16</sup> E. G. White manuscript 87, 1900. (See *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1952, p. 6.)

of God: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. 40:8. It also declares the whole duty of man: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 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." Rom. 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, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."

"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Rom. 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

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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 forever 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."<sup>17</sup>

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,

<sup>17</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, July 15, 1890, p. 433.

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." Rom. 10:3.

Then the Scripture continues, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." 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 believeth.

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, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" Paul cannot have in mind "under condemnation." No one desires to be under condemnation. Romans 7:1 reads, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth." 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." (Gal. 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]." Rom. 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." Rom. 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." Rom. 7:25.

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness. Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. . . . Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law [as a standard]." Rom. 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 Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ."<sup>18</sup>

"Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practise. 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."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 250.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

### III—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."<sup>20</sup>

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

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 478.

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 Cor. 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 lukewarmness 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?" Rom. 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." Phil. 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

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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."<sup>21</sup>

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 dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." Ps. 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 lukewarmness, 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

<sup>21</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890, p. 146.

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."<sup>22</sup>

"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."<sup>23</sup>

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 untransformed, 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 serveth the law? It was added, because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made." Gal. 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 presseth into it."

<sup>22</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

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 laxer 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." Gal. 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 cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17.

3. Finally, the true 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 continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 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 continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." "The law worketh wrath." Rom. 4:15. But wrath cometh only upon the children of disobedience. (Eph. 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 hast 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;

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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 continueth 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 practises, 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."<sup>24</sup>

"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."<sup>25</sup>

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, ye shall be free indeed."

<sup>24</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 315, 316.

<sup>25</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 136.

## The Law and the Gospel United, for Christ's Righteousness

### I—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 Decalogue 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 Decalogue 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.

## II—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." Eph. 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 vail is upon their heart." 2 Cor. 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 righteous-

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ness 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 ye believed Moses, ye 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.

### III—The Decalogue 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 saith, Behold, the days come, saith 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, hath 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 stumblingstone." 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." (R.S.V.) 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." Heb. 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 shalt 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

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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 Decalogue. 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." Rom. 8:2.

*The Law of God Experienced in the Life*

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. (Isa. 8:16.) "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . With the mind I myself serve the law of God," exclaims Paul. Rom. 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." Matt. 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". Rom. 8:4.

Isaiah prophesied concerning Christ that He would "magnify the law and make it honourable." Isa. 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." (Rom. 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 shalt 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 shalt 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 intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression."<sup>20</sup>

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 Decalogue 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. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt 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

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White in *Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1875, p. 181.

say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Matt. 5:21, 22.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh 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 Decalogue, 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."<sup>27</sup>

Under the new covenant the law of God becomes married to the gospel by the Holy Spirit. Obedience is no longer a

<sup>27</sup> *Mount of Blessing*, p. 75.

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 doth he meditate day and night." Ps. 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."<sup>28</sup>

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 ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. 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."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

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 honour 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." Isa. 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." Matt. 7:18, R.S.V. "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." Matt. 12:34, 35, R.S.V. "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, R.S.V.

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, R.S.V.

"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."<sup>30</sup>

#### *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."<sup>31</sup>

"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."<sup>32</sup>

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

<sup>30</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 105.

<sup>31</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 478.

<sup>32</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 713, 714.

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."<sup>33</sup>

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 saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. . . .

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 622-625.

For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant." Isa. 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." Heb. 4:1, R.S.V. 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, R.S.V.)

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

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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 remaineth therefore a rest [or a keeping of the sabbath] to the people of God. . . . Let us labour 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. (Rom. 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." Rom. 7:25; 8:1.

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"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 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."

**Life Only Through Christ**

By

W. L. EMMERSON



# Life Only Through Christ

## Part I

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." Deut. 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."<sup>1</sup>

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." (Phil. 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." Gen. 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" (Gen. 2:7) after God's own "image" and "likeness" (Gen. 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.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in W. R. Huntington, *Conditional Immortality*.

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 eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 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, "ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Gen. 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, Ye 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 doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye 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."<sup>2</sup>

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 eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," literally, "dying thou shalt 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."<sup>3</sup>

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

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 534.

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." Gen. 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 (Ps. 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*]." Gen. 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

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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 creepeth 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. (Gen. 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*]." Eccl. 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 creepeth 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. (Ps. 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." Gen. 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" (Gen. 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 perfections, 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 Tim. 1:17) with mortal man (Rom. 1:23) and by the further distinction between God, who inherently and only possesses immortality (1 Tim. 1:17), and man, for

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whom immortality is still a future goal, which he may "seek for" (Rom. 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*] goeth forth, he returneth to his earth." Ps. 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." Eccl. 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." (Gen. 3:19.) With this agrees the writer of Ecclesiastes: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." Eccl. 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 befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts;

even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath [*ruach*]; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast." Eccl. 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 eatest, thy body shall die, but thy soul shall live on." He said, "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof *thou* [the whole man] shalt surely die." Gen. 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 sinneth, it shall die" (Eze. 18:4, 20), and the apostle Paul, who categorically stated, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 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 Cor. 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 goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146:4. "The living," similarly asserts Solomon, "know . . . : but the dead know not any thing." Eccl. 9:5. Then, itemizing some of the typical "thoughts" of man, he says

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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 goest." 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." Ps. 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." Ps. 115:17. The dead, in fact, have no "remembrance" of God (Ps. 6:5), they have no present experience of God, and they "cannot hope" for any future contact with God (Isa. 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."<sup>4</sup>

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

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<sup>4</sup> S. D. F. Salmond, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality* (3d ed., 1897), p. 187.

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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.<sup>5</sup>

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."<sup>6</sup>

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. (Matt. 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

<sup>5</sup> Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, book 2, chap. 8, par. 14 (Whiston trans.).

<sup>6</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*, book 18, chap. 1, par. 4 (Whiston trans.).

“science [*gnosis*] falsely so called” (1 Tim. 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.”<sup>7</sup>

### 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.”<sup>8</sup>

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.

<sup>7</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 58.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 549.

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Finally, the evidence all leads to the conclusion that the future life is to continue for ever.”<sup>9</sup>

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

<sup>9</sup> Michael Maher, “Immortality,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 7, pp. 688, 689.

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."<sup>10</sup>

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

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<sup>10</sup> *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, pp. 341-346.

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 priesthoods 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 archdeceiver'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."

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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." Ps. 13:3.

The Lord told Moses, "Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers" (Deut. 31:16), and the formula, "So ——— 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. (Matt. 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 Thess. 4:13; 5:10; 1 Cor. 11:30; 15:20, 51), and the saints as asleep "in Jesus" (1 Thess. 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 shalt 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." Dan. 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 (Rev. 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 subcon-

scious 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 Cor. 15:38.)

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 up 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."<sup>11</sup>

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."<sup>12</sup>

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 psy-

<sup>11</sup> Edward White, *Life in Christ*, p. 297.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309.

chology, 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."<sup>13</sup>

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."<sup>14</sup>

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" (Rev. 13:8). If then it was a foregone conclusion at the entrance of sin that death would not be a state of "nothing-

<sup>13</sup> G. D. Rosenthal, *Survival*, p. 106.

<sup>14</sup> J. H. Leckie, *The World to Come and Final Destiny*, p. 80.

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; Rev. 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

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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."<sup>16</sup>

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."<sup>16</sup>

"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."<sup>17</sup>

Again, commenting on the statement of Christ, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 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."<sup>18</sup>

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.

<sup>16</sup> *Life in Christ*, p. 311.

<sup>16</sup> C. J. Shebbeare, *The Problem of the Future Life* (1939), p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 527.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 606.

## Life Only Through Christ

### Part II

Life was given to man in the beginning when God breathed into Adam the "breath of life." (Gen. 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 liveth, 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." Heb. 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. (Ex. 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." Ps. 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." Ps. 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, "ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:19.

"They shall come again," declared God to Jeremiah of the innocent victims of Satan's wrath, "from the land of the enemy." Jer. 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 ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves." Eze. 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." Dan. 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

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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 impartation, Jesus declared, "ye 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 Saviour," 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."<sup>19</sup>

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 believeth 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 of" 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

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<sup>19</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

4:14. In the sixth chapter Jesus describes Himself as "the bread of God . . . which cometh down from heaven, and giveth 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 ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood," he declared, "ye have no life in you." Verse 53. On the other hand, "whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh 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 hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath 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."<sup>20</sup>

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, ye 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

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<sup>20</sup> *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 336.

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." Matt. 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 evangel 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." Rom. 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 Tim. 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 (Rom. 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."<sup>21</sup>

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." Phil. 2:6-8. Thus Jesus "emptied himself" of the life that was in Him,

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<sup>21</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 533.

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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 Cor. 6:14. And again: "He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus." 2 Cor. 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. . . . Ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished [literally, gone to nothing]." 1 Cor. 15:14-18. "But," he confidently adds, "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits" (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 firstfruits; 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 (Eph.1:20) are the assurance that we now potentially sit in "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6) and, after His coming, we shall actually be forever with the Lord (1 Thess. 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 impartation of the life of Christ to a sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" likewise brings an immediate quickening of resurrection life. (Eph. 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 dwelleth in you." Rom. 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."<sup>22</sup>

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." Rom. 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."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, pp. 553, 554.

<sup>23</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 388.

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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 Thess. 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." Rev. 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. (Rev. 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 unblest 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 ye 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." Rom. 12:2.

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### 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 Cor. 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, ye [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." Isa. 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 Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body [or the body of our humiliation]." Phil. 3:20, 21. And again: "The Spirit of him that raised up . . . Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Rom. 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 sowest *not* that body that shall be." 1 Cor. 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."<sup>24</sup>

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

<sup>24</sup> *Survival*, pp. 98, 99.

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."<sup>25</sup>

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-by 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 Cor. 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.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

The bodies we now have, explains Paul, are "terrestrial." The bodies that we shall have, if faithful, will be "celestial bodies." (1 Cor. 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 shew 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 dishonour." 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. (Phil. 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 Cor. 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 honour, and in power, in freedom from waste, decay, and death, in the glory of perfection, in ability to discharge its functions."<sup>20</sup>

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:

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<sup>20</sup> *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 573.

“The resurrection of Jesus was a type of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The countenance of the risen Saviour, 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.”<sup>27</sup>

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; Matt. 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.” Gen. 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 beauteous 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

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<sup>27</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 804.

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 Cor. 15:54. (Cf. Isa. 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." Rev. 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" (Rev. 2:11), on whom "the second death hath no power" (Rev. 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

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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*." Ps. 37:20. "All the wicked will he *destroy*." Ps. 45:20. Elsewhere we learn that they will be *consumed* or *burned up* (Ps. 37:20), *devoured* (Isa. 42:14), *cut off* (Ps. 37:9, 38), *rooted out* (Ps. 52:5), and *blotted out* (Ps. 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." Ps. 2:9. They will be ground to powder. (Matt. 21:44.) Their light will be extinguished. (Job 18:5.) "Into smoke shall they consume away." Ps. 37:20. "As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Ps. 68:2. "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt. 3:12. They "shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Matt. 4:1. "Therefore," writes Hosea, "they shall be as . . . the early dew that passeth 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" (Ps. 37:10, 36), for they will "be no more" (Ps. 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." Ps. 34:16. "Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever." Ps. 9:5. "They shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 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 Thess. 1:9.

No wonder, therefore, that men are warned: "Fear 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]." Matt. 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."<sup>28</sup>

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."<sup>29</sup>

### 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, "Ye 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 he succeeds in luring souls away from their allegiance to God."<sup>30</sup>

Through the heathen 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*

<sup>28</sup> *Life in Christ*, p. 386.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>30</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 534, 535.

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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."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Justin Martyr, *Second Apology*, chap. 7 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 190.

Irenaeus declared that unbelievers will not “inherit incorruptibility,” and that “he who has not recognized God . . . deprives himself of continuance for ever and ever.”<sup>32</sup>

“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.”<sup>33</sup>

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.”<sup>34</sup>

### 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.”<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in *The World to Come and Final Destiny*, p. 222.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in *Life in Christ*, p. 424.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 423.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in G. G. Coulton, *Two Saints*, p. 110.

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 burns the roof of his mouth as if it were a firebrand! . . . Suffice it for me to close up by saying that the hell of hells will be to thee, poor sinner, the thought that it is to be for ever."<sup>36</sup>

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."<sup>37</sup>

Likewise wrote Keble:

"Salted with fire, they seem to show  
How spirits lost in endless woe  
May undecaying live."<sup>38</sup>

### 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."<sup>39</sup>

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

<sup>36</sup> From a sermon preached in 1855.

<sup>37</sup> Isaac Watts, *Moral Songs for Children* (1715).

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in *Conditional Immortality*, p. 49.

<sup>39</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 221.

the wicked will be subjected to "shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 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." Matt. 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, "ye 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 dieth 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 "everlasting 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 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

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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 "dieth 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 ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Rev. 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 believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth 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." Ps. 139:24.

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**The Increasing Timeliness of the  
Threefold Message**

By

F. D. NICHOL



## Part I

### 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."<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Incidents* (1868 ed.), pp. 306, 307.

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, ere 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 seems 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 failingly, 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

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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

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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."<sup>2</sup>

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 Immanuel 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."<sup>3</sup>

This philosophical school could not fail to affect theological thinking, because theology and philosophy had tradi-

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

tionally 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."<sup>4</sup>

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."<sup>5</sup> "We are left more than half in doubt whether by 'God' he means a being of specific character."<sup>6</sup> 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."<sup>7</sup>

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.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

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

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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 xiv. 6, 7.) It is a sound which is to reach all nations; it 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."<sup>8</sup> (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

<sup>8</sup> Josiah Litch in *Advent Shield*, No. 1 (1844), pp. 86, 87.

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 re-affirmed 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.

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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 Sabbathkeeping 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."<sup>9</sup> 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."<sup>10</sup> (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

<sup>9</sup> *Review and Herald*, April 18, 1854, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, August 1850, No. 1, p. 1.

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

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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 evolutionistic 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.

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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." Rev. 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 ere 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.

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## Part II

### 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."<sup>11</sup>

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."<sup>12</sup>

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."<sup>13</sup>

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.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species*, pp. 473, 474.

<sup>12</sup> Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, p. 707.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 708.

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 evolutionistic 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."<sup>14</sup>

In this same connection he admits that "following up this scientific line of thought alone" "leads to humanity-worship or rather to *self-worship*."<sup>15</sup> True, he does not accept the charge and seeks ardently to prove that we may still wor-

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Le Conte, *Evolution and Religious Thought*, p. 338.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

ship 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*."<sup>16</sup> (Italics supplied.)

He attempts to equate this immanent God with the God of the Scriptures. Later apologists for evolution, more clear-headed 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 Messiahship. 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 ascen-

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 300.

sion, 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 Saviour'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 evolutionistic 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 evolutionistic 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 evolutionistic 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.

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### **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 redated and attributed to later authors. Con-

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sequently 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 B.C.?

#### **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 Saviour 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."<sup>17</sup>

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

<sup>17</sup> Albert Ritschl, *Types of Modern Theology*, p. 138.

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 theologic 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."<sup>18</sup>

### 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. . . .

<sup>18</sup> June 24, 1909, p. 1408.

"The world is mine again,' the perplexed preacher might have said when he discovered the social gospel."<sup>19</sup>

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."<sup>20</sup> 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."<sup>21</sup>

And why did theologians, very particularly in America,

<sup>19</sup> Gaius Glenn Atkins, *Religion in Our Times*, p. 60.

<sup>20</sup> Gerald Birney Smith, *Current Christian Thinking*, p. 82.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

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."<sup>22</sup>

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]."<sup>23</sup>

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

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 86.

experience changes theology more than was anticipated by its early advocates."<sup>24</sup>

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?"<sup>25</sup>

### 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."<sup>26</sup>

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.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

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."<sup>27</sup>

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."<sup>28</sup>

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.

<sup>27</sup> Edward L. Schaub, "The Psychology of Religion in America" in *Religious Thought in the Last Quarter-Century*, edited by G. B. Smith, p. 131.

<sup>28</sup> *Current Christian Thinking*, p. 95.

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."<sup>29</sup>

### 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."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>30</sup> January 3, 1924, p. 6.

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 ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.'" <sup>31</sup>

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.

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<sup>31</sup> *Homiletic Review*, September, 1923, p. 186.

### Part III

## 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, evolutionistic

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."<sup>32</sup>

### 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

<sup>32</sup> John Herman Randall, Jr., in *Current History*, June, 1929, pp. 360, 361.

conception of reality [a finished creation as Genesis declares] to seem really convincing to men who think in terms of evolutionary science.”<sup>33</sup>

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.”<sup>34</sup>

#### 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. Leuba 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

<sup>33</sup> Pages 169, 170.

<sup>34</sup> Henshaw Ward in *Scribner's Magazine*, June, 1930, pp. 680-683.

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."<sup>35</sup>

#### 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.

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<sup>35</sup> *The Christian Century*, Jan. 7, 1931, p. 11.

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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.'" <sup>36</sup>

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 seat, holding court." <sup>37</sup>

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." <sup>38</sup>

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." <sup>39</sup>

He rightly adds that "if 'redemption through Christ's blood and the forgiveness of our trespasses' is no longer to

<sup>36</sup> Ralph W. Sockman in *Harpers*, November, 1930, p. 676.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 676, 677.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 678-680.

<sup>39</sup> *The Presbyterian*, Jan. 5, 1933, p. 3.

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."<sup>40</sup>

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."<sup>41</sup>

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 evolutionistic 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.

<sup>40</sup> *Advance*, July 19, 1934, p. 318.

<sup>41</sup> *Scribner's Magazine*, November, 1925, p. 455.

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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."<sup>42</sup>

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."<sup>43</sup>

#### 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

<sup>42</sup> *Yale Review*, Autumn, 1928, pp. 65, 75-80.

<sup>43</sup> Stanley High in *United Presbyterian*, Dec. 26, 1929, p. 15.

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."<sup>44</sup>

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

<sup>44</sup> January 19, 1928, pp. 67, 68.

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."<sup>45</sup>

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."<sup>46</sup>

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-

<sup>45</sup> Page 19.

<sup>46</sup> Page 1483.

year period. He declares that a half century ago "there was a body of religious truth generally recognized as orthodoxy."<sup>47</sup> 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."<sup>48</sup>

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."<sup>49</sup>

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 fa-

<sup>47</sup> Carl S. Patton in *Journal of Religion*, October, 1936, p. 445.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 449.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 450.

miliar 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."<sup>50</sup>

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?"<sup>51</sup>

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.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 452-456.

<sup>51</sup> William Henry Spence in *The Congregationalist*, Aug. 16, 1928, pp. 205, 206.

### 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.'" <sup>52</sup>

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

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<sup>52</sup> Page 1418.

the corner. But it soon became evident that the great depression was an inevitable aftermath of the world war of 1914-18.

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."<sup>63</sup>

Into this "obscure chaos" the peoples of the world moved increasingly in the 1930's. And amid such chaos the self-

<sup>63</sup> Aldous Huxley in *Harpers*, January, 1933, pp. 213, 214.

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."<sup>64</sup>

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

<sup>64</sup> Irwin Edman in *American Scholar*, Autumn, 1946, p. 520.

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."<sup>55</sup> 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

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<sup>55</sup> June 7, 1950, p. 698.

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."<sup>56</sup>

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."<sup>57</sup>

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.

<sup>56</sup> Cornelius Van Til, *The New Modernism*, p. 367.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 373.

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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."<sup>58</sup>

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 us, 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 us 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 Tim. 4:3. When a worker says to

<sup>58</sup> Wilhelm Pauck in *Journal of Religion*, January, 1947, p. 53.

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 Saviour who is so clearly revealed in those doctrines, I shall be saved.

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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 asketh 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.

## Part IV

### 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."<sup>59</sup>

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."<sup>60</sup>

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 mate-

<sup>59</sup> *Federal Council Bulletin*, June, 1938, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> *The Christian Century*, Feb. 22, 1939, p. 242.

rially 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.<sup>61</sup>

## 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.

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<sup>61</sup> For an extended discussion of the report see: *The Ecumenical Review*, Jan., 1952, pp. 161-173; April, 1952, pp. 282-295; July, 1952, pp. 413-426. This *Review* is a quarterly published by the World Council of Churches. For varied reactions by American churchmen see also the "Correspondence" section of the *Christian Century* in the weeks immediately following publication of the report.

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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."<sup>62</sup>

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."<sup>63</sup>

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

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<sup>62</sup> Quoted by John LaFarge, S.J., in *America*, Jan. 4, 1930, p. 304.

<sup>63</sup> January 3, 1940, p. 4.

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."<sup>61</sup>

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 arid 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

<sup>61</sup> Walter Marshall Horton, *Theism and the Modern Mood*, pp. 12, 13.

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 'Rev. A., who is a brilliant and popular preacher.' He goes, like his pagan brother, to attach himself 'for a while' to his favorite philosopher."<sup>65</sup>

### 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."<sup>66</sup>

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

<sup>65</sup> J. Burford Parry in *The Congregationalist*, Jan. 15, 1931, p. 78.

<sup>66</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 572, 573.

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 nonchurch 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."<sup>67</sup>

The writer adds immediately, and correctly, "Secularism is practical atheism."

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<sup>67</sup> Leroy E. Loemker, "The Nature of Secularism" in *The Christian Faith and Secularism*, edited by J. Richard Spann, p. 11.

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."<sup>68</sup>

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

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<sup>68</sup> *Religion in Life*, Winter, 1951-52, pp. 6-8.

in America, set forth baldly the antisupernaturalistic 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 tintured 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

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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 secularistic 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.

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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 reigneth."

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

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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."<sup>69</sup>

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.

<sup>69</sup> Page 389.

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

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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." Rom. 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 "shewing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 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 reigneth, 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 Protestant-

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ism 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."<sup>70</sup> 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.

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<sup>70</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 33.

# Antichrist in History and Prophecy

By

FRANK H. YOST

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## Antichrist in History and Prophecy

### 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 Saviour 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 “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. (Matt. 24:24.) Paul’s “man of sin” (2 Thess. 2:3),<sup>1</sup> “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

<sup>1</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia* identifies this “man of sin” with the “little horn” of Daniel 7. A. J. Maas, “Antichrist,” Vol. I, p. 560.

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> It was a contemporary of his, Amalric of Bena, who first attached the name to the pope, that is, to the papal system.<sup>4</sup>

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, Melanchthon, Bucer, Beza, and practically all their disciples called the Papacy Antichrist.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Commodian, *Instructions*, chap. 41, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325* (hereafter referred to as ANF), Vol. IV, pp. 210, 211; Victorinus, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*, ad chap. 17, in ANF, Vol. VII, pp. 357, 358.

<sup>3</sup> *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, eds. John M'Clinckstock, and James Strong, Vol. I, p. 259, art. "Antichrist." John C. L. Gieseler, *Text-Book of Church History* (1865), trans. Henry B. Smith, Vol. II, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. I, p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

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.<sup>6</sup>

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 rulership 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.<sup>7</sup>

To Seventh-day Adventists the Antichrist is primarily and fundamentally Satan, who first rebelled against Christ,<sup>8</sup> who will just before the Second Advent endeavor to impersonate Christ on earth,<sup>9</sup> and who will eventually be destroyed after the one thousand years in the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:10.)<sup>10</sup> 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

<sup>6</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk. v, chaps. 25-33, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 553-560; Tertulian, *Against Marcion*, bk. v, chap. 16, in *ANF*, Vol. III, pp. 463, 464.

<sup>7</sup> William E. Blackstone, *Jesus Is Coming* (3d ed.), pp. 185, 209.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 673.

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,<sup>11</sup> to deceive the primordial pair in Eden, and hence is called the serpent and also the dragon. (Rev.12:3, 9, 14-17.)<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> The satanic dragon is a composite of the prophetic beasts. (Rev. 12:3.)

2. The total of all apostasy among men, described for instance by Paul in an appalling picture of evil. (Rom. 1:18-32; 3:5-20.)<sup>14</sup> 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. (Dan. 7:3-8, 17-28; 8:3-8, 20-22.)<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 53, 58.

<sup>12</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 438.

<sup>13</sup> Satan's successive falls, his expulsion from heaven, his limitation to or confinement upon the earth, and his final destruction can be clearly marked:

a. His spiritual fall from righteousness, when iniquity was found in him. Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-17; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 35-42.

b. His being cast out of heaven with the fallen angels, and his "tartarization," so to speak, or expulsion into Tartarus. 2 Peter 2:4; Luke 10:18; Rev. 12:3, 4. After he had induced mankind to obey him, he appeared in the councils of heaven as representative of this earth. Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; John 14:30; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 67, 69.

c. His being cast down when Christ sealed His victory over sin and death at His ascension and expelled Satan and his angels, once and for all, from heaven. Rev. 12:7-13; John 12:31.

d. His voluntary coming to earth at the end of the age as false king and false christ—Antichrist in particular, as suggested by 2 Corinthians 11:14 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3, where "the Lawless one," not system or group, but a wicked person, is described. *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

e. His being cast upon the earth and restraint there, not only from further deceits by the circumstances of the desolation of the earth, but by his being actually restrained from leaving the earth. Rev. 20:1-4.

f. His being cast into the melting mass of the earth (2 Peter 3:10), the "lake of fire" of Revelation 20:10, where he suffers the longest of all and will be destroyed without recovery or return. Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 291; *The Great Controversy*, p. 673.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 119, 120, 125, 259, 342; Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 363, 366, 501, 531-535, 600, 601.

*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 rulership 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),<sup>16</sup> and the term was used as a symbol for the archenemy of the church on earth by John in the Revelation (Rev. 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. (Rev. 17:3-7.)<sup>17</sup>

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

<sup>16</sup> "And Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle which they say he wrote in Rome itself, as is indicated by him, when he calls the city, by a figure, Babylon, as he does in the following words: 'The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.'"—Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. ii, chap. 15, par. 2, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (hereafter referred to as *NPNF*), 2d series, Vol. I, p. 116.

Cf. Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men*, chap. 8, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. III, p. 364; and Di Bruno: "I must premise that amongst the first Christians pagan Rome was often designated under the name of Babylon, and naturally so, especially among the converted Jews, who saw the great similarity between the two capitals on account of their vastness, pagan immorality, superstition, and common antagonism to the people of God.

"For this reason no one mistook what St. John in the Apocalypse designated under the figure of Babylon.

"In the end of the first general Epistle of St. Peter we have these words: 'The Church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth my son Mark'; in which passage the word Babylon must be taken to mean Rome; in fact, it is not recorded either in Holy Scripture or elsewhere that St. Peter or St. Mark had ever been to ancient Babylon in Asia; and no ancient writer has ever said that this letter was dated really from ancient Babylon, or that it was so understood by any one; on the contrary, it is recorded positively in the history of Eusebius (Book II., chap. xv.) as having been stated by Papias, the disciple of St. John the Evangelist and friend of St. Polycarp, that St. Peter, in his first Epistle which he wrote from Rome, called Rome figuratively Babylon. The same thing is asserted by St. Jerome in his book of *Illustrious Men* when he speaks of St. Mark."—Joseph Faà Di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, ed. Louis A. Lambert (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1884 [imprimatur of Cardinal McCloskey]), pp. 323, 324.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 114-116; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 381-389, 439.

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. (Rev. 17:3; 9; 13:1; 12:3.)<sup>18</sup> By prophetic extension these seven heads, clearly successive (Rev. 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),<sup>19</sup> 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 up as a deceptive counterpart of the true church of Christ. The pope, or *pāpa*, as the Latin and Italian words are, is the bishop of Rome, metropolitan of the Roman arch-

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *The Great Controversy*, p. 51.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

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. (Matt. 16:18, 19.)<sup>20</sup> According to this claim, Peter was founder of the church at Rome, where he preached twenty-five years,<sup>21</sup> from the time of his release from prison by Herod Agrippa I in Jerusalem in A.D. 44. (Acts 12:3-23.)<sup>22</sup> until his martyrdom in Rome in 68. Before his death Peter, it is claimed, appointed to succeed him Linus,<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup> There are churches other than Rome which can prove that they have been founded by apostles, but Rome claims the primacy among all churches,<sup>25</sup> 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 Cor. 10:4) who has founded, and is the foundation of, the church of Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).<sup>26</sup> 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. (Eph. 2:19-22.)

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 412-414.

<sup>21</sup> Eusebius, *Chronicon*, in *Continuatio* of Jerome, *ad ann.* 44, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. XXVII, col. 450.

<sup>22</sup> This is a very important chronological datum, as it can be fixed with certainty at A.D. 44. The emperor Caligula died in A.D. 41, and was succeeded by Claudius. The newly crowned emperor made over to Herod Agrippa I the territories of his grandfather Herod the Great, and named him king. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, bk. xix, chap. 5, par. 1.) Agrippa died after reigning three years, that is, in A.D. 44. (*Ibid.*, chap. 8, par. 2.)

<sup>23</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. iii, chap. 2; chap. 4, par. 9; and chap. 20, par. 3, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 133, 137, and 149, where see ed. notes.

<sup>24</sup> *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 23d session, July 15, 1563, "On the Sacrament of the Order," Canons VII and VIII, in Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. II, pp. 192, 193.

<sup>25</sup> "Profession of the Tridentine Faith," art. 1, in Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. II, p. 209.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 175, 176; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 595, 596.

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.<sup>27</sup>

### *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* (Gal. 6:1; Rom. 8:6; 1 Cor. 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, *apostolus*, "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. (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10; Eph. 4:11.)<sup>28</sup>

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 Tim.

<sup>27</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 466, 467; Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. IV, pp. 393, 529.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 91, 92.

5:17; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1), and the deacons (from Greek, *diakonos*, "servant") (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).<sup>29</sup> 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 Tim. 3:8-13) and the elders (1 Tim. 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 (Phil. 1:1), 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).<sup>30</sup> According to the postapostolic writers, there was a first or presiding elder in each group of elders.<sup>31</sup> 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

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Acts 6:3-6 and *Ibid.*, pp. 87-97.

<sup>30</sup> The Greek word thus translated is *Cheirotoneo*, "to stretch the hand"; that is, to vote or choose. Since later records show the bishops to have been elected: Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. vi, chap. 29, pars. 2-4; Cyprian, *Epistle* 51, pars. 8 and 54, par. 6, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 329, 341; *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, bk. iii, sec. 2, chap. 20, and bk. viii, sec. 2, chaps. 3, 4, in *ANF*, Vol. VII, pp. 432, 481, 482; *Apostolic Canons*, i, in *ANF*, Vol. VII, p. 500.

<sup>31</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chap. 67 (about A.D. 155); Tertullian, *The Chaplet*, chap. 3 (about A.D. 225). The Greek word in Justin Martyr translated "president" or "leader" is *ho proestōs*. Tertullian's Latin for "president" is *praesidentes*.

in others. Shortly after A.D. 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.<sup>32</sup> But Clement, leader of the church at Rome, writing to the church at Corinth in A.D. 96, knows only presbyters;<sup>33</sup> and as previously mentioned, Justin and Tertullian speak of "presiding ones," apparently still the chiefs of the elders.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, Tertullian resents the growing authority of the bishops.<sup>34</sup> 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 A.D. 324, in his *Church History*, knows all the early church leaders as bishops, and not as presbyters.<sup>35</sup> 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

<sup>32</sup> Ignatius (in Loeb Classical Library [hereafter referred to as LCL], *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I), *Epistle to the Ephesians*, chap. 2, pp. 174, 175; chap. 3, pp. 176, 177; chap. 4, pp. 176-179; chap. 5, pp. 178, 179; *Epistle to the Magnesians*, chap. 6, pp. 200-203; chap. 13, pp. 208-211; *Epistle to the Tralians*, chap. 2, pp. 212-215; chap. 3, pp. 214, 215; chap. 7, pp. 218, 219; *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, chap. 7, pp. 244-247; *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans*, chap. 8, pp. 260, 261; chap. 9, pp. 260-263; *Epistle to Polycarp*, chap. 6, pp. 272-275. However, of the doubtfulness of these epistles see Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, p. 660: "These oldest documents of the hierarchy soon became so interpolated, curtailed, and mutilated by pious fraud, that it is today almost impossible to discover with certainty the genuine Ignatius of history under the hyper- and pseudo-Ignatius of tradition."

<sup>33</sup> Clement, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, chap. 45, par. 5, and chap. 47, par. 6, in LCL, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 86, 87, 90, 91.

<sup>34</sup> On Modesty, chap. 21, in *ANF*, Vol. IV, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>35</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. iii, chaps. 13-15, 22, 32, 34-36; bk. iv, chaps. 4-6, 10, 24-27.

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.)<sup>36</sup>

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.<sup>37</sup>

5. The circulation of the Scriptures could not have been extensive among the Christians. There were no printing

<sup>36</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chap. 67, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 185, 186.

<sup>37</sup> Cyprian, *Epistle 54*, in *ANF*, Vol. V, p. 341; Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. vi, chap. 39, and bk. viii, chap. 13, in *NPNE*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 280, 281, 333, 334; Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. i, chap. 6, in *NPNE*, 2d series, Vol. III, p. 43: "The Council looked like an assembled army of martyrs."

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.<sup>38</sup> 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 A.D. 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.<sup>39</sup> The episcopal power was greatly enhanced by the legalization of Christianity by Constantine in A.D. 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 cultism 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,

<sup>38</sup> Cyprian, Epistle 54, par. 5, in *ANF*, Vol. V, p. 340.

<sup>39</sup> Cyprian, Epistle 24, par. 1; Epistle 51, par. 21; Epistle 54, pars. 2, 5; Epistle 64, par. 3; Epistle 68, pars. 8, 9, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 305, 337, 339, 340, 366, 374, 375; Treatise 1, par. 5, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 422, 423.

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

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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.<sup>40</sup> 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.<sup>41</sup> 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.<sup>42</sup>

#### *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

<sup>40</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk. iii, chap. 3, pars. 1-4, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 415, 416.

<sup>41</sup> Tertullian, *On Prescription Against Heretics*, chap. 19, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 251.

<sup>42</sup> Tertullian, *The Chaplet*, chaps. 3 and 4, in *ANF*, Vol. III, pp. 94, 95. Cf. *The Great Controversy*, pp. 447-449.

existing rites and customs of the populace, as well as the philosophy of the educated class.”<sup>43</sup>

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; holydays 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.”<sup>44</sup>

### *Changes in Baptism*

The mode of baptism underwent a change very early, and with it the understanding of its significance. By A.D. 150, trine immersion had been introduced, and pouring was practiced along with immersion.<sup>45</sup> By A.D. 225 an elaborate baptism ritual had been developed.<sup>42</sup> 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 A.D. 225 Origen argued for infant baptism, in order to save infants who might otherwise suffer damnation because of the original sin they had inherited.<sup>46</sup> 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

<sup>43</sup> John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 371, 372. Cf. *The Great Controversy*, p. 58.

<sup>44</sup> Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

<sup>45</sup> *Didache*, chap. 7, in LCL, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 318-321.

<sup>46</sup> Origen, *8th Homily on Leviticus*, chap. 3, Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XII, col. 496; *Homily on Luke*, chap. 14, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XIII, col. 1835; *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, bk. v, chap. 9, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XIV, col. 1047. Cf. Cyprian, *Epistle 58*, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 353, 354; Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration of Holy Baptism*, chaps. 17, 23, 28, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. VII, pp. 365, 367, 368, 370; Ambrose, *Expositio in Lucam*, bk. i, par. 37, *ad Luc. 1:17*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. XV, col. 16, 28; Augustine, *Treatise on the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins and on the Baptism of Infants*, bk. i, chap. 23, in *NPNF*, 1st series, Vol. V, p. 24; *On Baptism Against the Donatists*, bk. iv, chap. 24, in *NPNF*, 1st series, Vol. IV, p. 461; Leo I, *Epistle 16*, chap. 4, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. XII, p. 28. It should be pointed out that Tertullian did not accept the necessity of infant baptism: *On Baptism*, chap. 18, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 678.

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 Cor. 11:25, 26),<sup>47</sup> became a more formal rite. By about A.D. 150 it was a thanksgiving service,<sup>48</sup> and was celebrated in Rome on Sunday.<sup>49</sup> Very early it was called a sacrament, or oath, as a pledge to Christ.<sup>50</sup> It was soon called a sacrifice.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup> 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, A.D. 225, services were held at the graves of the martyrs;<sup>53</sup> and by the time of Gregory Thaumaturgus (the miracle-worker), who died about A.D. 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.<sup>54</sup> Prayers to the saints and image worship easily followed.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 391.

<sup>48</sup> *Didache*, chap. 14, in LCL, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 330, 331.

<sup>49</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chap. 67, in ANF, Vol. I, pp. 185, 186.

<sup>50</sup> Pliny the Younger, *Epistles*, bk. x, Epistle 96, in LCL, *Pliny*, Vol. II, pp. 402-405; Tertullian, *The Chaplet*, chap. 3, in ANF, Vol. III, p. 94.

<sup>51</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Christ's Resurrection, Oratio I*, in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XLVI, col. 611. But it is called a "sacrifice" in the early *Didache*, chap. 14, in LCL, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 330, 331.

<sup>52</sup> Mrs. E. G. White calls the mass a "Heaven-insulting heresy" in *The Great Controversy*, p. 59.

<sup>53</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi*, in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XLVI, cols. 953, 954. Cf. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, bk. xiii, chap. 2, in *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XXI, cols. 1095, 1096.

*Image Worship*

Image worship came in gradually. Painting on the walls of churches was forbidden by the Spanish Council of Elvira in 305,<sup>54</sup> and it was not till the fifth century that Augustine reluctantly,<sup>55</sup> and Paulinus of Nola approvingly,<sup>56</sup> 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 A.D. 800, was to set him up against the empress Irene of Constantinople,<sup>57</sup> 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 Decalogue 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.<sup>58</sup> 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.

<sup>54</sup> Canon 36, in Charles Joseph Hafele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, Vol. I, p. 151.

<sup>55</sup> Augustine, *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, bk. i, chap. 10, par. 16, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. XXXIV, col. 1049.

<sup>56</sup> Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare, "Iconoclasts," *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (11th ed.), Vol. XIV, p. 272.

<sup>57</sup> See note 147.  
<sup>58</sup> *Epistle of Barnabas*, chaps. 2, 3, 14, 15, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 137, 138, 146, 147; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue With Trypho, a Jew*, chaps. 10-12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 33, 39, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 199, 200, 203-206, 208, 209; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk. iv, chaps. 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16-18, in *ANF*, Vol. I, pp. 471, 472, 475-477, 479-485; Tertullian, *Answer to the Jews*, chaps. 2-4, 6, in *ANF*, Vol. III, pp. 152-157.

*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 A.D. 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; Matt. 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" (Gal. 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 Cor. 16:8.)<sup>59</sup> 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. (Ex. 12:6; Lev. 23:5; John 19:14, 31.)<sup>60</sup>

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.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 390; Tertullian, *The Chaplet*, chap. 3; *On Idolatry*, chap. 14, in *ANF*, Vol. III, pp. 94, 70; Polycrates of Smyrna, in Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. v, chap. 24, par. 6, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, p. 242.

<sup>60</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 774.

We are told by a writer at A.D. 200 that this practice began as early as the time of the apostle Philip and the apostle John.<sup>61</sup> 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,<sup>62</sup> which was the Feast of Unleavened Bread prescribed in the law of Moses (Ex. 12:1-20; 23:14, 15; 34:18; Lev. 23:5-14; Num. 28:16-25; Deut. 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 Cor. 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;<sup>63</sup> 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.<sup>64</sup> The observance began under Sixtus,<sup>65</sup> who was the *pāpa* (pope),<sup>66</sup> or leader, of the Church of Rome about A.D. 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.

<sup>61</sup> Polycrates of Smyrna, in Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. v, chap. 24, pars. 2-8, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, p. 242.

<sup>62</sup> Irenaeus of Gaul, in *NPNF*, par. 12, p. 243.

<sup>63</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. v, chap. 23, par. 1, and chap. 24, par. 11, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 241, 243, respectively.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241. Cf. *The Great Controversy*, pp. 52, 54; *Early Writings*, p. 65.

<sup>65</sup> Greek, *Xystus*, Irenaeus of Gaul, in *NPNF*, chap. 24; par. 14, p. 243. Cf. *The Great Controversy*, pp. 51, 52.

<sup>66</sup> The term "pope," English translation of the Italian and Latin *pāpa*, and of the Greek *pappas*, for "father," was a term early used for all bishops of the Christian church, and later for abbots of monasteries: *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, eds. William Smith and Samuel Cheetham, Vol. II, p. 1652, art. "Pope." Although Cyprian addresses the bishops of Rome as "colleagues" and "brothers," letters from Rome address him as "papa": Epistle 29 (36) and 30, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 307, 308. Sirius, bishop of Rome (384-398) first used it as a title: Epistle 6, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. XIII, col. 1164.

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. (Matt. 27:22-26.) They discredited the fact of His resurrection. (Matt. 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.<sup>67</sup> Tertullian named the synagogues "fountains of persecution."<sup>68</sup>

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.<sup>69</sup> They caused the removal of Archelaus, Herod's son (not without cause), as ruler in Jerusalem,<sup>70</sup> and brought about the seating of a Roman procurator instead.<sup>71</sup> 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, A.D. 70,<sup>72</sup> 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

<sup>67</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue With Trypho, a Jew*, chap. 17, in *ANF*, Vol. I, p. 203; Origen, *Against Celsus*, bk. vi, chap. 27, in *ANF*, Vol. IV, p. 585; Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, Vol. I, p. 14, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 123; Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. iv, chap. 15, par. 29, in *NPNE*, 2d series, Vol. I, p. 191.

<sup>68</sup> Tertullian, *Scorpiace*, chap. 10, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 643.

<sup>69</sup> Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. i, chaps. 14-20.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. ii, chaps. 1-7.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 8.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. ii, chap. 14 to bk. vii, chap. 10.

forty years later,<sup>73</sup> 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.<sup>74</sup>

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."<sup>75</sup>

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.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Under the emperor Trajan: Arthur E. R. Boak, *A History of Rome to 565 A.D.*, p. 264.

<sup>74</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. iv, chap. 6, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 177, 178.

<sup>75</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 52, 53. Cf. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, pp. 202, 203.

<sup>76</sup> James George Frazer, *Golden Bough*, (one-vol. abridged ed.), chaps. 28-40, p. 62.

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.<sup>77</sup>

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;<sup>78</sup> and so on through the cycle of the seven days, for Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn each had a day,<sup>79</sup> with Saturn's day coinciding with the seventh-day Sabbath.<sup>80</sup>

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.<sup>81</sup> They "agreed to disagree."

A rather apocryphal source, the *Liber Pontificalis*, states that at about this same time a brother of Pope Pius I, named

<sup>77</sup> *Apology* 16, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 31; *On Idolatry*, chap. 14, in *ANF*, Vol. III, p. 70.

<sup>78</sup> Robert Leo Odom, *Sunday in Roman Paganism*, chap. 15.

<sup>79</sup> Day of Saturn. Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, bk. xxxvii, chap. 16, pars. 2-4, in LCL, Dio, Vol. III, pp. 124-127. Cf. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. i, chap. 7, par. 3. Day of the Sun, Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chap. 67, in *ANF*, Vol. I, p. 186. Days of Mercury, the Sun, the Moon, Saturn, and Venus, Porphyry in Eusebius, *Præparatio Evangelica*, bk. v, chap. 4, in Migne, *Patrologia Graecia*, Vol. XXI, cols. 347, 348.

<sup>80</sup> Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, bk. xlix, chap. 22, par. 4, in LCL, Dio Cassius, Vol. V, pp. 386, 387. Cf. Dio, *Ibid.*, bk. xxxvii, chap. 16, pars. 2-4, in LCL, Dio, Vol. III, pp. 124-127, with Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. i, chap. 7, par. 3.

<sup>81</sup> Irenæus, in Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. v, chap. 24, pars. 16, 17, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 243, 244.

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."<sup>82</sup>

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 A.D. 125 and 150. Writing at about A.D. 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 succours 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 Saviour on the same day rose from the dead."<sup>40</sup>

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 Sundaykeeping 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*.

<sup>82</sup> *Book of the Popes*, "Pius I," in Loomis trans., pp. 14, 15.

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."<sup>83</sup>

"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 decalogue, 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."<sup>84</sup>

"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."<sup>85</sup>

How the pope did this is illustrated by an act of Pope Victor, about A.D. 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.<sup>86</sup>

The attempt of Pope Victor to excommunicate those who

<sup>83</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 33.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>85</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 447, 448. Cf. pp. 53, 54.

<sup>86</sup> Irenaeus, in Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. v, chap. 24, pars. 9-11, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 242, 243.

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 A.D. 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."<sup>87</sup> (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 paganized church, the Papacy rose to power.

#### *The Sacerdotal Church*

But the combined result upon the church of such evolutions 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 A.D. 400 the church in general, and the Church

<sup>87</sup> *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. v, chap. 22, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. II, p. 132.

of Rome in particular, had become a mystery cult. Certainly by A.D. 500 it had become as much a religion of priestcraft and sacrament as any of the heathen religions roundabout.<sup>88</sup>

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 A.D. 96, wrote a letter to the church in Corinth.<sup>89</sup> Corinth was having

<sup>88</sup> For reservation of the sacerdotal functions to the priest through the bishop, see *Constitutions of the Apostles*, bk. iii. sec. i. chap. 10, in *ANF*, Vol. VII, p. 429; for the whole picture, see summation by Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 50, par. 13.

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 A.D. 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.<sup>40</sup>

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

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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.<sup>44</sup> 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.<sup>45</sup> This was at A.D. 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 I at about A.D. 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.<sup>46</sup> 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, A.D. 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" (Matt. 16:18),<sup>89</sup> 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<sup>90</sup> and questioned by even Cyprian,<sup>90</sup> 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. Matt. 4:18-22 with Mark 1:16-20 and Luke 5:1-11; Mark 5:35-43 with Luke 8:49-56; Matt. 17:1-13 with Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36; Matt. 26:36-46 with Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46), denied Him when Christ most needed a loyal word and look (Matt. 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 1:15-26), 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. (Dan. 2:34, 44, 45; Matt. 22:42-44; 1 Cor. 10:4.) He only is the foundation (1 Cor. 3:9-13), the cornerstone, upon which the New Testament apostles and prophets have erected the sacred edifice, which is the temple of Christ (Eph. 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.)

<sup>89</sup> *On Modesty*, chap. 21, in *ANF*, Vol. IV, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>90</sup> *Epistles* 26 (33 in Oxford ed.), chap. 1, and 68 (66 in Oxford ed.), chap. 8, in *ANF*, Vol. V, pp. 305, 374, where he applies the Petrine theory, not to Rome only, but to the entire church.

But weak as the Petrine theory was historically and exegetically, tradition fed it with trumped-up stories of Peter on the Tiber. Synthetic *Acts*<sup>91</sup> and *Recognitions*<sup>92</sup> 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 A.D. 44, that Peter spent twenty-five years preaching in Rome.<sup>93</sup>

It must be recognized that Peter was in Rome—at least once, when he was martyred about A.D. 68.<sup>94</sup> 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 A.D. 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 A.D. 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 A.D. 44.<sup>95</sup> 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 A.D. 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" (Gal. 2:6-21). At some time, probably after

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<sup>91</sup> *Acts of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, Acts of Peter and Andrew*, in *ANF*, Vol. VIII.

<sup>92</sup> *Recognitions of Clement and the Clementine Homilies*, in *ANF*, Vol. VIII.

<sup>93</sup> See note 21.

<sup>94</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 537.

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 Cor. 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. (Rom. 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 Saviour 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 A.D. 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.<sup>85</sup>

Thus, even before Constantine had legalized Christianity

<sup>85</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. vii, chap. 30, pars. 18-20, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, p. 316.

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 A.D. 313, that Constantine, with the probably forced cooperation of Licinius, the coemperor, issued the Edict of Milan.<sup>96</sup> Under this decree the church ceased to be a *religio illicata*; 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.”<sup>97</sup>

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

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. x, chap. 5, pars. 2-14, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 379, 380; Lactantius, *Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died*, chap. 48, in *ANF*, Vol. VII, p. 320.

<sup>97</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. x, chap. 1, par. 8, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, pp. 369, 370.

and made them for all practical purposes functionaries of the Roman government.<sup>98</sup>

Constantine exempted the clergy from taxation and from onerous municipal duties. Declaring the bishops to be better judges than his own officials,<sup>99</sup> he authorized them to hear civil cases,<sup>100</sup> 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. (Matt. 18:15-18.) Paul instructed Christian disputants to use not the courts of the world but the court of the church for redress. (1 Cor. 6:1-6.)<sup>101</sup> A fourth-century source refers to these church trials.<sup>102</sup> 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.<sup>103</sup>

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,<sup>104</sup> and even named the orthodox bishops.<sup>105</sup> Thus was laid a foundation for the episcopal inquisition, the forerunner of the papal Inquisition.

<sup>98</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. xvi; Boyd, *Ecclesiastical Edicts of the Theodosian Code*.

<sup>99</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, bk. iv, chap. 27, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. I, p. 547.

<sup>100</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. i, title 27, par. 1, in Mommsen ed., Vol. I, p. 62; and *ibid.*, *Sirmionian Constitutions*, bk. i, p. 907.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. *Didache*, chap. 14, in LCL, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 330, 331.

<sup>102</sup> *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, bk. ii, sec. iii, in *ANF*, Vol. VII, pp. 398-408.

<sup>103</sup> Augustine, *Epistle 213*, chap. 5, in *NPNF*, 1st series, Vol. 1, p. 570; John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, bk. iii, chap. 17, in *NPNF*, Vol. IX, p. 58.

<sup>104</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. xvi, title 5, pars. 5, 6. Cf. T. Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, Vol. II, p. 551.

<sup>105</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. xvi, title 1, pars. 2, 3.

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,<sup>106</sup> 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 A.D. 330 to Byzantium on the Bosphorus, where he had built the new city of Constantinople.<sup>107</sup> 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 Soto, *De Potestate Ecclesiastica*,—*Bibliotheca Pontif. Rocaberti*, tom. x. p. 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.

<sup>106</sup> Salvian, *On the Government of God*, bk. v, pars. 4, 7, in Sanford trans. pp. 142-145.

<sup>107</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. ii, chap. 3, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. II, pp. 259-261.

Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. i, chap. 16, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. II, pp. 20, 21.

Orosius, *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*, chap. 28.

Zosimus, *Historia Romana*, bk. ii, chap. 30, in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantiae*.

iv. 3: 'Dicendum ergo est summum Pontificem ex divino jure habere exemptionem et immunitatem ab omni judicio ac jurisdictione sæculari 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 Greek 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."<sup>108</sup>

### 9. The Title "Pontifex Maximus"

There were emperors seated variously at Rome, Ravenna, and Milan<sup>109</sup> between 330 and 476, but the popes were able

<sup>108</sup> Henry Edward Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ* (2d ed., 1862), pp. 11-13.

<sup>109</sup> Charles Seignobos, *History of the Roman People*, translation of William Fairley (1912), pp. 438, 439: "The political misfortunes of the state therefore were in a sense the

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;<sup>110</sup> 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.<sup>111</sup> When Gratian resigned the title, Pope Damasus, less modest, as eager as his predecessors to seek the place of greatness in religion and society, assumed it.<sup>112</sup> It had been applied to the popes early, as complimentary, to the disgust of men like Tertullian.<sup>113</sup> 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

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fortune of the Church, and especially of the papacy. It is hardly correct yet to speak of a papacy at this period, for such an idea was still in the future. But the germs of the enormous power of the Roman bishops were already sprouting. And while Rome declined politically, she rose as a religious centre. The removal of the emperor's residence from Rome to Milan or Ravenna, and finally the cessation of the imperial office in the west altogether, led to the bishop of Rome becoming the leading citizen in the old capital. And there has always been a glamour about the name of Rome. A mystic power has seemed to be in and of her. And even the barbarians, while they no longer saw in Capitol and Forum the seat of majesty, yet revered the Eternal City, and Roman provincial and Gothic conqueror came to look upon the bishop of Rome rather than the emperor of Rome as the centre of unity for the west."

<sup>110</sup> Zosimus, *Historia Romana*, bk. iv, chap. 36, in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantiae*.

<sup>111</sup> Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*: "Numa," "Julius Caesar," "Antony," "Caius Marius," "Tiberius Gracchus," "Caius Gracchus"; Varro, *On the Latin Language*, bk. v, chap. 83 (LCL ed., Vol. I, p. 81); Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History*, bk. ii, chaps. 12, 43, 49 (LCL ed., pp. 72-75, 142-145, 158-161); Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, bk. vii, chap. 9 (LCL ed., Vol. II, pp. 116-119); Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, bk. xxxvii, chap. 37 (LCL ed., Vol. III, pp. 158-161); bk. xlii, chap. 51 (LCL ed., Vol. IV, pp. 194-197); bk. xliii, chap. 51; bk. xliiv, chap. 53; bk. xlix, chap. 15 (LCL ed., Vol. V, pp. 302-307, 402-405, 370-373, respectively); Appian, *Civil Wars*, bk. ii, chap. 10, pars. 68, 69, chap. 18, pars. 126-132, and bk. v, chap. 13 (LCL, Appian, *Roman History*, Vol. III, pp. 352-357, 458-477, and Vol. IV, pp. 584-597, respectively); Suetonius, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*: "Julius," "Augustus," "Claudius," "Nero"; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, bk. ii, chap. 9.

<sup>112</sup> *Cadex Theodosianus*, bk. xvi, title 1, par. 2.

<sup>113</sup> *On Modesty*, chap. 1, in *ANF*, Vol. IV, p. 74.

Clement, overseer at Rome at the end of the apostolic age, wrote a letter of kindly rebuke to the quarreling church at Corinth.<sup>114</sup> 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,<sup>115</sup> 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.<sup>116</sup>

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,<sup>117</sup> 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.<sup>118</sup> 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.<sup>117</sup> And the theologically-minded emperor Justinian late in his reign ruled that Rome was first and Constantinople second in the hierarchy of episcopal sees.<sup>118</sup>

The Council of Sardica in 347, deserted by most of its Eastern bishops in the heat of a dispute over Arianism, voted

<sup>114</sup> Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, ad. ann. 263; pars. 36, 37, Vol. III, pp. 193, 194.

<sup>115</sup> Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, Vol. I, pp. 388-404.

<sup>116</sup> Canon 3, in Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 357.

<sup>117</sup> Canon 28, in Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 410-420.

<sup>118</sup> *Codex Justinianus*, title 14, *Novella cxxi*, chap. 2.

that any bishop under accusation of heresy might appeal to the pope. The pope was named—Pope Julian;<sup>119</sup> 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.<sup>120</sup> 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 coemperors 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,<sup>121</sup> 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

<sup>119</sup> Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 114, 115.

<sup>120</sup> W. Ernest Beet, *Rise of the Papacy*, chaps. 1, 2.

<sup>121</sup> *Codex Justinianus*, bk. i, title 1, par. 1; Joseph Cullen Ayer, *A Source Book for Ancient Church History*, pp. 367, 368.

be there.<sup>122</sup> 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.<sup>123</sup> 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.<sup>124</sup> 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

<sup>122</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. xiv.

<sup>123</sup> Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 225-236, 316, 317.

<sup>124</sup> Hydatius, *Chronicon*, chap. 154, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auct. Antiq.*, Vol. XI, pp. 26, 27; Prosper Tiro, *Chronicon*, chap. 1367, in *Mon. Germ. Hist., Auct. Antiq.*, Vol. IX, p. 482; Jordanes, *History of the Goths*, chap. 42, in Mierow trans., p. 69; *Book of the Popes*, chap. 47, in Loomis trans., p. 101.

city and leave it with far less damage done than might otherwise have been the case.<sup>125</sup> 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.<sup>126</sup> He warned against pagans who were using Sunday and Monday for the worship of the sun and the moon.<sup>127</sup> 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.<sup>128</sup>

### 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. (Dan. 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 Herulians. 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,

<sup>125</sup> Prosper Tiro, *Chronicon*, chap. 1371, in *Mon. Germ. Hist., Auct. Antiq.*, Vol. IX, p. 484.

<sup>126</sup> Epistle 16, chap. 4, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. XII, p. 82.

<sup>127</sup> Sermon 42, chap. 5, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. XII, pp. 157, 158.

<sup>128</sup> Epistle 9, chap. 2, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. XII, p. 71.

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.<sup>129</sup>

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.<sup>130</sup> 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.<sup>131</sup> 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.<sup>132</sup> 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.<sup>133</sup> Since the completion of the conquest of Carthage by the Romans in 142 B.C., North Africa had been virtually a suburb, albeit a very important suburb, of the city of Rome. In the

<sup>129</sup> Procopius, *History of the Wars*, bk. v, chap. 1; Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 519-526; Oman, *Dark Ages*, pp. 4, 5.

<sup>130</sup> Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 142-144.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 180-213.

<sup>132</sup> Procopius, *op. cit.*, bk. iii, chaps. 3, 4.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 6-8; Victor Vitensis, *Historia Persecutionis Africanæ Provinciae*.

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.<sup>134</sup>

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.<sup>135</sup> 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.<sup>136</sup> 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.<sup>137</sup> They re-entered the city in 540,<sup>138</sup> 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

<sup>134</sup> Procopius, *op. cit.*, bk. iv; Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, chap. 15.

<sup>135</sup> Pasquale Villari, *Barbarian Invasions of Italy*, chap. 4.

<sup>136</sup> Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 3-66.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp. 73-113, 210-252.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 455-504.

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.<sup>139</sup> 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.<sup>140</sup> But Gregory was able to establish Roman Catholicism among them and to hold them in check by political machinations.

<sup>139</sup> *Codex Justinianus*, bk. i, title 1.

<sup>140</sup> Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 151-173.

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.<sup>141</sup> When the king of Northumbria 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.<sup>142</sup>

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,<sup>143</sup> and Rome was vastly pleased by it, as coming from the seat 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

<sup>141</sup> Venerable Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, bk. ii.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. iii, chap. 25.

<sup>143</sup> Thomas Oestreich, "Boniface III" *et al.*, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 660.

of France. Pope Zacharias invited Pepin to suppress the Lombards, who were still serious enemies of the Papacy in Italy.<sup>144</sup> 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.<sup>145</sup> 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,<sup>146</sup> 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.<sup>147</sup> 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 Con-

<sup>144</sup> Oman, *op. cit.*, chap. 19.

<sup>145</sup> Einhard, *Annales*, ad 751, in *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scriptores*, Vol. I, pp. 137 ff.; Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, Vol. I, p. 454; Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar Holmes McNeal, *A Source Book for Mediaeval History*, pp. 37, 38, 104, 105. For confirmation of lands in Italy made to the Papacy by Emperor Otto I in A.D. 962, see *Mon. Germ. Hist., Leges*, Vol. IV, p. 1, No. 12; Thatcher and McNeal, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-118.

<sup>146</sup> Oman, *op. cit.*, chap. 20.

<sup>147</sup> *Annales Laurehamenses*, chap. 34, in *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scriptores*, Vol. I, p. 38; F. H. Ogg, *A Source Book of Mediaeval History*, pp. 132, 133.

stantine to the pope of ecclesiastical and political power over virtually all of Western Europe. This was called the Donation of Constantine.<sup>148</sup> It was claimed that Constantine had made this Donation when he removed his capital from Rome to Constantinople in A.D. 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.<sup>149</sup>

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.<sup>150</sup>

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	—	5
I	—	1
C	—	100
A	—	0
R	—	0
I	—	1
U	—	5
S	—	0
F	—	0
I	—	1
L	—	50

<sup>148</sup> See Christopher B. Coleman, *The Treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine*.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-19.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-183.

I	—	1
I	—	1
D	—	500
E	—	0
I	—	1
		666

Among those who have used this method of identification are Seventh-day Adventists.<sup>151</sup> 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 *fili* is explained in the coalescing of the two *i*'s. The fact is that the full Latin is *fili*, 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 *fili*. As a matter of fact, extant copies of the Donation spell the word *fili*.

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 *Vicarius Christi*, "Vicar of Christ" is used many times for the pope. It was made an official title of the pope by Innocent III.<sup>152</sup> 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 docu-

<sup>151</sup> Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 619-623.  
<sup>152</sup> William H. W. Fanning, "Vicar of Christ," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, p. 403. See also "Profession of the Tridentine Faith," art. 10, in Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. II, p. 209. To Tertullian the "Vicar of the Lord" was the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. (See *On the Veiling of the Virgins*, chap. 1, in *ANF*, Vol. IV, p. 27.)

ments 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.<sup>153</sup> 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,"<sup>154</sup> quotes the Donation of Constantine in its setting in the *Decretum*, thus recognizing the title as belonging properly to the pope.

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<sup>153</sup> Auguste Boudinhon, "Decretals," *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (11th ed.), Vol. VII, p. 916.

<sup>154</sup> Vol. VI, printed in Rome, 1772, p. 27.

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.<sup>155</sup> 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<sup>156</sup> 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 excommuni-

<sup>155</sup> Henry Edward Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ*, pp. 8, 13, 17, 21, 46, 47, 141, 190, 231, 232, 244.

<sup>156</sup> J. P. Whitney, "The Reform of the Church," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. V, pp. 1-50; A. H. Thompson, "The Monastic Orders," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. V, pp. 658-696.

cation.<sup>157</sup> 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.<sup>158</sup> 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.<sup>159</sup> 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.<sup>160</sup>

It was Pope Innocent who authorized the destruction of the cultured Albigenses.<sup>161</sup>

After Innocent III the Papacy fell on evil days. There came the Babylonian Captivity, when the popes were seated

<sup>157</sup> Letter of Gregory VII to the German Nobility, in *Mon. Germ. Hist., Selected*, Vol. III, pp. 33, 34; translated in Ogg, *op. cit.*, pp. 275, 276. See *The Great Controversy*, pp. 57, 58.

<sup>158</sup> Thatcher and McNeal, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-139. See *The Great Controversy*, p. 57.

<sup>159</sup> E. F. Jacob, "Innocent III," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, pp. 1-43.

<sup>160</sup> A. H. Thompson, "Mediaeval Doctrine to the Lateran Council of 1215," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, pp. 634, 635.

<sup>161</sup> E. F. Jacob, "Innocent III," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, pp. 1-43; A. S. Tuberville, "Heresies and the Inquisition in the Middle Ages, c. 1000-1305," *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, pp. 699-726; Charles Henry Lea, *History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, Vol. I, chap. 4.

under the finger of the French crown at Avignon.<sup>182</sup> 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.<sup>183</sup> 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,<sup>184</sup> but out of the Council of Trent (1547-1563)<sup>185</sup> 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. (Rev. 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.<sup>186</sup> 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

<sup>182</sup> Alexander Clarence Flick, *The Decline of the Medieval Church*, Vol. I, part 1.

<sup>183</sup> G. J. Jordan, *Inner History of the Great Schism*; Flick, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, part 2.

<sup>184</sup> D. J. Kennedy, "Thomas Aquinas, Saint," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 670-674.

<sup>185</sup> J. P. Kirsch, "Trent, Council of," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, pp. 30 ff.; Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. II, pp. 77-210.

<sup>186</sup> Michael Ott, "Pius VI," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII, pp. 131, 132.

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."<sup>167</sup>

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.*

"I.—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.*

<sup>167</sup> Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom*, Vol. II, pp. 211, 212.

"2. All action of God upon man and the world is to be denied.

"Allocation *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.

"Allocation *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.

"Allocation *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, 1846.

"Allocation *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.

"Allocation *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.

"Allocation *Maxima quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

#### "II.—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.

"Allocation *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 Günther, 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.

"III.—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, *Multiplikes inter*, 10th June, 1851.

"Allocution *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, *Quanto 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.

"IV.—SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, SECRET SOCIETIES, BIBLICAL SOCIETIES, CLERICO-LIBERAL SOCIETIES.

"Pests of this description are frequently rebuked in the severest terms in the Encyc. *Qui pluribus*, Nov. 9, 1846; Alloc. *Quibus quantisque*, April 20, 1849; Encyc. *Noscitis et Nobiscum*, Dec. 8, 1849; Alloc.

*Singulari quadam*, Dec. 9, 1854; Encyc. *Quanto conficiamur mœrore*, Aug. 10, 1863.

“V.—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, *Multiplies 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 œcumenical 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, *Multiplies 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 apostolica*, 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 Dec., 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 Dec., 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 Dec., 1856.

"30. The immunity of the Church and of ecclesiastical persons derives its origin from civil law.

"Apostolic Letter, *Multiplies 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 Dec., 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 apostolica*, 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 apostolica*, 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 apostolica*, 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 *Jamdudum 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 apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

“VI.—ERRORS ABOUT CIVIL SOCIETY, CONSIDERED BOTH IN ITSELF  
AND IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

“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 well-being 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 apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

“42. In the case of conflicting laws between the two powers, the civil law ought to prevail.

“Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 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 Nov., 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*, 1st Nov., 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*, 1st Nov., 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 *Nunquam fore*, 15th Dec., 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, *Quum 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, *Quum 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 Dec., 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, *Multiplies inter*, 10th June, 1851.

"Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th Sept., 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 Dec., 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.

"Allocution *Probe meminertis*, 22d Jan., 1855.

"Allocution *Cum sæpe*, 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, *Multiplies inter*, 10th June, 1851.

"55. The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church.

"Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th Sept., 1852.

"VII.—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 quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

"Encyclical Letters, *Quanto 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 *Jamdudum 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 Sept., 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 Oct., 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.

"VIII.—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 apostolica*, 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 apostolica*, 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 apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.  
"Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th Sept., 1852.

"68. The Church has not the power of laying down what are diriment impediments to marriage. The civil authority does possess such a power, and can do away with existing impediments to marriage.

"Apostolic Letter, *Multiplies inter*, 10th June, 1851.

"69. The Church only commenced in later ages to bring in diriment impediments, and then availing herself of a right not her own, but borrowed from the civil power.

"Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 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 diriment impediments, either are not dogmatic, or must be understood as referring only to such borrowed power.

"Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 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 apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

"72. Boniface VIII. is the first who declared that the vow of chastity pronounced at ordination annuls nuptials.

"Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 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.

"Apostolic Letter, *Ad apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

"Letter to the King of Sardinia, 9th September, 1852.

"Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th Sept., 1852.

"Allocution *Multis gravibusque*, 17th December, 1860.

"74. Matrimonial causes and espousals belong by their very nature to civil jurisdiction.

"Apostolic Letter, *Ad Apostolica*, 22d August, 1851.

"Allocution *Acerbissimum*, 27th Sept., 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*, Nov. 9, 1846; the second in the Apostolic Letter *Multiplices inter*, June 10th, 1851.

"IX.—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 apostolica*, 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 impliedly 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 Sept., 1860; *Jamdudum*, 18th March, 1861; and *Maxima quidem*, 9th June, 1862.

"X.—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 Sept., 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 Dec., 1856.

"80. The Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and civilization as lately introduced.

"Allocution *Jamdudum cernimus*, 18th March, 1861." <sup>188</sup>

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 213-233.

*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 œcumenical 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,’ [Matt. xvi. 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), A.D. 869 (Labbe’s Councils, Vol. V. pp. 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), A.D. 1274 (Labbe, Vol. XIV. p. 512).] Finally, the Council of Florence defined: [From the Acts of the Seventeenth General Council of Florence, A.D. 1438 (Labbe, Vol. 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 xxi. 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., A.D. 422 (Vol. VI. Part II. p. 36, Paris edition of 1638)], and the form of the ancient rule [From a Rescript of St. Innocent I. to the Council of Milevis, A.D. 402 (Labbe, Vol. 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 effectually repaired where the faith can not fail. [From a letter of St. Bernard to Pope Innocent II. A.D. 1130 (Epist. 191, Vol. IV. p. 433, Paris edition of 1742).] And the Roman Pontiffs, according to the exigencies of times and circumstances, sometimes assembling œcumenical 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 Saviour 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 xxii. 32. See also the Acts of the Sixth General Council, A.D. 680 (Labbe, Vol. 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 assert the prerogative which the only-begotten Son of God vouchsafed to join with the supreme pastoral office.

"Therefore faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, for the glory of God our Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of Christian people, the sacred Council approving, we teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals; and that, therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable [that is, in the words used by Pope Nicholas I., note 13, and in the Synod of Quedlinburg, A.D. 1085, 'It is allowed to none to revise its judgment, and to sit in judgment upon what it has judged' (Labbe, Vol. XII. p. 679)] of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church.

"But if any one—which may God avert—presume to contradict this our definition: let him be anathema.

"Given at Rome in public Session solemnly held in the Vatican Basilica in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy, on the eighteenth day of July, in the twenty-fifth year of our Pontificate."<sup>109</sup>

The opposition to the dogma of infallibility was strong in the council and afterward, when its proclamation became obligatory. Yet the bishops surrendered to the ecclesiastical necessities of their situation with remarkable alacrity. No bishops stood against it to the point of excommunication. Even Bishop Hefele, the historian of the church councils, surrendered in April of 1871. But a number of scholars, more particularly in Germany, resisted the papal decree, among them Döllinger, who was excommunicated in 1871. Other dissidents joined him in forming the Old Catholic group, which had much to do with the Kulturkampf in late nineteenth-century Germany. Lord Acton, the historian, was a noted Catholic opposer of the dogma of infallibility in England.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 266-271.

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#### 24. *The Healing of the Wound*

Pope Pius IX died in 1878 with the international affairs of the Papacy in confusion and relations to the governments of Europe in several cases less than cordial. Italy, the new kingdom, was watchful of papal policies. Bismarck's new German Empire was saying, "We shall not go to Canossa." France was a republic, formed at the collapse of the government of Napoleon III, and was as unready to support the Papacy as Napoleon had been ready to do. The Congress of the United States had refused in 1867 to vote funds to support its twenty-year-old ministry to the Papal States, an abstention maintained till 1940.

Slowly the Papacy recovered its international dignity and influence. Immigration had vastly increased the number of Roman Catholics in the United States, particularly in the cities, and this country has become one of the most dependable sources of papal income. The political influence of the Papacy improved in other countries during the early years of the twentieth century. When in 1939 the outbreak of World War II put Roman Catholic countries as belligerents on opposite sides of the battle fronts, the Papacy was able to maintain a position of neutrality without sacrifice of effectiveness in dealing with its problems.

But the period after World War I saw the spread of socialism in Europe, the collapse of kingships, and the growth of that anticlerical intransigence which under the names "modernism" and "liberalism" the popes had so frankly condemned in the nineteenth century. In Spain, France, and Italy the pope was little regarded. Poland, very Catholic, was busy with its problems as a new nation, and Catholic Czechoslovakia organized what was virtually a national Catholic Church. Austria and Hungary were little less difficult for the Papacy.

When Mussolini's Fascist government took over the government of Italy in 1922, the problem of the Papacy became very specific and real. In relation to the powers of the bishops,

the control of marriage, of the youth, and of education, the Papacy and the Italian Fascist government seemed irreconcilable. Students of the relations between the two powers argue on both sides of the question of whether the pope and Mussolini were perpetual enemies, or secret allies. Probably they were, from time to time, both, or either, as suited one or the other.

Certainly they formed in 1929 a concordat which seems after more than a score of years of real significance. By the Lateran Treaty of February 11, 1929, signed by Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, as papal secretary of state, and by Benito Mussolini, as head of the Italian Government, the Papacy was once more recognized as a political state, including a small portion of the city of Rome around the Vatican, 108 acres in extent, with a population of some 1,200 souls, as its territory. This is but a shadowy restoration of the lost temporalities that the pope once controlled, but the recognition of Vatican City as the territory of the pope makes him once more a political ruler, and gives him an acknowledged place among the sovereigns of the world. The deadly wound has been healed. (Rev. 13: 3, 12.)

#### Prophecy Indicts the Papacy

Of the "little horn" the prophet says, "He shall speak great words against the most High." The Papacy seems to stand up eagerly from the pages of history to demand that its utterances shall make unmistakable the identification sought.

But care must be taken in selecting papal claims, that they be official statements. When Roman Catholic authorities are to be quoted, the standing of the authority making the statement must be such as to give full validity to their statements.

Most valid sources are the acknowledged decretals of popes. When the pope speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, from his throne as Pontifex Maximus, on a matter of faith and morals, his utterances are more than authoritative—they are infallible. Statements of members of the Roman Curia, the advisory

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papal council consisting of the cardinals and aided by the heads of the various offices and congregations of the Papacy, are official. It must be remembered that the cardinals do not constitute a rank in the Roman Catholic hierarchy, as do deacons, priests, and bishops, but are a class of ecclesiastical nobility drawn from the hierarchy and assigned to honorary positions in various churches in the city of Rome itself, by virtue of which they bear the titles cardinal deacon, or cardinal priest, or cardinal bishop. The cardinals in the United States are bishops by hierarchical rank—archbishops in fact—but they are priests in the cardinalate of Rome. The title *cardinal* (from the Latin *cardo*, “hinge”) means that they are intimately joined to the pope, as are hinges to a door. The title, once general, has been specialized since 1568. The statements of cardinals are authoritative.

Ecclesiastical authority in the Church of Rome resides in the bishops, of whom the pope is chief. When a publication bears the bishop’s imprimatur—“it may be printed”—it is authoritative. Encyclopedias, such as *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, when they bear the imprimatur, are valid. Catechisms must, to be usable, bear the imprimatur. The emissions in the United States of the National Catholic Welfare Council are of high episcopal authority. The canons of the episcopal councils acknowledged by the church are of authority.

Besides these official Catholic utterances, there are documents long used by the church which are authoritative by the sanctity of use. The writings of those Fathers whom the church recognizes as within the stream of inspired tradition are a superior group in this class. A document of antiquity sanctified by use is the collection known as the *Decretum*, by Gratian. Although never officially set apart by the church, as previously stated, it carries the respectability of centuries of official use. Great historical works, such as the *Annales* of Baronius—which was the Roman Catholic answer to the great Protestant apology of Reformation times, the *Magdeburg Centuries*—the works of Bellarmine, and others of the kind, are of weight.

The utterances of theologians in Catholic centers of learning are of great respectability, but may not be authoritative. Utterances of priests can only be taken as the ideas of those priests. The periodicals got out under the eye of bishops for the Catholic laity in their dioceses, of which *Our Sunday Visitor* is an example in the United States, do not carry an imprimatur, and will be successfully repudiated by Catholics if used in controversy to the disadvantage of Catholic disputants. Such materials reflect Catholic thinking, but not official Catholic teaching. Just because a quotation is "Catholic" does not make it usable.

### *Speaking Great Words*

But even when such precautions are exercised in selecting statements concerning the Papacy, much that is valid and reliable can be gleaned from Catholic sources showing the blasphemous claims of the Roman Church:

"Another God on earth."—MARCELLUS.<sup>170</sup>

"Lord God the Pope."—Gratian's *Decretum*.<sup>171</sup>

"We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."—POPE LEO XIII.<sup>172</sup>

"True Vicar of Christ."—Council of Trent.<sup>173</sup>

"Vicar of the incarnate Son of God."—CARDINAL MANNING.<sup>174</sup>

"Vicar of the Son of God."—CARDINAL MANNING.<sup>175</sup>

"Vicegerent upon earth, not of a mere man, but of very God."—Gratian's *Decretum*.<sup>176</sup>

"1. That the Roman church was established by God alone.

"2. That the Roman pontiff alone is rightly called universal.

"3. That he alone has the power to depose and reinstate bishops.

"4. That his legate, even if he be of lower ecclesiastical rank, presides over bishops in council, and has the power to give sentence of deposition against them.

"5. That the pope has the power to depose those who are absent [*i.e.*, without giving them a hearing].

<sup>170</sup> *Oration* of Christopher Marcellus, at the Fourth Session of the Fifth Lateran Council, in Labbe and Cossart, *Sacrosancta Councilia*, Vol. XIV, col. 109.

<sup>171</sup> Gloss on the *Extravagantes* of Pope John XXII, title 14, chap. 4. See *The Great Controversy*, p. 50, also p. 679 (Appendix).

<sup>172</sup> *Encyclical Letter*, June 20, 1894, in *Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII*, p. 304.

<sup>173</sup> Labbe and Cossart, *op. cit.*, Vol. XIII, col. 1167.

<sup>174</sup> Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Christ*, pp. 46, 47, 244.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 13, 17, 21, 141, 190, 231, 232.

<sup>176</sup> *Decretales Gregorii*, Pap. IX, bk. 1, "de translat. Episcopii," title 7, chap. 3. See appendix to p. 50 in *The Great Controversy*, p. 679.

"6. That, among other things, we ought not to remain in the same house with those whom he has excommunicated.

"7. That he alone has the right, according to the necessity of the occasion, to make new laws, to create new bishoprics, to make a monastery of a chapter of canons, and *vice versa*, and either to divide a rich bishopric or to unite several poor ones.

"8. That he alone may use the imperial insignia.

"9. That all princes shall kiss the foot of the pope alone.

"10. That his name alone is to be recited in the churches.

"11. That the name applied to him belongs to him alone.

"12. That he has the power to depose emperors.

"13. That he has the right to transfer bishops from one see to another when it becomes necessary.

"14. That he has the right to ordain as a cleric anyone from any part of the church whatsoever.

"15. That anyone ordained by him may rule [as bishop] over another church, but cannot serve [as priest] in it, and that such a cleric may not receive a higher rank from any other bishop.

"16. That no general synod may be called without his order.

"17. That no action of a synod and no book shall be regarded as canonical without his authority.

"18. That his decree can be annulled by no one, and that he can annul the decrees of anyone.

"19. That he can be judged by no one.

"20. That no one shall dare to condemn a person who has appealed to the apostolic seat.

"21. That the important cases of any church whatsoever shall be referred to the Roman church [that is, to the pope].

"22. That the Roman church has never erred and will never err to all eternity, according to the testimony of the holy scriptures.

"23. That the Roman pontiff who has been canonically ordained is made holy by the merits of St. Peter, according to the testimony of St. Ennodius, bishop of Pavia which is confirmed by many of the holy fathers, as is shown by the decrees of the blessed pope Symmachus.

"24. That by his command or permission subjects may accuse their rulers.

"25. That he can depose and reinstate bishops without the calling of a synod.

"26. That no one can be regarded as catholic who does not agree with the Roman church.

"27. That he has the power to absolve subjects from their oath of fidelity to wicked rulers."<sup>177</sup>

<sup>177</sup> Thatcher and McNeal, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-139.

"All names which in the Scripture are applied to Christ."—BELLAR-MINE.<sup>178</sup>

"The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.

"The Pope is of such lofty and supreme dignity that, properly speaking, he has not been established in any rank of dignity, but rather has been placed upon the very summit of all ranks of dignities.

"The Pope is called most holy because he is rightfully presumed to be such.

"Nor can emperors and kings be called most holy; for although in civil laws the term 'most sacred' seems sometimes to have been usurped by emperors, yet never that of 'most holy.'

"The Pope alone is deservedly called by the name 'most holy,' because he alone is the vicar of Christ, who is the fountain and source and fulness of all holiness.

"The Pope by reason of the excellence of his supreme dignity is called bishop of bishops.

"He is also called ordinary of ordinaries.

"He is likewise bishop of the universal church.

"He is likewise the divine monarch and supreme emperor, and king of kings.

"Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions.

"Moreover the superiority and the power of the Roman Pontiff by no means pertain only to heavenly things, to earthly things, and to things under the earth, but are even over angels, than whom he is greater.

"So that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the Pope.

"For he is of so great dignity and power that he forms one and the same tribunal with Christ.

"So that whatever the Pope does, seems to proceed from the mouth of God, as according to most doctors, etc.

"The Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been intrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom.

"The Pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws. . . .

"The Pope can modify divine law, since his power is not of man

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<sup>178</sup> Bellarmine, *On the Authority of the Councils* (1619), bk. 2, chap. 17, Vol. II, p. 266.

but of God, and he acts as vicegerent of God upon earth with most ample power of binding and loosing his sheep.

"Whatever the Lord God himself, and the Redeemer, is said to do, that his vicar does, provided that he does nothing contrary to the faith."—FERRARIS.<sup>179</sup>

"Holds the primacy over the whole world."

"Head of the whole church."

"Father and doctor of all Christians."—Council of Trent.<sup>173</sup>

"Highest power in the world."

"Anointed high priest."

"Supreme temporal ruler."—CARDINAL MANNING.<sup>174</sup>

"Exercises functions, not of mere man, but of the true God."—Gregory's *Decretals*.<sup>180</sup>

"Dissolves, not by human but rather by divine authority."—Gregory's *Decretals*.<sup>180</sup>

"The kingly power is not superior to the pontifical, but is subject to it, and is bound to obey it."—Gregory's *Decretals*.<sup>181</sup>

"Prince over all nations and all kingdoms."—POPE PIUS V.<sup>182</sup>

"Power to impose laws . . . , power likewise to grant dispensation from these laws, . . . to annul them. . . . This judicial authority will even include the power to pardon sin. For sin is a breach of the laws of the supernatural kingdom."<sup>183</sup>

"Hence he [the Pope] is said to have a heavenly power, and hence changes even the nature of things, applying the substantial of one thing to another—can make something out of nothing—a judgment which is null he makes to be real, since in the things which he wills, his will is taken for a reason. Nor is there any one to say to him, Why dost thou do this? For he can dispense with the law, he can turn injustice into justice by correcting and changing the law, and he has the fulness of power."—Gregory's *Decretals*.<sup>184</sup>

Note what comes to us from Mrs. White:

"It is one of the leading doctrines of Romanism that the pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ, invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world. More than this, the pope has been given the very titles of Deity. He has been styled 'Lord God the Pope,' and has been declared infallible. He demands the homage of all men. The same claim urged by Satan in the wilderness

<sup>179</sup> F. Lucius Ferraris, "Papa II," *Prompta Bibliotheca*, Vol. VI, pp. 25-29.

<sup>180</sup> *Decretales Gregorii IX*, bk. i, title vii, chap. 3, "de translat. episcoporum."

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. i, title xxxiii, chap. 6.

<sup>182</sup> Bull of deposition of Queen Elizabeth of England in 1570.

<sup>183</sup> G. H. Joyce, "Pope," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII, p. 265.

<sup>184</sup> *Decretales Gregorii IX*, bk. i, title vii, chap. 3.

of temptation, is still urged by him through the Church of Rome, and vast numbers are ready to yield him homage."<sup>185</sup>

"And let it be remembered, it is the boast of Rome that she never changes. The principles of Gregory VII. and Innocent III. are still the principles of the Roman Catholic Church. And had she but the power, she would put them in practice with as much vigor now as in past centuries. Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose, Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy. Let the principle once be established in the United States, that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by secular laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured."<sup>186</sup>

#### *Wearing Out the Saints*

The prophecy calls for a power that "shall wear out the saints of the most High." Dan. 7:25. (Cf. Rev. 13:7.) Here again the Papacy almost clamors for recognition as the power designated.

The basic philosophy underlying religious persecution is, that it is right to bring differing religious beliefs into harmony with that group, whether minority or majority, which finds itself with enough authority and power to compel the harmony. The Papacy has had the power to force dissidents to be in harmony, or to suffer.

In a society where religious and civil authority are part of one administrative whole, there can be no room for religious liberty. The only dissent permitted would be so insignificant as to be ignored by the suppressive group in power.

In most of human history there has been no separation of the religious life from the political life of man. Rather, the normal historical situation has been for the state to dominate religion. Even this is forcing modern terminology back into the past. There has scarcely been a separation of the idea of religion and the idea of the state. For instance, in the

<sup>185</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 50.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 581.

Hebrew economy religion largely dominated political life, in so far as these phases may be separately seen. Again, among the Gauls, the authority of the Druid priests overshadowed the civil authority of Gallic chieftains.

In pagan Rome religion was under the state; and the head of the state, anciently the kings and latterly the emperors carried as chief priest the title of Pontifex Maximus. Religion in a state or province absorbed by Rome was permitted to continue as it had been, as long as it did not engender rebellion against Roman authority. In Gaul the Druids became such a danger, and were suppressed. In Judea, Jews and Romans arrived at an uneasy compromise, under which the Jewish religion was tolerated, but restrained from the least civil interference.

Christianity began as a cult of Judaism; at least, its vocabulary, complexion, and personnel were Jewish. But the Jews refused to accept Christianity as a cult of Judaism. It was therefore left with no national or political sponsors, and the pagan Roman government knew it only as an upstart religion without background or place—in its very nature a *religio illicita*. Pagan Rome persecuted Christianity accordingly.<sup>187</sup>

These persecutions of the cult of Christ by pagan Rome ceased with the Edict of Milan issued in the names of the emperors Constantine and Licinius in A.D. 313. In wording, this noble-sounding document granted religious liberty to all, but the words never took life, except to give Christianity freedom to worship and to propagate itself—a freedom it had never before had.

But the liberties the edict set forth were not otherwise applied, and as Christianity became the religion of society and of the state, which it did shortly after 313, pagan cults were persecuted. Indeed, dissenting sects of Christians were persecuted in turn, according as one or another of the various

<sup>187</sup> Pliny, *Letters*, bk. x, Letter 96, 97 (LCL ed., Vol. II, pp. 400-407); Eusebius, *Church History*, bk. iii, chaps. 17, 19, 32, 33; bk. iv, chaps. 15-17, bk. v, chaps. 1-8, 21; bk. vi, chaps. 1, 4, 8, 9, 28, 39, 43; bk. vii, chaps. 1, 10-23, 32; bks. viii to x in *NPNF*, 2d series; Canfield, *Early Persecutions of the Christians*; Maude A. Huttman, *Establishment of Christianity and the Proscription of Paganism; The Great Controversy*, pp. 39, 40.

sects was able to gain the upper hand with the state. Trinitarian Orthodoxy, when it had the political upper hand, persecuted the Arians; and Arianism, when its adherents were favored by government, persecuted the Orthodox.

All this was in keeping with Roman law, which, after toleration had come, granted to Christian bishops the right to examine, convict, and sentence for heresy.<sup>188</sup> By A.D. 400 Roman law had become so sharp against paganism that the temples of the gods were often closed,<sup>189</sup> and sometimes after a process of cleansing were taken over by Christians.

The civil authority of the bishops against heretics was later revoked, although the bishops regularly sat in provincial councils of state. But the bishops exercised very large ecclesiastical authority. In them resided the teaching function of the church, a function which, it was claimed, Christ describes in Matthew 28:19, 20, and which came upon the episcopacy by tradition from the apostles.<sup>40</sup> It was held that the church had the truth, the church must teach the truth, the church must make the truth a fact in society, and the state must aid in so doing. Every bishop was the presiding judge in the ecclesiastical court of his own diocese, which was in fact a historical outgrowth of such scriptures as Matthew 18:15-18 and I Corinthians 6:1-5. All through the Middle Ages the bishops in these episcopal courts heard cases under charges of heresy, pronounced sentences of guilt, and recommended to the local magistrates the punishment to be exacted.

One example of such a bishop's court comes down to us from the twelfth century. A bishop was riding in northern France with his entourage when a young man attached to the episcopal court saw a young girl by the roadside. He stopped to talk to her and made to her an indecent proposal, to which she responded with an emphatic refusal. He knew at once that this was no ordinary girl and reported the matter to his bishop. The girl and her aunt, summoned before the bishop, proved to be members of the sect of Publicans or

<sup>188</sup> *Supra*, pp. 658-660.

<sup>189</sup> Theodoret, *op. cit.*, bk. v, chap. 20, in *NPNF*, 2d series, Vol. III, p. 146; *Codex Theodosianus*, bk. v, title 43, in Mommsen ed., Vol. I, part 2, p. 869.

Catharists (Puritans) and were convicted of heresy. The aunt, it was said, escaped by witchcraft; the girl was put to death.<sup>190</sup>

The bishops at this point of history had become too often too lenient toward heresies within their dioceses, or too indifferent to bother. But the church saw that this was *just the time* to bother; it was not the time for episcopal laxity. Heresy was too rampant. Waldenses, Albigenses, Poor Men, Catharists, Bogomiles, and Beghards were at every hand. Innocent III issued decree after decree against the heretics, and authorized the bloody crusade of 1209 against the Albigenses.<sup>191</sup> But centralized authority was needed against heresies which spread beyond local dioceses. In 1221 the Papacy took over the matter of extirpating heretics, and organized for this purpose the Holy Office of the Inquisition.<sup>192</sup>

It is an understatement to say that the record of the Inquisition is not good. Persecution, always held by the church a necessity, became a virtue. The Roman Catholic Church has justified persecution:

“With regard to heretics two elements are to be considered, one element on their side, and the other on the part of the church. On their side is the sin whereby they have deserved, not only to be separated from the church by excommunication, but also to be banished from the world by death. For it is a much heavier offense to corrupt the faith, whereby the life of the soul is sustained, than to tamper with the coinage, which is an aid to temporal life. Hence if coiners or other malefactors are at once handed over by secular princes to a just death, much more may heretics, immediately they are convicted of heresy, be not only excommunicated, but also justly done 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.”<sup>193</sup>

<sup>190</sup> G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages*, Vol. I, No. 12, pp. 29-32.

<sup>191</sup> *Supra*, p. 676.

<sup>192</sup> A. S. Tuberville, “Heresies and the Inquisition in the Middle Ages, c. 1000-1305,” *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, pp. 699-726.

<sup>193</sup> Joseph Rickaby, S.J., *Aquinas Ethicus, or The Moral Teaching of St. Thomas* (London: Burns and Oates, 1892), Vol. I, pp. 332, 333.

"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 pravity, 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."<sup>104</sup>

"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 *podestà*, 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 re-enforced by several popes, Alexander IV (1254-61), Clement IV (1265-68), 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."<sup>105</sup>

"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 Bellarm., *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

<sup>104</sup> *Decretales Gregorii IX*, bk. 5, title vii, chap. 13.

<sup>105</sup> Joseph Blötzer, "Inquisition," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VIII, p. 34.

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."<sup>196</sup>

"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."<sup>197</sup>

"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?"<sup>198</sup>

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

<sup>196</sup> P. Marianus de Luca, *Institutiones Juris Ecclesiastici Publici (Institutes of Public Ecclesiastical Law)* (Rome, 1901), Vol. I, p. 143.

<sup>197</sup> Fr. Alexius M. Lepicier, *De Stabilitate et Progressu Dogmatis* (Rome, 1910), p. 194.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

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" (Rev. 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 (Rev. 17:5)<sup>190</sup> had as a basis for persecution the same principles

<sup>190</sup> Says Ellen G. White: "Babylon is said to be 'the mother of harlots.' By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise, these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel. In the words of the prophet to Israel, 'Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.' But they fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel,—the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. 'Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown.' [Eze. 16:14, 15.]"—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 382, 383.

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. (Matt. 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.<sup>200</sup> 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.<sup>201</sup> 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

<sup>200</sup> Philip Schaff, *The Progress of Religious Freedom*, pp. 19, 43-49.

<sup>201</sup> "Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.' And, says the prophet, 'I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death.' And again, 'He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.' The forty and two months are the same as the 'time and times and the dividing of time,' three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, 'He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.'"—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 439.

under Henry the Fowler in 918.<sup>202</sup> 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 "Dark Ages."

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."<sup>203</sup> It was still pressing its obscurantism in the fourteenth century, for "Wycliffe came from the obscurity of the Dark Ages."<sup>204</sup> 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.<sup>205</sup> We refer also to the period from about A.D. 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

<sup>202</sup> Oman, *op. cit.*, pp. 476-918.

<sup>203</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 55.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>205</sup> Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. III, p. 327.

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 doth already work." 2 Thess. 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.<sup>206</sup>

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.

<sup>206</sup> "In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.' [Rev. 13:2.] And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. [Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5-7.] 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. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus: 'Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.' [Luke 21:16, 17.] Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battle-field. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: 'The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.' [Rev. 12:6.]"—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 54, 55.

*Change Times and Law*

The Papacy was "to think to change the times and the law." (Dan. 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.<sup>207</sup> Its contempt for the Sabbath<sup>208</sup> and concern for Sunday<sup>209</sup> 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.<sup>210</sup> 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.' [Dan. 7:25, R.V.] 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.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>209</sup> *Supra*, pp. 644-651.

<sup>210</sup> Compare Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, Band III, p. 689, and Archibald Bower, *History of the Popes*, Vol. II, pp. 166-171, art. "Hadrian," in Phila. printing of 1845.

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."<sup>211</sup>

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.

<sup>211</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 446.

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."<sup>212</sup>

"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."<sup>213</sup>

"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

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<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 445. (See also pp. 443, 383.)

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 588.

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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.”<sup>214</sup>

### 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.” (Rev. 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.” Dan. 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 sawest 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 sawest, 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.” Rev. 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

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 573.

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 Saviour’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. [Rev. 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 Saviour 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.”<sup>215</sup>

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 Saviour. 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.” Dan. 7:28, 27, A.R.V.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

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**Present Unmeasured Outreach of the Third  
Angel's Message and the Finishing of the Work**

By

E. D. DICK

*Sabbath Sermon, September 6, 1952*

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## Present Unmeasured Outreach of the Third Angel's Message and the Finishing of the Work

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 doubtings 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 re-examine 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 delayeth 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 biddings are His enablings. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He says, "Go ye *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 saith 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 passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, 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."<sup>1</sup>

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."<sup>2</sup> We do well to meditate upon these statements. "Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised."

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.

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies on Education*, p. 108.

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"Brethren, it is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Saviour in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Saviour. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; He sitteth 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."<sup>3</sup>

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."

<sup>3</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 754.

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 Saviour. 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 cowskins, 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 Saviour, 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,

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requiring everybody to have a B.A. or an M.A. 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 Saviour.

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.”<sup>4</sup>

“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.”<sup>5</sup>

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

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<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 239.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 638.

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.

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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 tithes 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 Sabbathkeeper 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 Sabbathkeeper 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 Saviour 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 comest 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 fullhearted dependence upon Jesus as the Saviour.

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,

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"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 faith-

ful. 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."<sup>6</sup> 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.'"<sup>7</sup>

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

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 105.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

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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." <sup>s</sup>

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

<sup>s</sup> W. A. Spicer in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1951, p. 14.

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."<sup>9</sup>

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." No. 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

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<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1885, p. 769.

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.'"<sup>10</sup>

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.

<sup>10</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 154.

"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."<sup>11</sup>

"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."<sup>12</sup>

Oh, yes, brethren and sisters, let us not grow weary in well-doing. Let us not say that the Lord delayeth 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 fulfilment 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."<sup>13</sup>

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."<sup>14</sup>

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.

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<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 197.

<sup>12</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 129.

<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 277.

<sup>14</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 754.

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'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."<sup>15</sup>

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.

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<sup>15</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29.