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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 II

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## Introduction

This is Volume II of the report of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Conference published under the title *Our Firm Foundation*.

The conference, held in Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., September 1-13, carried on a continuous and intensive program of Bible study for thirteen days. This report is divided into two parts, only to keep the size of the books down to a form convenient for handling. The studies are arranged in a sort of topical sequence, but do not have any particular interrelation or dependence, except that one quite naturally leads to the next in the development of a system of doctrines.

Although the studies were prepared independently and without collaboration on the part of the speakers, there nevertheless runs through them a thread of truth which binds them together with a remarkable degree of unity and purpose. That thread is *righteousness by faith*, which is "the third angel's message in verity," and this doctrine is to become the message of the loud cry, which results from the outpouring of the latter rain.

The hour has come, the Lord is ready, the message is due the world at this time. There is but one hindering factor, and that may be you or some other individual whose heart may not be right for this greatest of all Christian experiences.

May the studies contained in this volume be the means of preparing the church individually and collectively for the presence of the Holy Spirit and the power necessary to finish the work of God in the earth.

D. E. REBOK.

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**The Mediatorial Ministry of Jesus Christ**

**By**

**H. L. RUDY**



## The Mediatorial Ministry of Jesus Christ

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world 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. 9:24-28.

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.” 2 Thess. 2:1-4, 15.

The message concerning the mediatorial ministry of Christ is God’s answer to the apostasy of the last days. It is the heart of Christianity. It is to keep and inspire God’s people in the great and final conflict between truth and error, righteousness and sin.

Our relationship to this message is not for the purpose of discussion and debate among ourselves. Altogether too

much is made of jots and tittles in connection with non-essential details of prophecy dealing with the conflict centering on the sanctuary and its services. Our business is to discover the blessedness of Christ's ministry for a lost and deceived world. The enemy of souls is determined to profane the blood of Christ and to nullify His mediatorial ministry. We are to exalt Christ as the minister of the true sanctuary in heaven and to sound the warning message against the worship of the beast and his image. It is in the interest of this urgent necessity that the mediatorial ministry of Christ is set forth in this presentation.

The subject is presented under the following headings:

I. Christ's Commission as Related to His Mediatorial Ministry.

II. Christ and His Sanctuary.

III. Christ, Our High Priest in Heaven.

IV. Christ as King.

### General Observations

Before Christ's commission as related to His mediatorial ministry is discussed, four general observations need to be made.

I. It is to be noted that Christ's redeeming work is mediatorial throughout. It covers the whole period of time from the entrance of sin into the universe to its final extinction and the annihilation of its instigator. It concerns the full and complete redemption of a lost world. It embraces a complete vindication of God's character and of His purpose for all His creation.

From ancient times Christ entered into the breach caused by the tragedy of sin. He began with a declaration of war against Satan and his host, and He continues until the last battle in this warfare is finished and final victory of righteousness is established. In this gigantic struggle Christ has been made the captain of man's salvation. There was no time in the history of sin when Christ was not in the midst of the great conflict. It was Christ who was introduced into the

relationship between God and man when Adam fell into sin in Eden. Christ was the seed who would bring the blessings of salvation to the world, and ultimately crush the serpent's head. Throughout the Old Testament times Christ was the rock that accompanied all the promises of God.

"Since the sin of our first parents, there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man, and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man's Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.

"Christ was not only the leader of the Hebrews in the wilderness,—the Angel in whom was the name of Jehovah, and who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, went before the host,—but it was He who gave the law to Israel. Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His Father's law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone.

"It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets 'prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' . . .

"Jesus was the light of His people,—the light of the world,—before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven's brightness that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega,—the First and the Last."<sup>1</sup>

In the course of time He entered into the story of man's salvation as the divine-human Son of God. (Heb. 1:1, 2.)

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 366, 367.

With the coming of Christ in the flesh His mediatorial ministry assumed its greatest proportions and significance. His earthly ministry was as essential to the plan of salvation as His ministry in heaven. The cross was just as essential as His priesthood.

The redeeming work of Christ is commonly understood to embrace His ministry as prophet, priest, and king. This is essentially true, but in surveying His work we must remember that though He entered upon these various offices at certain distinct times, He has not relinquished one office in order to assume the next one. As He moved from one position to the other He only expanded His ministry to embrace more and more of the lost dominion. He has never lost one ray of glory. After His earthly ministry was finished He returned to the glory He had with the Father before the world was brought into existence. And when finally His work of redemption is fully completed, He will emerge as Lord of lords and King of kings, in possession of the full dominion. He will reign forever, and the redeemed of the earth will reign with Him as kings and priests.

2. The mediatorial ministry of Christ is primarily concerned with the tragedy of sin. Sin caused a separation between God and man. Through Christ, God and man have been brought together again. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. 5:19.

The initiative in this work of reconciliation came from God. Through the gift of His dear Son the Father drew near to sorrowful, tempted man.

"In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men. . . .

"By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity

by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.”<sup>2</sup>

In dealing with this awful tragedy of sin the Father and the Son had determined to accomplish a complete work. Every work of the devil would be destroyed (1 John 3:8), and every enemy would be subjected to the power and reign of the Son (Heb. 10:12, 13).

3. Such a work called for an infinite price. It required the sacrifice of the life of God’s beloved Son. This sacrifice Christ offered to make. He came to this world and gave “himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.” Eph. 5:2. He “gave himself for our sins.” Gal. 1:4.

Because of His perfect love for both His Father and fallen man, Christ gave Himself in order that the two might be brought together. His sacrifice reached in both directions; it was “a sacrifice to God” and also a sacrifice “for our sins.” He was the “Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both.”<sup>3</sup>

4. In coming to this earth as Mediator between God and man, Christ had to accomplish a twofold task. He needed to carry out certain assignments as the representative of His Father, and as the one who would also become man’s advocate before the Father. This task is referred to in Hebrews 3:1 as follows: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” We are to consider Him as “Apostle and High Priest.” These two offices doubtless go together in His mediatorial ministry.

First He is to be considered as apostle. As apostle He is the one sent out to speak on behalf of God. This is precisely what happened. “God, who at sundry times and in divers

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 23-26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

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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. Before He could apply the *merits* of His saving sacrifice, Christ had to speak the *words* of salvation.

In this sense He was that prophet spoken of by Moses. "I will raise them up a Prophet," the Lord told Moses, "from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." Deut. 18:18. God had a message for the world, and only His Son could give it. This message was to become the basis of all righteousness and judgment. It was to prepare the way in the hearts of Christ's followers for His ministration in their behalf at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven.

### I. Christ's Commission as Related to His Mediatorial Ministry

The word "commission" quite adequately describes the work Christ must accomplish in qualification for the priesthood. Goodspeed renders "Apostle and High Priest" "commissioner and high priest." In fulfillment of His great commission Christ accomplished the following: He provided the necessary sacrifice for sin, He revealed the will of His Father, He dealt with the forgiveness of sin, He established His Messianic role, and He gave prophetic guidance to His followers for the future. These accomplishments will now be considered in the order stated.

#### 1. *Providing the Sacrifice*

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." Heb. 8:3. If Christ is to become high priest, He must have some sacrifice to offer. This sacrifice Christ provided.

"As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ

took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim."<sup>4</sup>

The providing of this sacrifice was possible only at an infinite cost. It included more than just the death on the cross. As the Father's representative He must fulfill all righteousness. Every day of His humiliation in sinful flesh was a day of suffering. It was in the days of His flesh that He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Heb. 5:7. He learned "obedience by the things which he suffered." Verse 8. In giving His life in loving ministry as man's Redeemer, He was bringing gifts and sacrifices every day. Not once did the temptation to shed this body and return to His Father leave Him. The suffering of guilt grew in intensity as He neared the cross, until there in Gethsemane it would have crushed out His life had not an angel strengthened Him. He shed blood as it were as He agonized for the sins of the whole world before He was nailed to the cross. (Luke 22:44.) Our Saviour verily sacrificed Himself. The violent death He suffered at the hands of the enemy marked the full measure of His sacrifice. His death relieved the suffering and made it His supreme victory over sin.

## *2. Revealing the Will of God*

God's will is revealed in His holy law. Jesus came to reveal God's will by teaching the true meaning of the law. This was imperative, because Christ was primarily concerned with sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. Throughout the centuries the Jews, by their traditions, had vitiated the true understanding of God's will as revealed in His law.

Prophecy had said of Christ, "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." Isa. 42:21. The law that was challenged by Satan as unnecessary for holy, sinless beings, and subsequently broken through transgression, Christ came to teach and vindicate. Concerning this mission, He declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. 5:17.

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

He came to fulfill the law in two ways: to obey it fully as our example and to explain and expand its meaning. As the day fulfills the dawn, the full-blown flower the bud, and the finished picture the rough sketch, so Christ came to magnify and exalt the true character of God as reflected in His law. In all of Christ's interpretations of the law, and the application of its principles, He sought to reveal the spiritual implications of the commandments. He was not satisfied with good intentions. The law revealed the perfection required of man, and therefore He sought to bring forth the fruits of character in the lives of His hearers.

With Christ the law was the perfect standard of righteousness. Perfect obedience to each commandment, even the least, was required. Just punishment would follow any disobedience. A righteousness exceeding that of the scribes and Pharisees would have to be presented by those who would enter the kingdom of heaven. That righteousness would come from Him. (Matt. 5:18-20.) He accepted that standard for Himself and lived up to it. He learned "obedience by the things he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. 5:8, 9. By precept and example He met every demand of God's law. This He did in order that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:4-8), and deliver man from the condemnation of the law, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom. 8:4). So completely did He succeed in this work that when His life in the flesh was over Satan could bring no just charge against Him. (John 14:30; 19:6.)

### ***3. Dealing With the Forgiveness of Sin***

Christ's approach to the whole problem of sin marked the beginning of a new day. He dealt with sin as the sin bearer, the One who had power to forgive sin. The ax was "laid unto the root of the trees" (Matt. 3:10), as John had already announced. His fan was in His hand to "thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner," and

eventually to "burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Verse 12. The words of Christ, supported with His perfect life, were so sweeping and devastating to the accepted ways of salvation that the outlook of the whole world was changed. Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:14, 15.

What Jesus had to say about the forgiveness of sin was entirely new. He set forth the true principles of the kingdom of heaven: *repentance* and *believing the gospel*. What a contrast this was to the legalistic, self-righteous system of religion that characterized the teachings of the day. Here He was treading on most sacred ground.

This fact was highlighted in His healing of the paralytic. (Mark 2:1-12.) When Jesus saw the faith of the four men who had brought the stricken man, "He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Verse 5. This was considered blasphemy by the Pharisees. To claim to forgive sin was going too far. Curing the sick did not justify or excuse it. They could think of others—Levites, rabbis, and others—who could heal the sick and cast out demons. But forgiving sins belonged only to God, except as it could be secured through the priests by means of certain prescribed sin offerings. (Leviticus 4; Numbers 15.) For someone not of the priestly heritage to forgive sin was an offense worthy of death. Yet Jesus claimed the power to forgive sin.

Through His prophetic ministry Jesus proclaimed the goodness of God. He called people to repentance and directed them to God's forgiveness. The coming of the day of the Lord meant for Him, not condemnation of sinners, but the blessing of forgiveness. The Spirit of the Lord God anointed Him "to preach good tidings unto the meek; . . . to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1. God in Christ took a hand in dealing with sin and its captives. The sin and sorrow of the whole world were being laid upon Him. He was the sin bearer, and He Himself was

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the sacrifice for sin. Why then should He not forgive the sins of a penitent soul that believed on Him? For that very purpose He had come into the world.

#### 4. *Establishing His Messianic Role*

Jesus made no public announcement of His Messiahship, but He prepared the inner circle of His disciples for a correct understanding of His Messianic mission. It was most important for Jesus to establish His Messianic role in the minds and hearts of His disciples. There must be no uncertainty in their minds as to His work as the Messiah. The preaching of the gospel and the future security of the church rested upon the Rock of the Messiahship. Thereon the church was to be built, and the powers of death would not be able to overcome it. At first the disciples did not understand the great importance of these revelations. Later they would understand. "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he." John 13:19. As is so often the case with divine revelation, the Messiahship could not be understood or appreciated until the great things pertaining to it had taken place. This is still true regarding the understanding of future events. Often the church must wait till events have occurred before they can be fully recognized and understood. The Messiah was expected by the people. Indeed, He had already come, and Jesus had verified His arrival as the Messiah. (John 4:25, 26.) But He was careful not to announce His Messianic role publicly until the disciples were ready for it.

He took special steps to prepare the inner circle for His Messianic mission He was about to assume fully. At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. 16:15, 16. Thereupon Jesus responded, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Verse 18. "Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." Verse 20.

"After Peter's confession, Jesus charged the disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ. This charge was given because of the determined opposition of the scribes and Pharisees. More than this, the people, and even the disciples, had so false a conception of the Messiah that a public announcement of Him would give them no true idea of His character or His work. But day by day He was revealing Himself to them as the Saviour, and thus He desired to give them a true conception of Him as the Messiah."<sup>5</sup>

On the mount of transfiguration the inner circle of the disciples were given another glimpse of the Christ. (Matt. 17:1-9.) This time He charged them not to say anything about this experience "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." Here Jesus was seen in company with Moses and Elijah, the great molders of true religion. The disciples received a new conception of the mission and stature of Jesus.

"They [the disciples] were given a clearer insight into the work of the Redeemer. They saw with their eyes and heard with their ears things that were beyond the comprehension of man. They were 'eye-witnesses of his majesty,' and they realized that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, to whom patriarchs and prophets had witnessed, and that He was recognized as such by the heavenly universe."<sup>6</sup>

##### 5. *Giving Guidance for the Future*

Finally Jesus directed His disciples, and through them His church in coming generations, to the prophecy of Daniel for further understanding concerning His ministry, with the admonition: "Whoso readeth, let him understand." Matt. 24:15.

The disciples had begged of Him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Verse 3. Whereupon He warned them against coming deceptions, false christs, wars, persecutions, betrayals, false prophets, increasing iniquity, and the disappearance of love from the hearts of men. Nevertheless, the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in all the world, and then the end would come.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 414, 415.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 425.

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Having briefly sketched the religious and political events that the people of God were to experience throughout the coming generations, Christ pauses to concentrate upon the "abomination of desolation" that was foretold in the prophecy of Daniel. (Verses 15-25.) This He did in order to give the church a sure foundation for its faith and hope. Throughout His ministry, as well as after His resurrection, Christ had pointed to the fulfillment of prophecy. He made it plain that Moses and all the prophets had spoken of Him; yes, more than that, He was the very one who had inspired them to bring their messages.

This the apostles understood very well. As they reviewed the words of the Master in later years they testified, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10); and, as Peter witnessed at length, "we have not followed cunningly devised fables. . . . We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:16-19).

The word of prophecy was to be the sure guide for the people of God. The prophecy of Daniel would be understood more and more clearly as the history of the church progressed. For many generations portions of this great prophecy remained closed. But it also contained the promise that in "the time of the end" knowledge would be increased (Dan. 12:4) and the wise would understand (verse 10). With the arrival of "the time of the end" there came an understanding of the prophecy of Daniel. The rise and fall of the great world empires could be traced through the pages of history. Above all, the great prophecies concerning the sanctuary and the ministration of Christ unfolded before the minds of God's inquiring children. The mediatorial ministry of Christ came into its true perspective. The great time prophecies could be traced to the very portals of the temple of God in heaven, where Christ, our great High Priest, is now completing His mediatorial work on behalf of sinful, repentant souls.

### Summary

In dealing with the tragedy of sin, Christ voluntarily entered the breach as the "Daysman" to bring God and man together. He became man's substitute and surety. As such it was necessary that He come in the likeness of sinful flesh and become "an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10), that justice might be fully satisfied. This made the ministry of Christ on earth and His ministry in heaven part and parcel of His great redeeming work. The cross cannot be separated from the life and teaching that preceded it and of which it was the crown. Neither can the cross be separated from His subsequent ministry at the right hand of God in the temple in heaven.

Christ came in the flesh in order to serve in a dual capacity. First as apostle, or commissioner, and then as high priest. The first office covered His earthly ministry. The second He entered upon after His resurrection. Both were not fully understood or appreciated until the prophecies concerning them were fulfilled. Christ prepared the inner circle of His disciples as much as possible for a right understanding of His mission, but even that instruction had little meaning until Jesus had ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit had taught the meaning of Christ's words to His followers. The church would continue to discover new understanding of the prophetic word throughout the centuries after the resurrection. Indeed, some of the great prophecies would not be understood until eighteen centuries had passed, until the end of the longest time prophecy on record in the Scriptures. It is here that the prophecy of Daniel becomes the sure guide for the future experience of the church.

## II. Christ and His Sanctuary

### 1. *The Prophecy Concerning the Sanctuary*

God chose to make the sanctuary the center of true worship. His way, or plan, of dealing with man is in His sanctuary. (Ps. 77:13.) During the history of the Hebrew people,

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until Christ's crucifixion, the sanctuary was God's meeting place with sinful men. The wilderness tabernacle, or sanctuary, was brought into existence at Mount Sinai, and continued to remain the center of worship all through the wilderness wandering and the conquest of the land of Canaan. Then the Solomonic and subsequent temples in Jerusalem were honored by God's presence in them.

The Babylonian captivity of Israel brought great spiritual sorrow to the exiles, particularly because the sanctuary was desolate and its services interrupted. In an effort to preserve the worship of the true God, the Jews built small synagogues in the various places of exile, ever praying toward Jerusalem and looking forward to a restoration of worship in the Temple. With this burden resting heavily upon his heart, Daniel prayed most earnestly that God might reveal His glory again in His sanctuary. Said Daniel, "O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." Dan. 9:17.

The seventy years of desolation that was visited upon Jerusalem was nearly past. The time was near for the captivity to be turned. Daniel believed the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning Jerusalem, and now pleaded with God to forgive Israel's sins and restore the exiles to their spiritual home, and let His face shine in mercy upon them from the sanctuary. God heard and answered the prayer of His "beloved" servant. While he was still praying, the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the former vision, touched him and said, "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. . . . For thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." Verses 22, 23.

Now Gabriel gave Daniel the great prophecy concerning the Messiah.

"As a compensation for the 70 weeks in which the people, the city, and temple have been entirely prostrate, 70 weeks of years, seven times 70 years of a renewed existence, shall be secured to them by the Lord: and the end of this period, far from bringing the mercies of God to

a close, shall for the first time bestow them on the Theocracy in their complete and full measure. With it, the finished forgiveness of sins, the introduction of everlasting righteousness, the actual conferring of the saving blessings, which the prophets promise, the anointing of a holy of holies, coincide."<sup>7</sup>

Gabriel began where he had left off on his previous visit by saying, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Verse 24.

Seventy weeks of years of renewed and continued existence were to be given to the Hebrew nation and its holy city. Beginning with the decree to build and restore Jerusalem, this period was to extend to the Messiah, or the "Anointed One." In the middle of the seventieth week the Messiah was to be "cut off." (Verses 25-27.) Although Christ was "cut off" in the middle of the week, the confirmation of the covenant continued until the end of the week. For three and a half years the Jews refused to accept Christ, although the services in the Temple had been interrupted by the tearing of the veil. By offering Himself a sacrifice once for all, He put an end to all Levitical sacrifices. His sacrifice superseded them, set them aside. When the Substance had come, the shadows were done away.

## 2. *The Work of the Messiah Foretold*

In this great prophecy the work of the Messiah was foretold. Indeed, the primary object of the seventy-week prophecy was to designate the Messiah and to give the time of His appearance. This work, briefly summarized, was to be:

a. "*To finish the transgression.*" Throughout their entire history Israel had broken God's covenant. Warning after warning had been sent to them by the prophets, but no amount of affliction or instruction could bring that nation to keep the covenant. The covenant could not be kept in

<sup>7</sup> E. W. Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (1836), p. 293.

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their own power. Jesus came to break the power of transgression, to bruise the head of the serpent, to take away the usurped dominion of the tyrant, and to set up His kingdom of love in the hearts of men upon the ruins of Satan's kingdom, that where transgression and death had reigned, righteousness and life might reign through Christ.

b. *"To make an end of sins."* Margin: "To seal up sins." "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8:3. He took upon Himself flesh and blood, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. 2:14. The "Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. He came to make an end of sin, to take it away and abolish it, that it might not rise up in judgment against us. He came "to seal up sins," that they may not appear or break out against us, to accuse and condemn us. A seal is set upon sin, as when the devil is cast into the bottomless pit a seal is set upon him. (Rev. 20:3.)

c. *"To make reconciliation for iniquity."* "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. Sin had alienated man from God. Christ came to bring man and God together. By His atoning sacrifice He satisfied the justice of God, and by His life He opened the way for man to return to God.

"The Lord Jesus Christ was set forth 'a propitiation' (Rom. 3:25). This propitiation was 'in his blood,' which shows that he is speaking of the death on the Cross. The propitiation is the penalty for sin, the penalty for the broken law, and it is rendered unto God. There is the mystery that God is the one who makes the sacrifice, and God is the one to whom the sacrifice is made. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."<sup>8</sup>

Christ died for the sins of the whole world. "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2. The iniquity of us

<sup>8</sup> R. C. McQuilkin, *The Message of Romans*, p. 43.

all was cast upon Him. (Isa. 53:6.) He "tasted death for every man." Heb. 2:9.

d. "To bring in everlasting righteousness." Instead of putting an end to the sinner Christ found another way—to save the sinner from sin by providing righteousness for him. Had man stood in the beginning, his innocency would have been his righteousness; but being fallen, man must have something else to plead. Christ provided the plea: The merit of His sacrifice is our righteousness. With this we answer all the demands of the law. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness." 1 Cor. 1:30. "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. 5:21.

Man could not atone for his sin; therefore God provided righteousness for him. Paul wrote: "There is none righteous, no, not one," and, "All the world may become guilty before God." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:10, 19, 23. "But now," the apostle continues, "the righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . . ; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Verses 21, 22.

"Against that black picture of sin abounding, Paul is now giving the glorious message of a 'righteousness of God.' The wrath of God was revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Men need righteousness, and they do not have it. Now there is the revelation of a righteousness which God is to give to man. . . .

"The problem of all problems with regard to sin is: How can God clear the guilty? The answer is that God cannot clear the guilty, unless the penalty is fully paid. . . . The propitiation is the penalty for sin, the penalty for the broken law, and it is rendered unto God. . . .

"Here then is the good news. God declares righteous everyone that has faith in Jesus, whether he be a circumcised Jew or an uncircumcised Gentile. The *ground* of this righteousness is the righteousness of Christ and His blood; but there is also a condition: the condition is faith."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

*e. "To seal up the vision and prophecy."* Prophecy had written Christ's biography in advance—His birth, His life and work, His betrayal and death, His burial and resurrection, and His ascension and priesthood. Now He came to seal all Old Testament prophecies that referred to Him as the Messiah. He accomplished them, fulfilled them, confirmed the truth of them.

The prophecy stated, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." Dan. 9:25. Sixty-nine of the seventy weeks would pass, and then the Messiah would come. The decree that marked the beginning of the seventy weeks of years came in 457 B.C. The 483 years reached to A.D. 27. Precisely at that time Messiah was anointed "with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38) at His baptism. Christ entered upon His ministry. He introduced the new covenant and confirmed it for one week. That marked "the beginning of the gospel." (Mark 1:1.)

God's eternal purpose to save men, His everlasting covenant, which existed from the beginning, now came into full force as the new covenant. Israel had broken the covenant, but God is faithful and still holds to His purpose to save. Through Christ a new covenant relationship was established, based on better promises. (Jer. 31:31-34.) This covenant Christ came to confirm (1) by His teachings and miracles, (2) by His death and resurrection, (3) by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and (4) by bestowing the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the believers. His anointing by the Holy Spirit was an earnest of the anointing of the whole church, that the work He began could be continued by the same power and authority. (Acts 1:8; John 14:12.)

### **3. *The Anointing of the Most Holy***

This is a climactic step in Daniel's outline of the work of the Messiah, and it brings us directly into the sanctuary in heaven. Having completed the offering of His sacrifice,

Christ is here seen entering into the presence of His Father (Heb. 9:24) as "minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2). The Hebrew words used here (Dan. 9:24) and translated "the most Holy" are regularly employed of the sanctuary, not of persons. "To consecrate a most sacred Place," Moffatt. The anointing of the "most Holy" must refer, then, to the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary, when Christ ascended.

The anointing of the most holy was a glorious event. It was made the occasion when two events vitally affecting man's salvation took place. One of these events was the exaltation of Christ at the right hand of God in heaven. The other was the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the church upon earth. They both happened simultaneously, and the latter was the result of the first, and it took both of them together to constitute the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary, or the "most holy."

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter connects these two great manifestations of Christ's glory. Having affirmed the resurrection of Jesus and followed Him into heaven, the apostle said, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:33. Here the apostle connects Christ's exaltation with the reception of the Holy Spirit.

Christ's exaltation prepared the way for the coming of the Spirit. We do well to contemplate these two events in their order. As to His exaltation, the apostle Paul wrote that God has "highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:9-11.

This took place initially after His resurrection, when Christ ascended to heaven with the trophies of His sacrifice. "When he ascended on high," we are told, "he led a host

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of captives, and he gave gifts to men.' " Eph. 4:8, R.S.V. The saints that came "out of the tombs after his resurrection" (Matt. 27:51-54, R.S.V.) accompanied Him to the courts of glory, and joined the heavenly beings in the inauguration services of the world's Redeemer.

Here is a most beautiful description of this glorious event.

"All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

"As they drew near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels,—

" 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of glory shall come in!'

"Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond,—

" 'Who is this King of glory?'

"This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise,—

" 'The Lord strong and mighty,  
The Lord mighty in battle!  
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of glory shall come in!'

"Again is heard the challenge, 'Who is this King of glory?' for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply,—

" 'The Lord of hosts:  
He is the King of glory!'

"Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

"There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion,—all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.

"But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave-sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. He approaches the Father, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing. Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, 'It is finished,' He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: 'Father, it is finished. I have done thy will, O my God. I have completed the work of redemption. If thy justice is satisfied, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."'

"The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. Christ's toiling, struggling ones on earth are 'accepted in the beloved.' Before the heavenly angels and the representatives of unfallen worlds, they are declared justified. Where He is, there His church shall be. 'Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.' The Father's arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.'"<sup>10</sup>

Christ is now exalted at the right hand of His Father. The angels worship Him. The work of redemption has been completed. Justice is satisfied. The heavenly beings join in a new song: "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5:12. His atoning sacrifice has been accepted, and the prayer that those whom He brought with Him be accepted and remain with Him was answered. As the "wave sheaf," or the first fruits, of the harvest, they represent the great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. Now Christ is ready to intercede on behalf of His struggling children and witnesses here upon earth.

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<sup>10</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 833, 834.

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Before His departure from the earth He promised to send the Comforter to His disciples. "I will pray the Father," said He, "and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17. This request Christ presented to His Father immediately and received the promise. Pentecost was the signal upon earth that the promise of the Holy Spirit had been given. Jesus had been anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism as a token of the anointing of the whole church by the same power. Now having been made "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), He has been given all power in heaven and earth to use in the work of salvation.

The disciples were to tarry in Jerusalem and "wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4), which He had spoken of before. Now when "the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one place. . . . They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:1-4. Pentecost was the signal upon earth that the inauguration of Christ as man's Redeemer had been accomplished.

"When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people."<sup>11</sup>

The exaltation of the Saviour as both Lord and Christ, the reception of the Holy Spirit by Christ for the church, the acceptance of the merits of His atoning sacrifice, and His entrance into the presence of the Father on behalf of the sinner are all comprehended in the anointing of the most holy. The sanctuary in heaven thus became the center of the work of salvation. From now on all true worship centers in

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<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 38, 39.

the sanctuary in heaven. This was the moment Christ pointed to when He said to the Samaritan woman, "Believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." John 4:21. Neither Gerizim nor Zion, nor any other place upon earth, would ever be the center of true worship after Christ's work on earth was accomplished and He had taken His place at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

#### 4. *The True Sanctuary in Heaven*

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:1, 2.

The attention of the true worshiper is now directed to the sanctuary in heaven, "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." When Christ died upon the cross and the veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51), the glory of the Lord departed, not only from the Jewish Temple, but from this earth. Never again would there be an earthly sanctuary that could contain the glory of Christ and could be considered the center of true worship upon this earth. There would be places of worship scattered over the whole earth, but the divine center of all worship would be in heaven, to which everyone would have equal access through Christ, the great High Priest.

Jesus prepared the Jews for this moment of desolation that was to come over their city and Temple. With tears in His voice He told them on the occasion of His last visit, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matt. 23:38. By their rejection of Christ, of divine love, and of mercy they had brought about the judgment that was now upon them. Through the prophet Hosea the Lord had forewarned them of their doom. The message sounded down the centuries: "O, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself" "for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Hosea 13:9; 14:1.

But despite the great happenings surrounding the crucifixion, resurrection, and glorification of Christ, the Jews refused to accept the fact that the center of true worship was now in heaven and not upon earth. By mighty works and miracles on Pentecost and for three and a half years following, God tried to appeal to hardened hearts. Instead of heeding warnings of mercy and responding to appeals of love, the Jews made a public issue of their rejection of Christ as their high priest in heaven.

This happened in connection with the preaching of Stephen. Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," was ordained by the apostles to preach the gospel in Jerusalem. (Acts 6:5.) He did "great wonders and miracles among the people" (verse 8), and "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (verse 7). Stephen preached concerning the ministry of Christ in heaven. The fact that a great number of priests accepted the gospel shows that Stephen left no room for the earthly priesthood in his teaching.

There is further evidence, however, that Stephen tried to direct the minds of his hearers to Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. First of all, the charge the council brought against him through false witnesses substantiates the fact. They charged, "This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." Verses 13, 14. No greater self-condemnation could have come to the Jews than was implied in this charge. They verily admitted that Stephen had told them that the Temple had been left desolate, and that the Mosaic ceremonies had been done away. By this charge they openly refused to accept the fact that their earthly sacrifices and ceremonies had lost all significance, and that they had rejected Christ their Saviour.

Second, Stephen climaxed his great sermon with the truth that "the most High dwelleth not in temples made with

hands"; but as the prophet had said, "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Acts 7:48-50. The glory of Christ was far too great to be contained in any man-made house. Even Solomon's Temple was only a vain attempt, but God favored it with His presence. But now that the Desire of all nations had come, and had been rejected and sacrificed, there is no place on earth worthy to receive Him. Only at the right hand of "the Majesty in the heavens" could He find "rest." Now they openly scoffed at Stephen and rejected the message. At last God's faithful servant condemned them for their stubbornness and hardness of heart, and for resisting the power of the Holy Spirit. (Verse 51.) Whereupon they "gnashed on him with their teeth," and set about to take his life.

This brings us now to the third evidence in Stephen's preaching—God wanted the world to understand that all true worship must center in heaven. Stephen, having faithfully delivered his message, is now in the hands of a murderous mob. His strength is failing him. He must seal his message with his own life. The charge that was hurled against his Master was now brought against him. But God would not allow the message to pass with the messenger. He opened heaven itself, and let His servant and all the people behold Jesus at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Once more Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Verses 55, 56. In great rage they cast him out of the city and hurled stones upon him until he died.

Thus ended the seventy weeks of years. The story of the earthly sanctuary was forever closed, and the true worshipers were seen looking into the heavens to Jesus, their Lord and Christ, ministering in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. From now on the sanctuary in heaven is the center from which the work of salvation is conducted.

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"The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin."<sup>12</sup>

Henceforth Satan is determined to subdue the truth concerning the mediatorial ministry of Christ. Beginning with the stubborn Jews and continuing with apostate Christendom, Satan has been determined to blind the hearts of men with reference to Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary. The plan of redemption, as revealed through Christ as man's substitute and surety, has been corrupted in the minds of men. Instead of looking to Christ as man's representative before God, an earthly representative has been set up by Satan. The apostles saw that subtle shift of faith from Christ to antichrist already at work in their day. The time came when a complete counterfeit mediatorial system was set up in Satan's temple upon earth, and through his agents Satan has set himself up as God, to be worshiped as God. Later on we deal specifically with this development as the conflict between righteousness and sin progresses.

There remains one more prophecy pertaining to the earthly sanctuary which would be fulfilled. This prophecy stated, "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." Dan. 9:26. Upon His last departure from the Temple the disciples showed Christ the beauty of the structure, only to receive the reply: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt. 24:2. To the Christians the Lord gave a sign of the city's doom and of their last chance to flee from it alive. In A.D. 70 the sign appeared as the Roman armies approached for the siege, and suddenly withdrew for no other reason than that Christ had provided a final opportunity for His children to find safety. Some time later the siege was resumed

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<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 488.

by Titus, and both Jerusalem and the Temple were utterly destroyed. Thus the final stroke of divine judgment was inflicted upon the desolate Temple and the city of a rejected people.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was one of the bloodiest and most desolating events ever visited upon a people, their city, and center of worship. So terrible was it that it has become an object lesson for the destruction of the whole world with its final idolatry and wickedness. Never would Jerusalem become the center of true worship again "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

When the great conflict between sin and righteousness will be finished, and the earth is made new, then in the New Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, the redeemed of the Lord will once again come to worship before Him. Until then their worship is directed into the sanctuary in heaven where Christ, their High Priest, makes intercession for them.

### III. Christ, Our High Priest in Heaven

The subject of Christ as our high priest in heaven is such a great and sublime theme that it is impossible to deal with it fully in the space allotted for this paper. It is hoped that this brief introduction of the subject will stimulate further intensive study on the part of the reader. From the vast store of available material the following phases of the subject have been selected, and will be briefly treated: (1) Christ, our *Great* High Priest; (2) Christ, High Priest of a *greater* and more perfect tabernacle; (3) our *merciful* and *faithful* High Priest; (4) Christ, Mediator of the new testament; and (5) the Minister of the *true* sanctuary.

#### 1. Christ, Our "Great" High Priest

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb. 4:14. The emphasis in this reference is on the special rank given to Christ as our high

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priest. He is referred to as a "great" high priest. Ultimate greatness in the high priesthood is limited to Jesus the Son of God. He alone is worthy to "receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5:12. He only has been "highly exalted," and to Him alone has been given a name "which is above every name" that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:9-11.

There are three things that designate Christ as our *great* high priest. First, He was "*made*" an high priest. The initiative in that respect came from God the Father; it did not come from Christ Himself. For "Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee." Heb. 5:5. It was God who called Christ and made Him high priest. (Heb. 5:10; 6:20.) There was no spirit of self-exaltation in the heart of Christ. He laid no claim to this high position. Although He met all the conditions, and measured up to all the qualifications, He remained humble even after His resurrection. Not until after the Father had given the command: "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6), did He take His place at the right hand of His Father as our great high priest.

The next act designating Christ as our *great* high priest was the confirmation of His calling by an oath. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." Heb. 6:17. In adding His oath to the promise of salvation through Christ, God put forth two unchangeable things which forever settled the position given to His Son. The two unchangeable things are "the immutability of his counsel," or "unchangeable character of his purpose" (R.S.V.), and the adding of His oath. In both God presented things that are a part of His character. They both remain true and unchangeable because God's purpose does not change, and He is faithful to His oath. God cannot lie.

In further consideration of this oath we read, "The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word

of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." Heb. 7:28. The word of the oath which made Christ high priest came since the law, or after the giving of the law. When was that? The answer is found in Acts 13:32,33: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Here the apostle brings the promise and the oath together, and also designates the time of the confirmation by the oath. It was at the time of Christ's resurrection. As the Son of God came forth through the portals of the grave the Father claimed Him by the oath: "This day have I begotten thee." Thus Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4), and as the Son of God, Jesus was made our great high priest (Heb. 4:14).

The third factor designating Christ as our *great* high priest was the fact of His endless life. Isaiah had foretold it when he said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he 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. Note the statement, "He shall prolong his days." The "seed" of the promise could not be held in the grave. There was endless life in that Seed, and His days would be prolonged. "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." Heb. 7:14-16. It was the power of an endless life that entered into the making of the priesthood of Christ. God had purposed to save the world through His Son, and that purpose was based upon the power of endless life.

In order to emphasize the endlessness of the life and office of Christ as our great high priest, the example of Melchizedek

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is cited. In office, character, genealogy, and calling he was "made like unto the Son of God." Verse 3. Christ rose after the "similitude of Melchisedec." In Psalms 110:4 it is stated, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." As "King of righteousness," and "King of peace," and as "priest of the most high God" Melchizedek was a type of Christ. The fact that Melchizedek's genealogy was not known did not hinder his call to the priesthood. Like Christ he had the necessary qualifications for the office, and there was no need for genealogic lineage.

The fact that Christ sprang from Judah, "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood," was no more a hindrance to the Son of God being called to the priesthood than was the absence of a genealogy a hindrance to Melchizedek's call to the priesthood. The type therefore fits perfectly, the main point being the power of an endless life, inherent in the Seed, whose days would be prolonged, and typified by the absence of a genealogy of Melchizedek, giving "neither beginning of days, nor end of life," but making him a priest forever.

## **2. Christ, High Priest of a Greater and More Perfect Tabernacle**

The sanctuary in heaven, of which Christ is high priest, transcends anything of its character the world has ever known, or could possibly know. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building." Heb. 9:11. Moses received a pattern according to which he built the tabernacle in the wilderness, but it was far from being like the real sanctuary in heaven. It reflected the essentials of the true, but in size, materials, and furniture it was earthly, made with hands.

The Scriptures refer to this "greater and more perfect tabernacle" in various terms. It is spoken of as the "temple of God" (Rev. 11:19; Ps. 11:4; Rev. 16:17; Hab. 2:20), as the

“holy habitation” (Zech. 2:13; Jer. 25:30), as the “true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:2; 9:24), and as the “holiest,” or “holy place” (Heb. 9:8, 12; 10:19).

In the Revised Standard Version the word “sanctuary” is employed in Hebrews 9:8 and 10:19. James Moffatt renders Hebrews 9:8 thus: “By this the holy Spirit means that the way into the Holiest Presence was not disclosed as long as the first tent (which foreshadowed the present age) was still standing.”

M. L. Andreasen points out that the term “holiest of all” (Heb. 9:8) occurs eight times in the book of Hebrews, and that “the original Greek is the same in all eight places, and in each case is in the plural.”<sup>13</sup>

“Let it therefore be understood and emphasized that the original is plural in every case; that it can never mean the ‘holy place’ only, or the ‘most Holy’ only; but that in each of the eight cases it is in the plural and means ‘holies,’ or ‘holy places,’ and includes both the holy and the most holy apartment.”<sup>14</sup>

Eyewitness descriptions of the sanctuary in heaven are recorded in the Scriptures. John saw the temple of God “opened in heaven” (Rev. 11:19), and the “ark of his testament” could be seen. On another occasion he beheld “a door was opened in heaven,” and “a throne was set” and there were “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne” (Rev. 4:1-5), a clear reference to the seven-branched candlestick. Stephen saw “the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” Acts 7:56.

These scriptures tell us a number of things about the sanctuary in heaven. (1) The sanctuary is a real place in heaven. It has the throne of God in it. It contains the ark of the testament, wherein are kept the commandments of God. Before the throne are seven lamps. (2) These references show that the sanctuary in heaven is divided into separate places, or apartments. According to the earthly sanctuary, which was built after the heavenly pattern, there must be

<sup>13</sup> M. L. Andreasen, *The Book of Hebrews*, p. 325.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 327.

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two apartments in the sanctuary in heaven. (3) It is evident from these scriptures that a ministration or service was going on when John and Stephen were given a view of the temple. Christ was seen standing at the right hand of the Father. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunders and voices." Rev. 4:5. There was busy activity, and Christ was in charge, which is evident from the fact that He was seen in a standing position.

A full and complete description of this greater and more perfect tabernacle is not available to us. Enough has been revealed to give us the necessary understanding of the plan of salvation. Beyond that we must wait until, as the redeemed of the earth, we shall have the unspeakable joy of beholding our Saviour face to face in the kingdom of glory, and worshipping before Him in His holy temple.

The Lord is not pleased when we bring forth fanciful suppositions about the heavenly sanctuary. Such things belong to satanic deceptions of the last day, and must be shunned if we wish to maintain a clear vision of God's truth for our time.

"In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?"<sup>15</sup>

"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>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1905, p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 17.

### 3. *Our Merciful and Faithful High Priest*

As our merciful and faithful high priest, Christ comes preciously near to the human family. At once we recognize Him as one "taken from among men." Heb. 5:1. "For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:16, 17, R.S.V.

*a. Clothed in Human Nature.*—Jesus entered into our salvation when it was darkest. As a member of the human family He grew up "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." Isa. 53:2. He was attacked by the enemy when He was still an infant. All the natural hazards of life He met and overcame. The soil out of which He grew offered Him little support. Even His face revealed the marks of rugged warfare with the enemy. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He took the full course in the school of earthly life. In His own body He learned to know sorrow and grief. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Although He Himself never sinned, or did anything worthy of stripes, yet as the Son of man He learned the agony and pain of punishment. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:8. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4:15.

Taken from among men, Christ bears on His body the marks of the fellowship of His suffering with the human family. He fully understands the members of our sinful race. There is no weakness, no struggle with sin, which He does not fully know about and understand. How wonderful it is that He was called from among men, from our very midst! Now we may claim Him as our merciful and compas-

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sionate representative before the throne of God, and He in turn claims us as children entitled to membership in the family of heaven upon gospel terms. What comfort it must have brought to Stephen's heart when in the midst of his awful sufferings He saw the Son of *man*, not the Son of *God*, at the right hand of God. He is there as the Son of man when He represents us before the throne of heaven. It is for that reason we may "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Verse 16.

"Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while invested only with His love. He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed in our nature."<sup>17</sup>

"The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God."<sup>18</sup>

Clothed in human nature, and having been made perfect through suffering here upon earth, Christ is now able to represent us fully and completely before His Father. He represents us before His Father as really and effectively as though we were standing beside Him. When the Father's arm encircled His Son, it encircled every human soul that accepts Christ as His substitute and surety.

This approach to the Father through Christ is referred to as the "new and living way."

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." Heb. 10:19-23.

In His dual nature, as the Son of man and the Son of

<sup>17</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 177.

<sup>18</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 489.

God, He has opened the way to the throne of grace to every believing soul. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25.

*b. Holy, Separate From Sinners.*—Having now beheld our merciful and faithful High Priest as one taken from among men, we must see Him in His holiness also, "for such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Verse 26. As important as it is for Him to be acquainted with man, it is also necessary that He know the Father. He must know and understand how a holy God views sin, and what infinite love was manifest in the heart of God to find a way of salvation for the sinner. Christ was God manifest in flesh reconciling the world to Himself. Even before He was born He was said to be holy, for the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God." Luke 1:35, R.S.V. In Him the divine and human natures were brought together. In Him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9.

He is a "blameless" high priest. The earthly priests had infirmities (Heb. 7:27, 28) and had to first make sacrifices for their own sins before they could bring sacrifices for the people. He is "blameless, unstained, and separated from sinners." Verse 26, R.S.V. His ministry reaches down from the holiest presence of God. He was the glory of the Father from the days of eternity, He glorified the Father in the days of His flesh, and as our great high priest He is exalted to the glory He had with the Father before the world was. With Paul we must say, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Tim. 3:16.

The words written by Edwin Markham about Abraham Lincoln may well be applied to Jesus Christ:

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“But most he read the heart of common man,  
 Scanned all its secret pages stained with tears,  
 Saw all the guile, saw all the piteous pain;  
 And yet could keep a smile above his lips,  
 Love and forgive, see all and pardon all;  
 His only fault, the fault that some of old  
 Laid even on God—that he was ever wont  
 To bend the law to let his mercy out.”<sup>19</sup>

Martin Luther expresses the emotion of the heart one experiences when in contemplation of the great mystery of God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself:

“When I am told that God became man, I can follow the idea, but I just do not understand what it means. For what man, if left to his natural promptings, if he were God, would humble himself to lie in the feedbox of a donkey or to hang upon a cross? God laid upon Christ the iniquities of us all.

“This is that ineffable and infinite mercy of God which the slender capacity of man’s heart cannot comprehend and much less utter—that unfathomable depth and burning zeal of God’s love toward us. And truly the magnitude of God’s mercy engenders in us not only a hardness to believe but also incredulity itself. For I hear not only that the omnipotent God, the creator and maker of all things, is good and merciful, but also that the Supreme Majesty was so concerned for me, a lost sinner, a son of wrath and of everlasting death, that he spared not his own Son but delivered him to the most ignominious death, that, hanging between two thieves, he might be made a curse and sin for me, a cursed sinner, that I might be made just, blessed, a son and heir of God. Who can sufficiently declare this exceeding great goodness of God? Therefore the holy Scripture speaks of far other than philosophical or political matters, namely of the unspeakable and utterly divine gifts, which far surpass the capacity both of men and of angels.”<sup>20</sup>

Christ, by virtue of being the Son of God, has the nearest access to the Father. No one else can come that near. He appears “in the presence of God for us.” Every barrier that separated man from God has been removed through Christ. We, as sinners, who couldn’t endure the presence of God for a moment, now have an advocate with the Father, right in

<sup>19</sup> “Young Lincoln,” *Poems of Edwin Markham* selected and arranged by Charles L. Wallis, Harper & Brothers; New York (1950), p. 84. Reprinted by permission.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted by Roland Bainton in *Here I Stand*, p. 223.

His very presence! How much more could be done to make Christ our merciful and faithful high priest!

Every high priest taken from among men "is ordained for men in the things pertaining to God." Heb. 5:1.

"As the general character of the prophet was that of one qualified and authorized to speak for God to men, so the general idea of a priest is that of one qualified and authorized to treat in behalf of men with God."<sup>21</sup>

This is true of Christ as our high priest. He ministers "for men in things pertaining to God." Here we discover that our High Priest ministers in a capacity in which no man can serve for himself. In representing man's relation to God in divine things Christ only is qualified to serve. This rules out all other priests or would-be priests, since Christ was inaugurated as our Redeemer in heaven. Men may serve as Christ's ambassadors upon earth, preach the gospel of reconciliation with God, but only Christ can represent men before God in things pertaining to their salvation. His is the only name under heaven given among men "whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. He is the only *way*. We "must" be represented by Him, and only by Him. There is no other name acceptable to God in this respect. This fact is settled once and for all time.

This "new and living way" that has been opened and consecrated for us is the exact opposite of salvation through man's way, or by works. God's grace has provided the means of salvation, and we may receive them by faith. The "best robe," representing the righteousness of Christ, was awaiting the return of the prodigal son. As by faith he drew near to his father's house that robe was called for and placed upon him. He did nothing to provide that covering for himself. The father had provided it. It was the product of his grace. The son received the blessing of it by faith.

The devil would have the sinner first make himself good before drawing near to God. But that is not God's way. By faith the sinner may come with the full burden of his sins

<sup>21</sup> A. A. Hodge, *The Atonement* (1897), p. 151.

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and be accepted in the name of Jesus. The righteousness of Christ, accepted by faith, covers the past life. As sins are confessed, Christ is faithful and just to forgive them, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Then as "we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. Here is revealed a daily, living experience with Christ. By obeying the Word of God as Christ obeyed, our lives are brought into harmony with His life. We have fellowship one with another. He recognizes us as His children, and He represents us before God in our relation to God. He pleads the merits of His blood on our behalf, and thus cleanses us from all sin.

Our great High Priest has entered into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us. Now Paul raises the question: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? 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." Rom. 8:33, 34. Armed with such representation before the Father, God's children can have no charges brought against them by the enemy. When he points at man's unrighteousness, God speaks up and says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan." Zech. 3:2. And to the penitent soul clothed with filthy garments, the Lord says, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Verse 4. Yes, truly it is God that justifies. Then when Satan points at man's sins and imperfections in order to condemn him in the judgment, Jesus intercedes and pleads the merits of His blood. Those sins have been confessed. They have been forgiven and covered with the blood of Christ never to rise up in judgment to condemn the righteous.

#### 4. *Christ, Mediator of the New Testament*

Another phase of Christ's high priestly ministry is revealed in Hebrews 9:15. There He is pointed to as "the

mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The word "testament" is better rendered "covenant." Moses was the mediator of the old covenant. (Ex. 20:19; 32:30-32; Gal. 3:19.) Christ is the mediator of the new covenant. The condition of salvation in ancient days was the same as in the new covenant—faith in Christ. Therefore, nothing was lost to those who were called, whether before the cross or after the cross. The promise of eternal inheritance holds good for all time. Where the law of Moses came short in providing forgiveness for certain sins, faith in Christ made the blessings of forgiveness efficacious in all sins. "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:39.

As mediator of the new covenant Christ's blood covers not only all sins under the new dispensation but also all sins under the old dispensation. There was no perfect sacrifice for sin until Christ came and offered Himself. He was the perfect Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and His sacrifice superseded all previous sacrifices. In fact, all the sin offerings pointed toward Christ, and had Christ not offered Himself for sin, the promise of eternal inheritance would not have been secured for anyone. The whole world would have been eternally lost. As it is, redemption has become "eternal" (Heb. 9:12) for all who have and will come to God through Christ.

God has always dealt with sin, from the time Adam and Eve sinned in Eden, on the ground of the blood of Christ. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. All heaven was emptied in the gift of Christ in order to secure salvation for the whole world. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. . . . By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Heb. 7:19-22.

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Among other messages of hope that came to the Jewish captives in exile was that of Jeremiah concerning the new covenant. He prophesied:

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer. 31:31-34.

Here is a definite promise of a new covenant to take the place of the one Israel had broken. This new covenant was not to be “according to the covenant” God made with Israel at Sinai. This covenant was to affect the “inward parts” of the people; their hearts were to be changed, and God’s law was to be written on the hearts and in the lives of the people. Those who entered into this covenant were to experience forgiveness of sins. They were all to know God by personal experience. God was to become a personal Saviour from iniquity, and sin was not to be remembered against them any more.

That message had a genuine gospel ring. Never had the way of salvation been made so plain. A new day had come in the disclosure of God’s plan to save man.

In the letter to the Hebrews this is called “a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” Heb. 8:6. These “better promises” concern the better ministry of the covenant, the ministry of Christ. (Verses 1, 2.) The time was coming when the earthly sanctuary would be removed, and Christ would become high priest at the “right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”

Jeremiah foresaw that day, and he based his hope on the

original promises God made concerning the seed of the covenant, also referred to as "a righteous Branch," a king that should reign and prosper, and "execute judgment and justice in the earth." (Jer. 23:5, 6.) This promise of the Seed had been given to Adam (Gen. 3:15) and was repeated to Abraham and the other patriarchs. It was the promise of Christ, the minister of the new covenant. Jesus was Himself the Jehovah who appeared to Abraham and gave the promise of the Seed. But Abraham "rejoiced to see" the day of Christ, "and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8:56.)

The new covenant is understood in the light of God's covenant with Abraham. Through the faith of Abraham, the father of all the faithful, the promise was made "sure to all the seed." Rom. 4:16. The new covenant and the covenant with Abraham are virtually the same. The mediatorial work of Christ was the center of both: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29.

The covenant at Sinai did not change the covenant God confirmed to Abraham. (Verse 17.) It is only in Christ that there is any value in the new covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the new covenant that was not promised to Abraham. We must share the promises and blessings with Abraham.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Verses 7-9.

The second, or new, covenant existed in every essential feature, except its ratification, long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called second because its ratification occurred after the covenant made and ratified at Sinai.

In the promise of Christ the Seed, the sacrifice on the cross is comprehended. He was the Lamb without blemish, "foreordained before the foundation of the world." I Peter 1:20. The blood of Christ shed from the foundation of

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the world was the blood of the new covenant. (Luke 22:20.)

In Mosaic days faith in Christ was manifested by the sacrifice of the sin offering, pointing forward to the shedding of the blood of Christ. Under the new covenant Christ brought the sacrifice of His own blood, once and for all. "Once . . . hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9:26.

No sins were ever pardoned except by the shedding of blood. Some impurities might be removed by water and fire, but the stain of sin could be removed only by blood. It is universally true that sin never has been, and never will be, forgiven except in connection with, or in virtue of, the shedding of blood. All sin that is forgiven is remitted through the blood of the atonement.

It was because Christ shed His blood as a sacrifice for sin that He is made "the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Verse 15.

##### 5. *Minister of the True Sanctuary*

We are told that Christ is minister of the "true tabernacle." (Heb. 8:1, 2.) The emphasis that the true tabernacle is the one "which the Lord pitched, and not man" must have some significance. As has been shown in this study, God went to great length to direct the hearts of His children toward the heavenly sanctuary. He even allowed the earthly Temple to be completely destroyed in order to erase the very thought of perpetuating the idea that God's worship was centered somewhere upon earth. Now that Christ has ascended to the right hand of God, the *true* sanctuary is in heaven.

Though Hebrews 8:1, 2 doubtless refers to the sanctuary in heaven in contradistinction to the tabernacle in the wilderness, the truth is that God distinguishes on the basis of who the builders were. The *true* tabernacle is one the Lord pitched and not man. Man pitched the one in the wilderness.

He also built the Temple in Jerusalem. God had directed that building to be constructed. It fulfilled its purpose. Now God emphasizes the fact that man has nothing to do with the building of the true tabernacle. And God does not intend that man should ever build another sanctuary to serve as the place of His presence, and where Christ should minister as high priest. In fact, any attempt to set up a sanctuary upon earth to take the place of the one in heaven is regarded by the Lord as blasphemy. For that would be a denial of Christ as the living way consecrated for us. It would be a denial of the sonship and priesthood of Christ.

*a. Antichrist.*—Of this fact Satan was only too well aware. No sooner had Christ ascended into heaven than Satan began to set up a counterfeit system of worship here upon earth. The first thing he did was to inject a denial of the incarnation into the hearts of the people. This cropped up strongly in apostolic times. John wrote that antichrist was to come, in fact "many antichrists" had already come. (1 John 2:18.) Antichrist was recognized by the fact that he "denieth that Jesus is the Christ," and he denieth the Father and the Son relationship. (Verse 22.) The apostle differentiates between the Spirit of God and the spirit of antichrist on the basis of the fact that Christ came in the flesh: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4:2, 3. This heresy is the very essence of apostasy. Peter calls the denial of Christ that has "bought" us "damnable heresies." (2 Peter 2:1.) This heresy is also the apostasy of the last days.

Worship was shifted from Christ to antichrist. This shift began with the Jewish nation when they rejected the Messiah. The stoning of Stephen at the end of the seventy weeks of years marked the public turning away of that nation from Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 was designated by Christ as the sign of the "abomina-

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tion of desolation" spoken of by Daniel, the prophet. As the Roman armies, holding aloft the emblems of their heathen gods as the source of their power, surrounded the city the "abomination of desolation" was recognized by the Christians.

"Through heathenism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his great triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. By contemplating and worshiping their own conceptions, the heathen had lost a knowledge of God, and had become more and more corrupt. So it was with Israel. The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin."<sup>22</sup>

*b. Setting Up of a Counterfeit Mediatorial System.*—In order to thwart the mediatorial ministry of Christ in heaven Satan set up a counterfeit mediatorial system upon earth. He thus endeavors to divert the sins of the people from the sanctuary in heaven. This false mediatorial system is symbolized by the "little horn" of the "fourth beast" (Dan. 7:19-25) and by the later phase the "little horn" of the he-goat (Dan. 8:9-12) in the prophecy of Daniel.

A close examination of these two symbols shows that they represent the same power. This proves to be a religio-political power especially interested in matters pertaining to religion and worship. Its great energies are directed: (1) against the Most High and the saints of the Most High (Dan. 7:20, 21, 25); (2) against the host and the Prince of the host (Dan. 8:10, 11); (3) to take away the daily and the place of His sanctuary (verse 11); and (4) to cast down the truth to the ground (verse 12). This same power, under different symbols, is brought to view again in the prophecy of John the revelator. (Rev. 13:4-9.) Through the "beast" the worship of the dragon, or Satan, was set up on earth.

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to

<sup>22</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 35, 36.

blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Verses 5-8.

The apostle Paul wrote of this same power. His words help to complete its description. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, he wrote of the "man of sin" thus: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

These scriptures describe Satan, through the beast powers, as directing his warfare against the true worship of God, against our great High Priest, against the followers of Christ, and against the truth. The sufferings and tribulations that came to God's people as the result of this blasphemous warfare continued for centuries. God in His mercy had to shorten those days in order to save His elect from being completely destroyed from the earth. The scenes of this carnage as presented to Daniel were too terrible for him to behold. He fainted and was sick for certain days. (Dan. 8:27.)

Through the development and setting up of the Papacy, Satan succeeded in bringing about an idolatrous worship here upon earth more mysterious and deceptive than anything ever known before. It has become known as the "mystery of iniquity." Into that system was received the paganism of all lands and ages. Through his representatives the devil set himself up in his temple to be worshiped above the God of heaven. In the arrival of papal supremacy over the nations of the earth a decisive step in the setting up of this counterfeit system of religion was taken. The pope declared himself "not only a Priest forever, but also King of kings and Lord of lords." (See *Bible Readings for the Home* [C.H.L. ed.], pp. 179-181.)

"The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope

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of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator, and that none could approach God except through him; and further, that he stood in the place of God to them, and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Thus the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them. Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity.”<sup>23</sup>

In contrast with this great apostasy the early church looked to Christ, the minister of the “true” sanctuary, set at the right hand of God “in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.” Eph. 1:20-22.

*c. Christ Directing the Work of Salvation.*—As a part of His mediatorial ministry, Christ directs the work of salvation from His sanctuary in heaven. Through His appointed agents He carries on as mediator of the new covenant. The power of that ministry is felt throughout the universe. When in ancient times He gave the law at Mount Sinai, His power was manifested. The mountain quaked, and God's glory appeared as burning fire upon it. So awe inspiring was the scene that even Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake.” Heb. 12:21. Israel never forgot that great day in their history. But now One has come who is greater than Moses, and He has entered into the true tabernacle as minister of the new covenant. To the church the word comes:

“Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,

<sup>23</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 55.

and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." Verses 22-25.

As He speaks from heaven His word is like a two-edged sword, "quick, and powerful," penetrating into the innermost recesses of the soul and spirit of man, discerning even the very thoughts and motives of the heart. (Heb. 4:12.) He commissions His angels to go forth as His "ministering spirits," to serve for the sake of those who shall be heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1:14.) These "excel in strength" as they carry out the commands of their great leader. (Ps. 103:20, 21.) To these He adds the power of the Holy Spirit. As His servants proclaim the Word of Christ, the good news of salvation, the Word is accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit and heavenly angels, and no combination of earthly armies, carnal or spiritual, can thwart the work of salvation. As God's special messages have gone to the world through the centuries, the powers of evil have been halted, and the way into the heavenly sanctuary has been made plain. As wave after wave of persecution and bloodshed swept over the church, threatening the very existence of God's elect upon the earth, the Spirit of God has lifted up a standard against the enemy. (Isa. 59:19.) As the church reached the time of the end a final message of salvation was to go forth from the presence of God, a message especially directed against the beast powers who oppose the worship of the God of heaven. When the time came for this message to go to the world, the days of tribulation were cut short in order to open the way for its proclamation with great power and glory.

This message must be presented to the world. It is not a smooth, palatable message the people, particularly the enemies of God, want to hear. Indeed, they will not tolerate the free preaching of this message. What, then, are we to do about this task? Are we to go on preaching only a soft, easy-going message? Or are we to give the last warning message a certain sound?

We speak of the coming latter rain, and it is well that we do. But for what purpose will the latter rain be sent? The

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Lord has told us plainly that the latter rain will be sent to "give power to the loud voice of the third angel."

"The commencement of that time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."<sup>24</sup>

A "loud voice" is anything but a piped-down proclamation of God's message. We have done well in proclaiming the messages of the first and second angel. But it is the third angel's message—the warning against the beast and its image—that is to be proclaimed with a loud voice. Although great care, caution, tact, and, above all, love must be revealed in the preaching of the third angel's message, the injunction still stands that it must be proclaimed with a loud voice. When this is done, then there will be a great heart-felt need of the power of the Holy Spirit, and God will abundantly supply that need. There is no need for the latter rain as long as we proclaim an easy-going message that the people love to hear. But when the message that is presented strikes at the very apostasy of the last days and calls people out of Babylon and leads them to change their whole manner of life and worship, it is then that the power of the Holy Spirit will come in the form of the latter rain. It has been thus in the past when special messages were sent to the world, and it will continue true until God's work is finished upon earth.

"In every generation God has sent His servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. But the people desire smooth things spoken to them, and the pure, unvarnished truth is not acceptable. Many reformers, in entering upon their work, determined to exercise great prudence in attacking the sins of the church and the nation. They hoped, by the example of a pure Christian life, to lead

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<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 85, 86.

the people back to the doctrines of the Bible. But the Spirit of God came upon them as it came upon Elijah, moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; they could not refrain from preaching the plain utterances of the Bible,—doctrines which they had been reluctant to present. They were impelled to zealously declare the truth, and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear the warning.

“Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of Spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power,—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven.”<sup>25</sup>

“The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost. As the ‘former rain’ was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the ‘latter rain’ will be given at its close, for the ripening of the harvest. ‘Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.’ ‘Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.’ ‘In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.’ ‘And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

“The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close.”<sup>26</sup>

*d. The Judgment.*—Much more could be said of Christ’s high priestly ministry, but one phase of His work claims our

<sup>25</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 606, 607.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 611, 612.

special attention. This is particularly true because of the fact that we are living in the time of the end. Among the many phases of His ministry as our high priest, Christ has come to "put away sin." (Heb. 9:26.)

The putting away of sin includes the work of judgment. Christ's sacrifice provides not only for the forgiveness of sin but also for its complete eradication, putting it out of sight so that it will never rise again.

The putting away of sin is not completed until the penalty for sin has been fully paid. This phase of Christ's ministry is a part of the judgment. On the Day of Atonement the special service of that day was not completed until the high priest had finished his ministry in the most holy, laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, placed upon it "all the sins of the children of Israel," and sent it away to perish in the wilderness. Likewise in Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, after atonement has been made, Christ will put away sin once and for all when He casts Satan and all his agents into the lake of fire. The controversy between Christ and Satan, between righteousness and sin, did not end at the cross. Even now while Christ is serving as our great high priest, this struggle is going on relentlessly and in great fury. In the light of the sanctuary in heaven the "triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin"<sup>27</sup> is clearly revealed.

(1) The Time of the Judgment.—The scenes of desolation and suffering that Daniel saw in vision were not to continue unchecked forever. God's word had determined the limitation of the great apostasy. When the one angel asked, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" the answer came quickly from another angel: "Unto two thousand three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Dan. 8: 13, 14.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 488.

Daniel had earnestly prayed, "O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." Dan. 9:17. He was thinking of the desolation of the Temple in Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity. He pleaded with God to let His face shine upon that sanctuary, to restore its worship and glory among the nations. God heard and understood that prayer. In the answer that came from the angel the sanctuary in Jerusalem was remembered. But the time period mentioned reached far beyond the existence of the Temple in Jerusalem. The 2300 days of years, beginning in 457 B.C., reached far beyond the seventy weeks of years allotted to the Jewish people and the Temple. They reached down through the centuries another 1810 years, or to A.D. 1844. In this one sentence the angel covered the whole period of time intervening between the restoration of ancient Jerusalem and the time when the church would come up to the "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." Heb. 12:22-24. To Daniel this language remained mysterious. To the church also the full meaning of these words remained hidden until the long prophetic period had terminated.

Repeatedly Daniel sought for light concerning this vision. Finally the Lord said to him: "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Dan. 12:9, 10. During the long period of persecution, later known as the Dark Ages, the saints would be purified and tried. At last the time would come when the people of God would find understanding of these things pertaining to the sanctuary.

In 1798 the supremacy of the Papacy was broken. The 1260 years were over. With the arrival of 1844 light came on the sanctuary question. The glorious results of the Protestant Reformation, which once more exalted the Bible as the sole rule of Christian faith, were manifest. The doctrine of

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the priesthood of Christ and of justification by faith stirred the hearts of the Christians, and brought about an era of revival of faith that was destined to encircle the whole earth. Thereupon followed the second Advent movement and the proclamation of the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-12. The first of these three messages stated that the hour of God's judgment had come, and called upon the world to "worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Verse 7.

The coming of the judgment-hour message following immediately upon the termination of the desolating work of the "little horn" after 1798, fits into another scene witnessed by Daniel. Daniel said:

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:9, 10.

This scene of the judgment is presented between two important points in the work of the beast power: between the time when the "little horn" is speaking great things against the Most High and the time when the beast is "slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." (Verses 8, 11.)

This shows that a work of judgment is to take place at the time when the devastating work of the little horn was interrupted. This would have to be some time after those days had terminated, or after 1798. With the prophetic period of 2300 days closing in 1844, it must follow, therefore, that the cleansing of the sanctuary spoken of by the angel (Dan. 8:14) has reference to the coming of the judgment seen by Daniel in his vision. The setting up of the judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary must be one and the same thing.

(2) The Work of Judgment.—Viewed in the light of the

earthly sanctuary service, "which was a figure for the time then present," on the Day of Atonement, the cleansing of the sanctuary aptly denotes a work of judgment. This atonement was made once a year because of the "uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." Lev. 16:16. On the Day of Atonement the priest made an atonement for the people to cleanse them and the tabernacle from all their sins. (Verses 29-34.) This was a day of heart searching and affliction of soul. (Verses 29, 31.) Every one who failed to make proper provision for his sins was cut off from the congregation. This happened once each year in the completion of the cycle of service in the sanctuary.

The cleansing of the earthly sanctuary was typical of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. "The patterns of things in the heavens" were purified by the sprinkling of the blood of animals, "but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." Heb. 9:23.

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle . . . ; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others . . . : but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Verses 11, 12, 25, 26.

Christ made the atoning sacrifice once for all, and when He entered the "holy places" in heaven He "entered in once into the holy place [places], having obtained eternal redemption for us." "Eternal redemption" indicates that the full price was paid, and by His sacrifice the work of redemption is to be fully and eternally completed.

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin." The term "in the end of the world" no doubt applies to the time when Christ came as a sacrifice for sin. Some more recent translations (Weymouth, Moffatt, Menge) might be understood to refer to the end of the world. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the one offering Christ

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made covers His entire administration, throughout the Christian dispensation, until He comes the "second time without sin." (Verse 28.) All that occurs during that time is covered with His sacrifice. The whole work of putting away sin is covered, including His work of atonement during the judgment. He appeared once at the cross; He will appear in the world again at His second coming.

There is another coming that takes place between the first and second comings. This other coming is mentioned in Daniel 7:13. Of this the prophet said, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him."

"Christ had come, not to the earth, as they [Adventists in 1844] expected, but, as foreshadowed in the type, to the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the Ancient of days: 'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came'—not to the earth, but—to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.'"

"Both the prophecy of Dan. 8:14 . . . and the first angel's message . . . pointed to Christ's ministration in the most holy place, to the investigative judgment, and not to the coming of Christ for the redemption of His people and the destruction of the wicked. . . ."

"The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Dan. 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Dan. 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25."<sup>28</sup>

The Scriptures pointed to a judgment. Solomon said, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work." Eccl. 3:17. And again: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 426.

judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14. The apostle Paul reasoned with Felix "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts 24:25. Although that judgment was still future in Paul's day, yet the apostle expressly stated that God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." Acts 17:31.

The investigative judgment concerns everyone, for "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10. Through the ministry of the angels a careful record is made of every life. The books containing these records are examined in the investigative judgment. John said, "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20:12. The various kinds of books used in the judgment are "the book of life," (Rev. 13:8; 20:13-15) and the books of "remembrance" (Mal. 3:16; Ps. 56:8).

At the beginning of the investigative judgment in 1844 Christ was seen to enter into a new phase of His mediatorial ministry. He came near to the Ancient of days. (Dan. 7:13.) Both God, the Judge, and Christ, the Mediator, became vitally engaged in a work that seems to have brought them closer together than ever before in connection with the work of the sanctuary in heaven. Christ entered the most holy to perform the work of atonement. He ceased His ministrations in the first apartment. The time had come when the general ministry pertaining to forgiveness of sins was ended. This had been going on in the first apartment of the temple for eighteen hundred years. Now, another additional portion of His mediatorial work had to be taken up, this time in the most holy. There is no lapse in, or omission of, any part of the former service occasioned by the move into the most holy. "So Christ had only completed one part of His work as our intercessor, to enter upon another portion of the work,

and He still pleaded His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners.”<sup>29</sup>

Christ opened another door before He closed the first one (Rev. 3:7, 8), indicating that a door was always open through which the sinner had access to the Father.

This work is known as the investigative judgment. Christ is making up “a people for his name” (Acts 15:14) to share with Him the kingdom that He is soon to receive from the Father. Before the “marriage of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:7) takes place the guests of the wedding must be examined. This was made clear by Christ’s parable of the marriage as recorded in Matthew 22. Before the wedding the king examined the guests—

“to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on, are accepted of God, and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing work in the sanctuary above.”<sup>30</sup>

One book, the book of life, is especially mentioned in connection with the judgment. This is the register of heaven. It contains the names of those who have accepted Christ as their Saviour from sin and have given public expression of their faith. Doubtless Adam’s name leads the list, for this book has been in existence since the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8.) The saints in Old Testament times were conscious of the existence of this book. (Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Dan. 12:1.)

Christ spoke of the blessing of having our names written in heaven (Luke 10:20), and Paul specifically mentions the book of life (Phil. 4:3). Christ has entered the presence of the Father to represent those who have expressed their faith in Him, for He said: “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 429.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 428.

will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:32, 33.

As a recorded name comes up in the judgment, the book of remembrance of that person is investigated to ascertain whether that individual has kept the faith throughout his whole Christian life. If so, Christ will plead the merits of His blood on behalf of that one. The Father will accept the atonement of Christ for this person, the record is forever closed, and the name is retained in the book of life. In case the individual departs from the faith and denies the atoning sacrifice of Christ, that person's name is blotted out of the book of life. This work of investigation began with the dead in 1844 and has been in progress for more than one hundred years. Before this phase of Christ's ministry is completed, the names of the living who have once accepted Christ and whose names have been recorded in the book of life will be brought under final investigation in the judgment. Those whose names have been dealt with in the judgment are sealed for eternity. Some will be raised to life and will enter into the kingdom of God at the first resurrection. Some will not be brought forth until the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29.) The investigative judgment determines who belongs to each of the two groups.

(3) The Sealing.—As to those who will be living when Christ comes the second time, special provision has been made to determine their preparedness for the kingdom of God. This provision is the sealing. In the case of the dead who have been judged, death closed the activity of their lives. Their life records could be considered fully and their cases determined. With the living a special sealing work has to be done before their cases can be decided in the judgment.

When Christ returns there will be those living upon earth who will be "without fault before the throne of God." Rev. 14:5. They will have the seal of God. (Rev. 7:2-4.) John saw them upon the earth after the third angel's message had been given to the world. There they were keeping "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. They have

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gone through great trial and persecution because they had "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name." Rev. 15:2. The observance of the Sabbath will be connected with this sealing.

"The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation. . . . The mark of the beast is the opposite of this—the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God."<sup>31</sup>

However, there is more to this sealing work than Sabbath observance.

"Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works."<sup>32</sup>

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. . . .

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost."<sup>33</sup>

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God."<sup>34</sup>

"It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character."<sup>35</sup>

"Jesus is in His holy temple, and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins, and will pardon

<sup>31</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 117.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 213, 214.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>34</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 71.

<sup>35</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 215, 216.

all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before He leaves the sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the sanctuary, then they who are holy and righteous, will be holy and righteous still; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God."<sup>36</sup>

The sealing work is rapidly nearing completion. The winds of strife are increasing in intensity. God is holding them in check so that the earth will not be destroyed before the sealing of "the servants of our God in their foreheads" is completed. But God's mercy will end in due time.

"With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered, with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of His wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading of mercy in their behalf."<sup>37</sup>

When the last name has been dealt with and Christ lifts His hands and says, "It is finished," then His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is over. At this juncture the words of Christ apply:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he 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.

(4) The Blotting Out of Sin.—Before Christ comes the second time the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished. Peter said, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." Acts 3:19, 20. The time is coming when final disposition is to be made of sin. Merely forgiving sins will never put an end to sin. Christ could keep on forgiving sins forever, but if He took no steps to dispose of sin, there would never be an end to this blight that came upon the world and the universe.

<sup>36</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 48.

<sup>37</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 208.

“The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out ‘when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ.’ When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be.”<sup>88</sup>

#### IV. Christ as King

The next scene in the prophecy is that of Christ in the act of receiving the kingdom.

“And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Dan. 7:14.

This same scene is portrayed under the seventh trumpet: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Rev. 11:15.

At this the Saviour lays aside His priestly attire and puts on the royal robes. The intercessory work in the temple is finished. Now Christ comes to “execute judgment” (John 5:27; Jude 14, 15), to “give reward” to His servants, and to “destroy them which destroy the earth” (Rev. 11:18). Upon His departure from it, “the temple was filled with smoke . . . , till the seven last plagues of the seven angels” are fulfilled. (Rev. 15:8.)

For the first time in the duration of sin Christ has ceased His mediation on behalf of sinful men. This is something new, or as the prophet said, “strange.” (Isa. 28:21.) Heretofore wrath has been mingled with mercy. Now His wrath is unmixed. Sin and all its traces must be forever eradicated; “neither root nor branch” is to remain (Mal. 4:1) by the time this “strange act” is completed. The seven last plagues

<sup>88</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 485.

will accomplish their retributive work. After the last plague Christ comes to gather His elect to Himself. "A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Ps. 50:3. The wicked will be destroyed by the "brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2:8.)

Now Christ is prepared to make final disposition of sin itself. In the typical service of the Day of Atonement, after the high priest had completed his ministry of cleansing both the tabernacle and its furniture, he placed his hands upon the head of the "scapegoat" (Lev. 16:8), and confessed over him "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat"; then he sent the goat away "by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness" (verse 21).

The Hebrew word for scapegoat is Azazel. The text states that Aaron was to cast lots upon the two goats, "one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat ["Azazel," margin]." Whom does Azazel stand for? "Azazel" means "a wicked spirit," or the angel who revolted and persisted in rebellion and sin. That means Satan.

Mrs. Ellen G. White describes the antitypical event:

"Now the event takes place, foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the day of atonement. When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of the sin-offering, then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord; and in presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels, and the host of the redeemed, the sins of God's people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness."<sup>29</sup>

"As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 658.

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sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away 'unto a land not inhabited'; so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin, and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil."<sup>40</sup>

In the binding of Satan for a thousand years we see the sending away of the scapegoat in antitype. (Rev. 20:1-3.)

This teaching frequently raises the question, Since the sins are placed on the head of the scapegoat and an atonement is made with him (Lev. 16:10), do we not then make Satan our savior? We answer No; the vicarious atonement for the sins of repentant sinners has already been completed when the scapegoat ceremony takes place, and those sins have been blotted out. It is therefore logical to ask, How then are there any sins to be placed on Satan? Here is the answer:

"Most sins admit of shared responsibility. The person committing the sin is often mostly to blame, though this is not always the case. Some are more sinned against than sinning. The man who educates a child to steal cannot escape responsibility by saying that he himself does not steal. . . . The principle of joint responsibility is illustrated in the sin of our first parents. Satan tempted them, and they fell. Because of Satan's part in the sin, the serpent was cursed; because of Adam and Eve's sin, they were banished from Eden. God did not hold Adam and Eve solely responsible, neither did He excuse them. Satan was guilty; so was man. . . . This principle of joint responsibility, illustrated in God's treatment of the first sin, still holds good. It is God ordained, and its justice finds response in man's own sense of right."<sup>41</sup>

F. D. Nichol illustrates the moral principles involved by the following allegory:

"A group of men have been arrested, tried, and convicted of certain crimes. A heavy fine is imposed upon them. They are in a hopeless state, for they are penniless. But their hopelessness is changed to joy; a rich philanthropist offers to pay their fine. They accept and are free. The case is apparently settled. But no; the court, continuing its investi-

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 485, 486.

<sup>41</sup> M. L. Andreassen, *The Sanctuary Service*, pp. 190-192.

gations, discovers that a person of fiendish cunning has really dominated these poor men, and has seduced them into their course of wrongdoing. He is captured, and judgment meted out to him. He is made to pay a heavy fine—much heavier even than that from which the poor men have been freed by the gracious act of the philanthropist; for the court reasons that the fiend is doubly guilty.

"Now, it may truly be said that the philanthropist atones, or makes satisfaction, for the crimes of these poor men. Yet in another sense we could speak of the archfiend's atoning for those very crimes. There is no confusion of meaning, even though each gives satisfaction to justice in a basically different way. Nor by declaring that the archfiend gives satisfaction for those crimes do we minimize in the slightest degree the adequacy and sufficiency of the philanthropist's gracious act toward the penniless men."<sup>42</sup>

Satan cannot escape some share of responsibility for all the sins that have ever been committed. On this Mrs. Ellen G. White remarks:

"Since Satan is the originator of sin, the direct instigator of all the sins that caused the death of the Son of God, justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final punishment."<sup>43</sup>

"He must suffer for all the evil that he has done, and be punished for the sins that he has caused to be committed."<sup>44</sup>

It should be noted that Satan's suffering is not vicarious but punitive. He makes an atonement for his sins only in the sense that a criminal makes atonement to society for his crimes by suffering a just punishment. In this way we can understand Leviticus 16:10. When Satan and his host who have spurned salvation through Christ are at last destroyed in the lake of fire, an end is made of sin.

Satan knows that this is coming. Therefore, in order to deceive men regarding the true remission of sin, he operates a false, counterfeit system of mediation of his own. He sets himself up as God in his own temple. Through his "man of sin" he operates a system of religion based on pious good works as a snare to the whole world. The Pope and his priests claim to have received from Christ the work of mediation between God and man. These claim power to forgive sin by

<sup>42</sup> F. D. Nichol, *Answers to Objections* (1952), p. 733.

<sup>43</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358.

<sup>44</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 660.

their authority. Every effort is made to deceive the whole world. As the end of the world approaches, Satan's success in this respect will be overpowering. By special decrees the people of the whole world will be compelled openly to acknowledge the beast and its image, and to worship the same. At the same time God's children will refuse to acknowledge the beast and its worship. They will not accept the mark of its worship, but they will be sealed in their foreheads with the seal of God.

When this time comes, the blood of Christ will be brought to an open shame by universal rejection and wicked commerce. There remains only one thing: Christ's coming to give reward to His faithful people and destroy those who destroy the earth. Punishment, full and complete, may now be meted out to Satan and his evil agents and to all who worship the beast and his image. These are cast into the lake of fire "and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:10, 14, 15.

Now the reign of sin is forever ended. Now a great feast of rejoicing takes place, known as the marriage of the Lamb. The earth made new is now restored as man's Paradise and eternal home. All traces of sin are gone, and the eternal purpose of God looms into glorious view before the redeemed. They unite in singing a "new song." Once before, John had heard them sing "a new song" in faith of all the provisions of salvation made through the sacrifice of Christ. (Rev. 5:9, 10.) Now they sing again "as it were a new song" (Rev. 14:3), saying, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments" (Rev. 19:1, 2). These voices seem to have come forth from the sea of glass that is before the throne of God. The joy now spreads. A special voice comes

out of the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great." Verse 5. Whereupon John heard "as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Verses 6, 7.

All things are now made new. The New Jerusalem has come down from God out of heaven, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21:2. The saints arrayed in "fine linen, clean and white" are now at home. They have been made unto their God "kings and priests," and "shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:10.) Now they are in the presence of God. They have entered into that life which was hid with Christ; their bodies are changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body; they stand in their own righteousness, "for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. 19:8. Man will appear before God as though he had never sinned. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4.

Before concluding the representation of the glories of the new heaven and the new earth, the Holy Spirit cannot refrain from reminding us that "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Verse 27. For us everything depends upon having our names written in the Lamb's book of life when Christ comes to receive His kingdom. Now, while Christ is still interceding on behalf of sinners, we must make sure that our sins are all blotted out of the books in heaven, and our names are written in the Lamb's book of life for all eternity.

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**The Advent Message Built Upon the  
Foundations of Many Generations**

By

L. E. FROMM

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## I. Raising Up the Foundations of Many Generations

### Our Task Is to Reconstruct and Complete

God has had His master workmen throughout the centuries, building the beautiful edifice of prophetic truth. These were to be skilled craftsmen who should never need to be ashamed of their work, and who would ever build in true accord with the master plan and specifications. (2 Tim. 2:15.) God Himself was the master planner and designing architect. Jewish expositors, prior to the Christian Era, began to lay the firm footings and to plant the solid foundations, as well as to build the lower walls of the imposing structure that would rest directly upon them. And the workmen-interpreters, in early church times, were to erect the main portion of the superstructure of the prophetic faith of the church, which in turn was built upon the foundation of Christ and the apostle-prophets, after men like Paul and John established the foundations and set the cornerstones. (Eph. 2:20.)

As in the building of the great cathedrals of old, part was to be added to part as the years of history unrolled. So block was placed upon block, and section added to section, in this developing structure. And just as fast and as far as history fulfilled prophecy through the centuries, its progressive developments were to be recognized as they were unfolded. Additional prophetic faith portions would thus be added to the basic structure from time to time, which was to be completed in fair and imposing form in these latter days. And

as we come down through the first three or four centuries, we discover that these early men built solidly, and in a really remarkable way. Their construction has stood the test of time.

But in the passage of the next few centuries there arose false and faithless workmen, ruinous wreckers, who sought to overturn the earlier sturdy foundations and to break down the solid, symmetrical structure upbuilt by the early church, so far as prophetic interpretation was concerned. Thus the beautiful edifice of prophetic exposition, erected by the early church, was grossly mutilated. So distorted did it become by early medieval times that its original form and outline could scarcely be recognized. These false workmen left their cluttered debris scattered everywhere, with a distorted, misshapen structure in its stead.

Like the false prophets in Israel of old, these unfaithful men built with "untempered mortar," intermingling the holy and the profane, hiding their eyes from God's Sabbath, insinuating subtle "lies," seeking personal gain and group aggrandizement, and saying, "Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken." Those were days when, as with His ancient people, God sought for faithful men to stand in the "hedge" and to fill up the "gap." But the earlier record states, sadly, that He "found none." (Eze. 22:28-30.)

Then came a long lull in the building program, covering several hundred years. When these had passed, pre-Reformation and Reformation times produced a group of godly, scholarly men who earnestly gathered up the foundation stones laid down by the men of earlier generations. Building operations were begun anew, restoring to a large degree the semblance of that original interpretative edifice. Once more it rose in fair and comely form in the sight of all men. And they added other features and sections to the edifice, not previously discerned, but now disclosed by the restudy of the Blueprint. There were, however, sections of the distorted structure that were allowed to remain as they were—certain parts that were in direct conflict with the original plans and

specifications. These were left untouched and uncorrected, at the time, with all their blemishes and distortions.

Then, some time after the Reformation, still another group of destructive workmen, called rationalists or modernists—actually latter-day departers from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-7)—assailed the Reformation structure that had been rebuilt, and which had been patterned after the early church structure. Thus a second serious disturbance of the building took place, which God had designed to stand unmoved through the centuries. Much that the Reformers had restored they again tore down and cast aside.

And now we find fresh ruins and rubble scattered about, and a distorted, misshapen, modernistic structure taking form, with much of the original apostolic and restored Reformation building material still in discard in the debris, untouched and unutilized.

Then comes the crowning climax, as the capstone of the sound prophetic interpretation of the centuries is placed upon this imposing edifice by the modern builder-craftsmen of this prophetic temple. All this, you may say, is a historical parable. True; but it is based upon unassailable historical realities, and it constitutes the epitome of our theme and the outline of our studies.

In these latter days, as God's remnant workmen, we are called upon not only to reconstruct the Reformation edifice but to restore the neglected early church structure as well, and to bring everything into harmony with the divine Blueprint. We are even to restore original features omitted by the Reformers. And we are likewise to rebuild the parts distorted and rejected by the latter-day perverters of the Reformation positions. Not only are we confronted by this dual task, but we are commissioned to finish this uncompleted structure, carrying it through to consummation with the capstone of the present truth features of these latter days, thus bringing the full structure to completion.

Our authorizing commission, our specific assignment, is recorded in the familiar words of Isaiah 58:8-14. Listen to it:

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light breaking forth as the morning, with the luminous righteousness of God in the forefront, as our advance guard, His glory as our rear guard, and the Lord Himself as our director and counselor. Then comes the clear outline:

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Verses 12-14.

Ours is therefore specifically a reconstruction task. We are to restore the ancient structure of prophetic truth that twice has suffered grave disfigurement at the hands of unfaithful workmen. Not only are we now to repair “the breach” in the wall of truth, and to “build the old waste places,” and to restore the paths to dwell in, but we are specifically commissioned to “*raise up the foundations of many generations.*” We are to gather together all the true foundational building materials that have been hewn out through past generations, including those that have later been dislodged and tossed aside. These are to be brought together again, in balanced and symmetrical form, as originally designed of God for the faith of His church. We are to restore its beauty and harmony and strength. And we are to extend our work of recovery back to the dawn of the Christian Era.

Ours is therefore fundamentally a restoration, not the formation of a new structure. It is tied in inseparably with the efforts of all past builders of prophetic truth. All past truths and applications are to be retrieved. Not one block or stone of sound, true exposition is to be left out as worthless or needless. In this way we shall truly build again the foundations and superstructure of “many generations” into the stately edifice of truth originally designed by God. That is our bounden commission under the Advent movement.

### Augmenting Force for Our Final Witness

We are recognized pre-eminently as a people of prophecy, and we hold that we have a mandate and a mission from God for the proclamation of a message that is unique in all the annals of man. Our cause and our course have been outlined in advance by the infallible pen of inspiration. We have the authorizing credentials for our task, stamped with the insignia of heaven. (Rev. 14:6-12.) Consequently, an obligation rests upon us not placed upon any other group in the world today. No man, or body of men, can disannul that heavenly commission. And no one can exempt us from the responsibility of faithfully and competently proclaiming that message to all mankind.

We were brought onto the stage of world action for this specific purpose. The precise timing and fundamental scope of this movement identify it as of truly heavenly origin. Its historical rise and development and its ultimate climax and triumph are all portrayed upon the pages of inspired prediction. We are therefore a people of unparalleled privilege and accountability. High honor and tremendous obligation most surely devolve upon us.

Moreover, the floodlight of the world's pitiless scrutiny will soon be turned full upon us. The hour has now come to rise to the full measure of God's expectancy for us today, and to acquit ourselves as He expects of us in this climactic hour of all time. More is demanded of us than of our fathers, and much more than of our forefathers in generations past. And beyond all others before us, we should be fully aware of, and able to draft upon, the inherent strength and actual invulnerability of the fundamental positions of our prophetic faith. This has been brought into our possession by Providence in the last two decades.

We now have this augmenting force for perfecting and empowering our witness to the world. We are therefore coming into position to use the maximum of its latent power and appeal in the final phases of our witness to man-

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kind. The hour has clearly come to utilize these full potentialities and to employ the inherent strength of our position. The world is ready. And these facilities constitute our God-given reserves for time's last hour. They are designed to help finish the work. They are to blend with the outpouring of the latter rain in the time of the loud cry. They are to be set in the framework of full righteousness by faith. They are part of the paralleling human side and equipment. Let us, then, methodically survey these wonderful aids for the finishing of our task.

Our prophetic faith has a majestic ancestry and a historical support of which few have been aware, and which is not possessed by any other religious group today. It has a compelling force that is most impressive. It has a winsome appeal that is priceless. It offers such unassailable evidence as to make possible the maximum impression. It provides such a unique appeal to reason, and has such inescapable logic in its claim upon the conscience, that it is destined to produce a conviction surpassing any approach of the past. Such is our glorious heritage. God expects us to capitalize to the full upon its latent power and strength in presenting the climax of His case and claims before mankind at this time. That is our real and really glorious position today.

Having been commissioned by our leaders to delve into these backgrounds and recover these factual evidences, and having been asked to share these findings with you at this Bible Conference, I esteem it both a high privilege and a solemn obligation not only to give the resultant findings but to express certain deep convictions that have grown out of this prolonged study. The presentation of these findings over a period of years, before various graduate and undergraduate groups, as well as popular audiences, in the Old World and in South America, Inter-America, and North America, has deepened these convictions.

The effect of such presentations has been the same everywhere. I am persuaded that this subject has worldwide application and appeal. The express declaration of the Spirit

of prophecy that, when rightly presented, these lost gems of prophetic truth, recovered from the rubbish of error and reset in the framework of the everlasting gospel in its unique present-truth setting, will make an appeal to minds that could not be reached by any other approach, has been vindicated again and again. Here are some impressive declarations:

"The precious gems of the righteousness of Christ, truths of divine origin, are to be carefully searched out and placed in their proper setting, to shine with heavenly brilliancy amid the moral darkness of the world. Let the bright jewels of truth which God gave to man, to adorn and exalt His name, be carefully rescued from the rubbish of error. . . . Let the gems of divine light be reset in the framework of the gospel. . . . Each gem is to become the property of God's people and find its true position in the framework of truth. . . . The wonderful truth of God is to be sought out by every mind, and the results of many minds are to be brought together from many sources as God's hereditary trust. . . . Truth that has found its proper setting, flashes brilliant rays of divine light into darkened minds, and meets the wants and necessities of the minds and hearts of fallen men who could not be reached by any other agency."<sup>1</sup>

Such is the augmenting power and inherent force of these lost gems—diamonds from Daniel, pearls from Paul, and rubies from the Revelation—when restored and rightly used. And we are always safe—and only safe it might be added—when we are operating in harmony with the divine Blueprint drawn up for the remnant church. So let us enter upon our study.

#### Contemporary Recognition of Fulfillment the Rule

Now trace with me, first of all, the great, generally recognized sequence of world empires—the unfolding of the *basic outline prophecies*, primarily of Daniel 2 and 7. This is foundational. These have been universally recognized by Jew, Catholic, and Protestant alike as the ABC of all prophecy. They constitute the common denominator generally assented to by all groups who study prophecy.

It is marvelous to see how, from the very dawn of pro-

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 23, 1894, pp. 657, 658.

phetic interpretation onward, men have realized progressively just where they were in the advancing course of time and the divine plan and outline of the ages. And this has taken place just as rapidly as history has clearly fulfilled the prophesied events. This recognition was not simply by one man, or two, but by many men—whole groups of students of prophecy, scattered over many lands. The historical record begins with the Jews before Christ. In fact, it begins back with the Hebrew prophet Daniel himself, who expressly identified the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian as the first three of the four world powers of God's master outline of the course of empire from Daniel's day onward.

And in the very hour of transition they were anxiously watching the change-over from Persian to Grecian domination, and applied the symbol of the swift-moving he-goat to the conquering march of Alexander, the Macedonian monarch, and declared the notable first horn to be Alexander the Great.<sup>2</sup> Then they watched with concern the establishment of the Roman fourth power—which they even named, as stated in their paraphrastic translation of the book of Daniel—as the next in the prophetic line to assume control.

In addition, we find that these pre-Christian Jews understood and clearly applied the year-day principle to the seventy weeks—the one and only prophetic time period of Daniel then applicable to the Jews—a prophetic truth for the time then present. God has always had a present truth—a special truth for emphasis during each period along the highway of the centuries. These Jewish exegetes also clearly understood and stated that a "time" represented a year, and that "king" indicated a kingdom. And these foundational principles for all prophetic interpretation enunciated by the early Jewish church before Christ, were carried over into the Christian church and became the accepted heritage of the early church.

Men have known where they were all along the designated

<sup>2</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 1, pp. 167-169. The full sources appear in *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* set; hence, there is but terse reference to them here.

course of empire, and what principal events were to follow. This is a matter of simple record. In the days of Roman might and power Jew and early Christian alike then applied Daniel's prophetic fourth empire symbols to Rome. There was no question in their minds concerning the application.

Take the early Christian churchmen, the Ante-Nicene Fathers, from Justin Martyr onward. It is most astonishing to see how many of the very men who helped to lay the foundation for the great Latin departure in other matters, had this unique characteristic—that they still held tenaciously to the basic principles of sound prophetic interpretation long after certain of the other gospel foundations of the early church were crumbling and apostasy was beginning to overwhelm and distort the fundamental doctrines of the primitive church. As the mighty Amazon sweeps out into the South Atlantic for hundreds of miles, bearing its sweet, fresh water amid the surrounding brine, so the distinct stream of sound prophetic interpretation continued on until, by the fifth century, it was finally swallowed up by the surrounding apostasy.

A single early example must suffice. Hippolytus, bishop of Portus Romanus (d. c. A.D. 236), an opposer of two of the bishops of Rome, wrote the earliest systematic commentary on the book of Daniel that has been preserved for us. In striking phrases he paralleled the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, naming the four empires from Babylonia to Rome, identifying his own place as in the "legs of iron," and the fourth beast—the then-present Roman Empire—the fourth and last of the world empire series. He then declared the breakup of Rome would be the next world-shaking event in line, portrayed through the symbolism of the succeeding ten toes and the ten horns of these chapters.<sup>3</sup>

And he further declared the smiting stone of Daniel 2, in the time of Rome's divisions, to be Christ coming in judgment. But most remarkable of all, he expressed the belief

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 271-273.

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that the little horn of Daniel 7, springing up among the Roman divisions, represented the coming Antichrist—whose development, however, and identity as an ecclesiastical system spanning the Middle Ages he did not and could not yet envision. Rather, he wondered whether it might not be some heinous, atheistic Jew. Time was foreshortened to all these early men. They did not and could not yet grasp the stretching centuries that would be involved. The year-day principle had not yet been applied to the 1260 years, and the papal apostasy had not yet developed to the point of clear identification. But the grand outline was all there—the four empires, the division of Rome, the appearance of Antichrist, and finally the second Advent.

So our teaching today, on this basic outline, is none other than the revival and restoration of the early church interpretation on the four empires, and the permanent division of the fourth. Thus we clasp hands firmly across the years with Hippolytus and his contemporary expositors. We have simply revived and carried forward his teachings and those of others.<sup>4</sup> We have merely raised up the sturdy foundations of those early generations, back near the dawn of the Christian Era. That is our strength. Rome was the tremendously present fourth empire in Hippolytus' then present-truth emphasis. And this basic concept was shared by scholars scattered from one end of the Roman Empire to the other, writing in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew. That was indisputably the early church teaching and it constituted a powerful group of witnesses.

#### **Rome's Breakup, and Disintegration of Interpretation**

Next comes the era of the breakup of the Roman Empire into its lesser parts, or component nations. Sulpicius Severus (d. c. 420) and Jerome (d. 420) are typical of this epoch, and were striking expounders in this crucial period. These and other men definitely declared that the great predicted

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 346-348.

division was now already under way.<sup>5</sup> The brittle clay was clearly being intermingled with the sturdy iron. Statecraft and churchcraft were being fatally intermingled. The breakup was a present actuality. And this now became the new point of clear contemporary recognition and concern. It was the new area of emphasis of their present truth. So we are the restorers of this added section in the foundational structure laid by the generations of the fourth and fifth centuries.

And then the next major event in the line of inspired prediction—the appearance of Antichrist, whoever he might be—was awaited with gravest apprehension. Men prayed for the continuance of the then-present Roman Empire, for they feared the more sinister depredations and persecutions of the coming Antichrist. They likewise held the clear outline of the four world powers. Many, such as Tertullian, had written that Rome was the final withholding power,<sup>6</sup> and that its passing would make possible the rise of Antichrist—or the beast, or little horn, as it was already variantly called under the alternate symbols of Antichrist. And many feared the dread opposer would appear in the church.

Then the first great breakdown in prophetic interpretation began to take place. First subtle and then open apostasy began to appear—fatal departures from that earlier prophetic faith, brought about through the impact of such men as Origen of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Augustine of Hippo. Origen, the Neoplatonic philosopher, began first to pervert the interpretation of the prophecies by allegorizing them away from literal intent. The four empires of Daniel 2 and 7 were just spiritual progressions, advances, ascendant principles, one following the other. The literal interpretation of the promise of Christ's second Advent was just a crude concept for the immature mind, he asserted.

Eusebius represented the first resurrection as the widespread Christian conquests through conversion of the pagans,

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 252-263.

the devil's binding typifying the restriction of his power through the early conquests of the gospel.

By Augustine the resurrection was *spiritualized* into the spiritual awakening of souls dead in sin, the kingdom of God was crudely *carnalized* and *materialized* into the then-present apostatizing church, and the millennium was ingeniously thrust back so as to begin with the first Advent. People were then living, Augustine stoutly asserted, in the millennial thousand years of the Apocalypse. It was a revolutionary reversal and repudiation.

Moreover, the stone that was to smite the image on the feet was already, Augustine asserted, the mountain kingdom of God, which was to fill the earth. But this, they held, was to be accomplished through man's endeavor, and the stone was to crush the nations into subjection to the advancing kingdom of God. Thus the early shadow of the coming Inquisition was already cast in those transition times, under this gross misconception. And these flanking attacks upon the early precepts of prophecy, as well as the direct attacks—by Porphyry the sophist upon the historicity of the book of Daniel, and by Dionysius striking against the apostolicity of the Apocalypse—brought about the collapse of early church interpretation and the obscuring of the early sound exposition. For centuries bleak shadows crept over the earth, and darkness covered the understanding of men.

#### Conflict Next Centers Around Antichrist

It was a dreary time, until at last the true character and identity of the predicted Antichrist began to be unmistakably discerned. Around A.D. 1000, when the Papacy had clearly unveiled itself, the identity of the Antichrist was boldly asserted at the Synod of Rheims in 991.<sup>7</sup> And a swelling chorus of voices within the Roman Church began to declare, with anguish of heart, that the beast had taken up his seat in the see of Peter, and the ministers of Christ had become the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 540-543.

ministers of Antichrist. That, be it observed, was within the Roman communion, among loyal sons of the church, whose hearts were bleeding because of the deepening apostasy. And outside the pale of the Roman Church, among the Albigenses<sup>8</sup> and Waldenses, who did not acknowledge the pope of Rome, the prophetic symbols of Daniel, Paul, and John were applied directly to the Papacy as Babylon and Antichrist, now fully developed and dominant.<sup>9</sup> No exposition could be more direct or incriminating.

Eberhard II, Archbishop of Salzburg, at a synod held at Regensburg in A.D. 1240, was the first to perceive and expound the little horn of Daniel 7:25 as the already long-existent historical Papacy, which had sprung up, as prophesied, among the ten-horn divisions of the Roman fourth power, uprooting three.<sup>10</sup> This completed the cluster of prophetic symbols applied to the Papacy. It was a tense, dramatic hour when John of Milicz in 1367, boldly nailed his astonishing placard on the door of the old St. Peter's at Rome, declaring that the Antichrist had already taken up his abode in the church.<sup>11</sup> Other voices in various lands began to proclaim a similar message. Even the Jewish statesman and scholar, Don Isaac Abravanel, in 1496, declared it to be his inner conviction that the little horn of Daniel 7:25 was none other than the rule of the pope, springing up among the ten divisions of the Roman Empire.<sup>12</sup> And all this, be it remembered, was before the Reformation had gotten under way.

This contention now became the new point of emphasis. It was the new special truth for the time then present—that the Papacy was indeed the prophesied Antichrist, following the breakup of the restraining Roman Empire. And this continued to be the dominant emphasis in prophetic exposition all during pre-Reformation, Reformation, and post-Reformation times. It had been the burden of John Wycliffe and Walter Brute in Britain, who expounded Daniel 2 and 7

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 809.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 876-886.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 796-801.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 31-37.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 223-229.

just as we do today, with the Papacy as the little horn. It was echoed by kindred spirits in Bohemia.<sup>13</sup>

It was the heart of Martin Luther's twofold discovery, first of Christ and then of the Antichrist of prophecy.<sup>14</sup> It was the ringing battle cry that gave separating power to the Reformation. It was the startling theme of John Knox's first sermon, in 1547, in old St. Andrew's castle.<sup>15</sup> It soon became the battle cry, not only of the Scottish Reformer, but of the Reformation leaders of every land. Heard first in the Old World, it was carried over by the Pilgrim and Puritan fathers to the New World. Such were the developing sections of the superstructure of the lofty edifice of prophetic interpretation.

The early church had identified the Antichrist with apostasy. Now the identification of Antichrist with the Papacy was simply a clarification and amplification that brought the Reformation church into line with the fundamental teachings of the early church. Hence, it was essentially a restoration, a raising up of the foundations of former generations. They were one in view and spirit. And the other prophecies in Daniel and the Apocalypse were interpreted in consistent harmony with these basic outlines. The little horn, the beast, Babylon, the harlot, and Antichrist were simply symbolic expressions of the same apostate churchly power.

Scholars like Joseph Mede, kings like James I of Britain, scientists like Sir Isaac Newton, and men in all the secular walks of life, as well as the clerics, expounded prophecy. Writers and wood carvers, artists and sculptors, embodied their concepts in abiding form. Prophecy was again a dominant factor in religious life.

#### **Concern Over Timing of Papal Dominance Important**

But the time placement of Antichrist's spiritual dominance had now become a question of increasing importance

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 2, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 11, 12.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 20.

and concern. Prophetic interpretation had been at low ebb, back in 538, and no one then sensed the significance of the events occurring before men's eyes. The revolutionary character of Justinian's imperial rescript recognizing the pope's spiritual primacy was not grasped at the time. Centuries passed before the Roman Church came to the place of its great dominance under Gregory VII, Innocent III, and others, and so completely revealed its real character that its prophetic identity could no longer be concealed.

Drue Cressener, in 1689, declared that the 1260 years were to be calculated from Justinian's recognition of the papal primacy to about 1800 or shortly before.<sup>16</sup> And many others on both sides of the Atlantic—some twenty in all—began to anticipate some great crisis soon to take place affecting the Papacy, with France as the one to deliver the fatal stroke with the sword, and the "earthquake" as some kind of internal upheaval. Thus it was that when the Revolution swept over France, and the subsequent captivity of Pius VI took place at Rome in 1798 under Berthier, Marshal of France, this event was widely declared to be the end of the 1260 years.<sup>17</sup> And this terminal point of the 1260 years was now the new phase of their present-truth emphasis for that transition hour.

Again we would emphasize that our prophetic positions are simply the revival, the restoration, and continuation of basic Reformation positions on the outline prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7. It was the successors of the Reformers, their spiritual descendants, who had let the prophetic torch slip and fall to the ground and go out, or at least to be sadly dimmed by the downfall. We are simply continuing the illustrious line of torchbearers. We have picked up the fallen torch, fanned it again into flame, and are carrying it forward. We are consequently the raisers up of the prophetic foundations of many generations. We are the legitimate successors in the recognized line of transmission, not only from Refor-

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 588-597.

<sup>17</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 2, chaps. 33, 34.

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mation times onward, but back of that from the early church as well, and from the Jews prior to Christ. I am proud to be an Adventist, with such a wonderful heritage. I am proud of such a spiritual ancestry.

I wonder whether we half appreciate the part that these pioneering prophetic expositors, back through the centuries, have played in the development of the sound prophetic interpretation that is our heritage today. There is danger that, because we have increased light today, we may misjudge the very men who had such a noble part in this earlier work of the past, and have made possible our clear and balanced exposition at this time. The Spirit of prophecy has much to say on this. Here is one pertinent comment:

"The fact that we have increased light does not justify us in dissecting and judging the character of men whom God raised up in former times to do a certain work and to penetrate the moral darkness of the world. . . . These men were God's noblemen, His living agencies, through whom He wrought in a wonderful manner. They were depositaries of divine truth to the extent that the Lord saw fit to reveal the truth that the world could bear to hear. They proclaimed the truth at a time when false, corrupt religion was magnifying itself in the world.

"I could wish that the curtain could be rolled back, and that those who have not spiritual eyesight might see these men as they appear in the sight of God; for now they see them as trees walking. They would not then put their human construction upon the experience and works of the men who parted the darkness from the track, and prepared the way for future generations. Living down in our own generation, we may pronounce judgment upon the men whom God raised up to do a special work, according to the light given to them in their day."<sup>18</sup>

#### Interest Shifts to End Events of 2300 Years

Then, after the recognized close of the 1260 years of the old-time papal supremacy, and prior to its great restoration to power in these latter days, the interest and the emphasis in prophecy suddenly shift from Daniel 7 over to Daniel 8, which begins with the Medo-Persian Empire instead of Babylon. The new interest in time prophecy then begins to center in the 2300 years as from Persia, and approaching their ter-

<sup>18</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 30, 1897, p. 753.

minus around 1843, 1844, or 1847. This we shall note in another study in greater detail.

The 1260 years were now, by many, considered as accomplished. Their meaning was clear, and the papal power to which they were attached was acknowledged as demonstrated. The closing events could now be checked against the opening events of this long prophetic span. One was the reversal of the other. The basic outline prophecy of Daniel 7, with its related time period, was now proved. And this concept was considered as established and in the category of standard, accepted, fulfilled prophetic exposition—the acknowledged heritage of the church.

But what of the 2300 years? How were they to be calculated? What was the key to their placement? To what fundamental events were they attached? What marked their beginning? What was to be accomplished at their close? Just what was the sanctuary, and what was its cleansing? Where would it take place? And was it tied to any other time prophecy? These and related questions were now upon the lips and in the hearts of scores of students of prophecy. The 2300 years had always been of interest, but was largely baffling in centuries past. But now that the 1260 years were ended, men began to focus their interest and concern upon the 2300 years as involving the next great area of prophecy to be fulfilled. This period now became the new focal point in the advancing line of present truth.

#### **Dual Attacks Upon Millennium Prove Effective**

We must not, however, oversimplify the progressive development of sound prophetic interpretation. Throughout the centuries sound prophetic interpretation has been constantly assailed by pagan, Jew, Catholic, and infidel. As noted, in the third century Origen and others substituted for the basic outline prophecies the idea of great spiritual forces or advances. At the same time they replaced the literal first resurrection of the righteous at the second Advent with a spiritual resurrection of souls to spiritual life. Next, God's coming kingdom

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of glory was construed as the present, carnal, dominant church extending its material sway over the earth. And these substitutes for the true came to be widely accepted during the fourth and fifth centuries.

But the crowning perversion in this series of three great departures was the so-called Augustinian theory of the thousand years, introduced during the fifth century. Building upon and embracing the previous departures, Augustine simply popularized and won the dominant church over to the basic theory of Tichonius, that the thousand years of Revelation 20—an indefinite period—began at the first Advent, and span the Christian Era from the first to the second Advent. This theory included the concept that the resurrection marking its beginning was spiritual, and that the Holy City coming down from God out of heaven, or the camp of the saints, is simply the Catholic Church extending its sway over the earth. And this crowning perversion, and reversal of all early church teaching on the millennium, fastened itself upon the Christian church for some thirteen long centuries.

Not until the Reformation was far advanced was this false Augustinian theory and its misplaced millennium repudiated, and the true millennial period placed again in the future, where it belongs, as allocated by the early church.

This period was to be introduced by the personal, literal, second Advent of Christ and the literal resurrection of the righteous dead. But, alas, this restored millennial exposition was no sooner established than Daniel Whitby (d. 1726), Anglican rector of Salisbury, England, introduced an entirely new millennial hypothesis—the radical theory that Christ does not return until *after* a thousand years of gradual world betterment, world conversion, and world peace, to be accomplished by human endeavor blended with the effusion of the Spirit.<sup>19</sup>

This pleasing postmillennial prospect captivated the

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<sup>19</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 2, 649-655; see also pp. 805-807.

rationalistic-minded clergy, and was soon accepted by a large sector of Protestantism. So the premillennial truth of the early church was perverted first by apostate Catholicism and took firm possession of that dominant wing of Christendom. It was now matched by a different but equally fallacious millennial theory, adopted by a slowly apostatizing Protestantism. Both alike misplaced the millennial period. Both placed it *before* the second Advent. Both *spiritualized* the first resurrection. And both based their accomplishments upon human endeavor instead of divine interposition at the second Advent. It was plainly righteousness by works.

This all complicated the latter-day giving of the designated message of the second Advent. The warning against the beast is no longer commonly, or automatically, recognized as in some way applying to the papal power, as was formerly understood by virtually all Protestants. And that, of course, involves one of the vital features in our commissioned message to mankind. We now have first to establish the identity of the historical beast. So both the "revised" Protestant concept of the millennium, in relation to the second Advent and the faith of Jesus, and the identification of the beast itself, in relation to the commandments of God and the change of the Sabbath, have been profoundly affected and complicated by this popular shift in interpretation. There is correspondingly greater need of understanding the why, the when, and the wherefore of these changes and their basic fallacies, so as to stand on vantage ground.

#### Further Complicated by Counterinterpretations

But there is still more to this story. The situation became much more complex under the impact of Roman Catholic Counter Reformation developments. Many in the early church had thought of the coming Antichrist as an individual, to appear before the second Advent. Time was foreshortened to their eager gaze, as they looked and longed for the speedy return of Christ. Only in medieval times did the true concept of an Antichristian system become apparent, a system span-

ning a dozen centuries, rather than of an individual, with the 1260 days symbolizing the corresponding years of that extended system.

This will be noted in our next study.

But the moral pressure of the Reformation charge against Roman Catholicism increased as every Protestant group pointed an incriminating finger undeviatingly at the Papacy. And the charge was leveled squarely against her that she was none other than the predicted man of sin, Babylon, beast, little horn, and Antichrist of the prophecies. This was amazingly general.

The pressure upon Rome from this multiple Protestant accusation became unbearable. And the arguments used were based upon the alleged specifications of the prophecies. Something must be done about it. These prophecy arguments must be parried and neutralized. Then it was that two clever Spanish Jesuits—Francisco Ribera and Luis de Alcazar—rose to the occasion and sought to deflect the Protestant contention through countersystems of interpretation.<sup>20</sup> Ribera sought to redirect the charge of Antichrist toward some future individual infidel Jew, and thus away from a medieval system of apostate Christianity. He sought to center it at Jerusalem instead of Rome, and asserted it would hold sway for only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  literal years at the end of the age—not for 1260 years extending over medieval times.

On the contrary, Alcazar confined the fulfillment of prophecy mostly to the early centuries, to the overthrow of paganism and the destruction of Jerusalem.<sup>21</sup> Either countering concept would do, so long as the accusing finger was diverted from the Papacy. An institution of the Middle Ages would be freed from suspicion. And this dual distracting device succeeded beyond the fondest dreams of its projectors. Catholicism generally holds the Futurist view. And in the course of time Protestants began to accept one or the other of these counterinterpretations, designed by Rome for the

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 22, 23.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 23.

very purpose of Protestant division and frustration, so as to shield the papal church.

Protestants ultimately split into their well-known modernist and fundamentalist wings. And modernism, with its characteristic skepticism, when it has any interest or credence in prophecy at all, has usually followed Alcazar's Preterist lead and sought to push all valid prophecy back into the early centuries and look upon Nero, Domitian, or possibly Diocletian as the Antichrist.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, militant fundamentalism, holding tenaciously to an inspired Bible, and clinging loyally to the verities of the virgin birth, miracles, atonement, and literal resurrection of Christ, has nevertheless fallen a prey to Ribera's Jesuit Futurism. That group has almost to a man inserted a fatal gap from the cross up to a brief period just before the end of the age, when, they now hold, an atheistic dictator will appear and fulfill all the specifications attached to the malign Antichrist.

Thus the Catholic Counter Reformation's projection of conflicting counterinterpretations, designed to accomplish division and diversion, has accomplished the confusion of Protestantism in the field of prophecy. Both groups have tragically departed from the common prophetic faith of all of our Reformation forefathers. That is why we stand in contrast to, and often in conflict with, both wings of Protestantism.

#### Stepping Into Our Rightful Role as Expositors

Herein lies our supreme opportunity of now stepping into our rightful place as the avowed restorers of the true Protestant positions of the founding fathers of all branches of Protestantism as it formerly obtained in all Protestant lands in both hemispheres. Instead of meekly accepting an unjust consignment to the ranks of modern heretics, as concerns our prophetic faith, we should humbly but effectively assert

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

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and establish, by sound reasoning and irrefutable evidence, our actual position as the champions and sustainers of the true, historical interpretations now regrettably abandoned by most of Protestantism's spiritual descendants. We should now rise to our full and allotted place as the revivers and continuers of the true Protestant interpretation of the Reformation. This is our rightful heritage. We are simply the last segment in God's sevenfold true church of the centuries. These former expositors of the true interpretations were of God's true church and were true expositors in their time. We are in the line of true succession.

Such a role for us is an utterly new concept to most Protestants, and reverses the whole historical situation. And it is the truth. When grasped, it radically changes Protestant's entire understanding of relationships. It is now coming increasingly to be seen that it is not we, who have departed from the platform of the Protestant prophetic faith, but they. It is not we who have become modern heretics on prophecy, but they. We are actually the orthodox, they the heretics. Protestants can no longer justly charge us with prophetic interpretation phantasies. This so alters the situation that it seals their lips. And this change is being reflected in the attitude of many open-minded students, as they read the evidence, and of noted religious and educational leaders in both the Old World and the New. There is increasing silence concerning former charges of heresy or freakishness, and a new and wholesome respect is developing for Seventh-day Adventists as true Protestant Christians and legitimate expositors.

This new concept, I firmly believe, is destined to make possible the reaching of minds that could not be favorably touched by any other channel or approach. Many of these religious leaders are destined to yet become our friends and defenders, and to stand in the breach for us in the time of approaching crisis. Others, I am similarly persuaded, will, under the impulse of the loud cry, take their stand openly with us.

As the gulf between the (growing departures) of their own churches and their unchanging conceptions of truth grows wider and deeper, many honest, godly men, scattered in posts of leadership throughout the various communions, will take their stand with the remnant church/God hasten that day! And yet that will probably only be when the final issues have been clearly drawn and the loud cry is actually sounding. Meantime, we are tactfully and faithfully to sow the seeds of truth beside all waters/and to present our understanding of prophecy before the world in clear and winsome and telling ways.

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## II. The Culmination of the Year-Day Principle

### The Certainties of the Advent Faith

There is something highly satisfying about the words of Holy Scripture written by Luke the physician, with his medical training and orderly thinking, when he expresses the hope “that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” Luke 1:4. This declaration conveys a distinct sense of assurance. As we observed in our initial study, there is nothing vague, hazy, or untrustworthy about the evidence that lies at the foundation of our prophetic witness to the world. And such a declaration, coming from such a source as Luke, creates a consciousness that our faith rests on that which is sound, substantial, and sure. We may well observe—

1. *That intelligent faith is based on sound, unassailable fact.* It is not built on pleasing fables and transitory feelings. It is not founded on pious hopes and plausible assumptions. It is not reared upon unreliable traditions and imaginative folklore. Instead, it is built upon solid, trustworthy, factual evidence.

2. *That it is impossible for God to lie, and inconceivable that He should deceive.* He never contradicts the laws of truth and evidence that He has established upon which we are to base our faith and verify our findings, and by which we are to evaluate and check all evidence. The truth of God

ever accords with the highest demands of reverent reason, historical fact, and scientific procedure.

3. That truth has nothing to fear either from reverent investigation or from the attacks of hostile perversion. If it be truth, it is bound ultimately to triumph over its detractors. Indeed, the more it is buffeted, the brighter it shines and the more majestic it stands forth in its towering majesty.

Such observations are pertinent because, along with our increasing growth and the inevitable prominence that comes as a result, especially as we enter the crisis time of earth's last hour, we shall become the center of the world's critical and oftentimes hostile scrutiny. Every position we hold will then become the object of bitter attack. It therefore behooves us to know, as never before, the certainty and surety of the foundations upon which our faith is built. It is imperative for us to be assured and established beyond reasonable question upon every major fact of our prophetic faith. We are specifically admonished by the Spirit of prophecy—and such counsel is buttressed by our own common sense—that these fundamentals are to be verified beyond a reasonable doubt. We are further told that if we are not so prepared and buttressed, the “wisdom of the world's great ones will be too much for us.”<sup>28</sup>

#### Sure Counsels of Spirit of Prophecy

Before we enter upon our main discussion, there are two other statements from the Spirit of prophecy that are highly pertinent, which we should note. The first is similar to one cited in our initial study—it is in the same strain, and uses the same figure.

“The truths that Satan had concealed by his hellish shadow, the truths that he had misinterpreted, and misapplied, and disconnected from the Lord of Glory, are to be reset, opened and explained, and made to appear in their heavenly beauty, to be seen as truths that shall stand fast forever. They are to be re-established in the minds of men by the living agents whom God hath appointed. And error is to be revealed

<sup>28</sup> E. G. White letter 65, 1886; cf. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 546.

in its true character by the light of truth. The Lord Jesus has moved upon human minds, that they may become His living agents to do a special work in recovering the old truths from their old forms, that they may rid them of the traditions and maxims of men, and give them to the world in their native purity, in their original splendor, freshness, and force. This is our work, brethren and sisters, in this waiting, watching time."<sup>24</sup>

Yes, we are definitely to be restorers, diligent recoverers, of the lost truths that are our rightful heritage—truths that are due the world today. And again, concerning the progressive unfolding of truth, we are told:

"The Lord designs that in the revelation of truth in all ages the doctrines of grace shall be gradually unfolded to the comprehension of man. . . . His truth unfolds as the obscurity of dawn brightens into the radiance of noonday. . . . In searching the field and digging for the precious jewels of truth, hidden treasures are discerned. Unexpectedly we find precious ore that is to be gathered and treasured. And the search is to be continued. Hitherto very much of the treasure found has lain near the surface, and was easily obtained. When the search is properly conducted every effort is made to keep a pure and understanding heart. When the mind is kept open and is constantly searching the field of revelation, we shall find rich deposits of truth. Old truths will be revealed in new aspects, and truths will appear which have been overlooked in the search."<sup>25</sup>

The historical development of prophetic interpretation is the story of the quest of man after the truth of prophetic fulfillment, as the scroll slowly unrolls before his eyes. Not long ago I was chided by someone who said that we should never recount others' errors or partial truths, or misconceptions of truth. But these pioneer spokesmen were groping out of darkness into light, and it is marvelous what they saw back through the centuries. We have simply gathered up these basic truths that, with varying degrees of clarity, have been perceived one by one through the passing years, as fast as history has fulfilled each major and epochal event of prophecy. Others have labored, and we have entered into their labors. And Mrs. White expressed the devout wish that

<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1896 (vol. 1, no. 8), p. 766.

<sup>25</sup> E. G. White manuscript 75, 1897.

our eyes might be opened so we could see those men of old as God sees them, the men who first parted the darkness from the track. They were "not faultless," but they were "moved upon by a power above themselves," and were God's "instruments."<sup>26</sup>

### The Throbbing Heart of All Prophecy

For centuries astronomers sought to find the law of planetary motion. They had thought that the planetary orbit was a circle, with but a single center. But their calculations would not work out with accuracy on that premise. At last a German astronomer, Johannes Kepler (d. 1630), found that instead of a circle, the orbit of the planet is an ellipse, thus having two foci.<sup>27</sup> Once this principle was grasped, all became harmonious and accurate. A law of planetary motion had been discovered, and calculations could then be made with precision. Similarly with the great plan of redemption. It does not revolve around merely one Advent, but two. And these two Advents constitute the twin centers of the entire plan of salvation, the focal points of all time and eternity. Around these two the complete redemption of man revolves.

It is marvelous how the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9 are tied together in the supreme, interrelated, dual prophecy of the Word. The seventy weeks of Daniel 9 had their climax in the first Advent of Christ and His crucifixion as our vicarious atoning sacrifice. After His resurrection and ascension and His acceptance by the Father, Christ began His mediatorial ministry in the heaven of heavens for us as our merciful high priest. The 2300 days of Daniel 8 climaxed in the judgment-hour phase of Christ's heavenly ministry, which will end in Christ's second Advent in power and great glory. And so these interrelated parts of one inseparable provision of redemption are bound together. The fulfillment of the first is the assurance of the certainty of the second.

<sup>26</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 3, 1890, p. 337. (See also *Review and Herald*, Nov. 30, 1897, pp. 753, 754.)

<sup>27</sup> Norton Wagner, *Unveiling the Universe* (1936), pp. 29, 30.

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Prophecy, be it never forgotten, is not simply the bare bones, the skeleton, the mere genealogy of the nations, and their sequence upon earth, though that aspect is inherent as a setting or framework. Prophecy is not simply the deeper conflict of right and wrong in the dramatic battle of the centuries, though this is also definitely included. On the contrary, prophecy is primarily the revelation of the tremendous redemptive activity of God in behalf of, and for, the salvation of man, involving and centering in these two Advents and uplifting Christ as center of all. That gives prophecy warmth, life, and moving power.

We are admonished to study anew the books of Daniel and the Apocalypse, but always in connection with them the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."<sup>28</sup> Failure at this point has been our weakness. We have all too often presented the setting rather than the substance and center of prophecy. Oh, that prophecy might take on a new breadth and depth and height of meaning for us, tied inseparably into the throbbing heart of the gospel. Then, as never before, we would have persuasive power as we present its glorious portrayal to others.

#### New Type of Prophecy Begins With Daniel

Before the days of Daniel, in Old Testament times, the prophecies were largely like flash pictures. They might be called still pictures, single shots. The resultant print was distinct, and one could distinguish its leading features. But perspective and distance and relationship were not particularly differentiated. To illustrate: Perhaps two mountains are in view in the distance. They look almost as if the second were right behind and joined to the first, as if they merged one into the other. One has to go far to one side, as it were, and obtain a full side view, in order to get the perspective and to see that a great valley lies between and separates the two mountains. Thus it was with many Old Testament prophecies

<sup>28</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 196.

of the first and second Advents. It was often difficult to differentiate clearly between the two Advents, in time and circumstance. Clarifying help had to come from other portrayals, in order that the relationship might be understood.

Such a perspective is provided when we come to Daniel's prophecies. Here we are given a new type of prophecy—the outline prophecy, with a continuity that carries us consecutively down through the four world empires from Babylon onward. Then comes the division of the Roman fourth, and the extended period of the spiritual dominance of the papal little horn, and on to the second Advent, with everything in sequence. Now the prophetic portrayals are continuous, progressive, and changing, like a complete reel of pictures.

Moreover, these portrayals were essentially movies, yes, talkies, if the expression may be used, or animated cartoons. Words were heard and actions were seen, and there was comprehensive continuity. They were regular telecasts, we might even say. Beasts rose out of the sea of humanity. Ten horn-kingdoms sprang up on the head of the fourth beast-kingdom, and three were uprooted as the little horn burrowed his way up among the ten and did his nefarious work. His boastful, blasphemous words were heard. It was a vivid portrayal. And in Daniel 2 the stone smote the image upon the feet and then expanded into an earth-filling mountain. Thus a new, full-rounded, continuity type of prophecy had come into being. And with it came sequence and time periods, and a portrayal of the triumphant close, with the kingdom of God established forever.

#### Pivotal Character of 2300-Year Application

Now let us turn to the development and the consummation of the year-day principle in time prophecy, which parallels the outline prophecies we have already surveyed. What we denominate the sanctuary truth is the majestic keystone in the imposing arch of present truth for today. It is central to our thinking and pivotal in our message to the world. It was ever considered by our honored pioneers to be

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the main pillar of the advent faith, for around it all other vital truths are clustered. The certainty, the soundness, of the 2300 years as ending in 1844 is consequently of paramount interest and importance to us as a people, and particularly to us as workers. It is therefore of major importance for us to trace the historical steps by which many of the most reverent and able scholars of the centuries have steadily advanced, step by step, toward this solution. Their study has covered over two thousand years of progressive application of the year-day principle, which is the basic measurement upon which the climactic terminus of the 2300 years rests.

This progressive development has led logically and inevitably to the final step of placing the terminus of the great 2300-year period in 1844. And this ultimate conclusion was reached within the compass of a comparatively few years by scores of widely scattered, brilliant, and godly scholars of various faiths, spread over the Old World and the New. And all this, be it distinctly noted, was *before* William Miller first published his convictions, independently reached, in book form in 1836. This fact is vital to our understanding of the case for 1844, and to its respectful consideration by the world. Once grasped, it changes our whole status before the religious world.

And the concurrence in the time calculation by this large group of independent investigators, in the decades just prior to 1844, was characteristic of the progressive emphasis of a whole series of preparatory steps taken by prior groups spread over the course of the same centuries we have traversed in following the fulfillment of the great outline prophecies. This steady build-up for the climax not only is impressive and significant but is vital to the soundness and certainty of this final step in the year-day application. Here again indisputable evidence attests that we have built wisely upon the firm foundations of many generations in this phase of prophetic background and exposition. Ours is but the logical and inevitable climax of an old established principle, rather than of a sudden discovery of a new principle of procedure

or application. It is but the crowning point in two thousand years of normal progression in exposition.

The uniformity of application of this year-day principle and the irrefutable logic of its consistent progression are most satisfying and conclusive to the mind that seeks a sound sequence in reasoning, based upon solid premises and postulates. Now let us trace, in its progressive application through the centuries, leading on inexorably to our day, this year-day principle that parallels, and is inseparably tied in with, the great outline prophecies.

#### **Progressive Build-up for an Invulnerable Position**

The centuries have built up a case for our special prophetic faith emphasis of today that is amazing. Not only is it logical and formidable, but it is uniformly consistent as it traverses the centuries. The greatest and most reverent students of prophecy throughout the Christian Era are in the direct line of transmission. The climax is tremendous in its implications. And the beginnings of this emphasis, its growth and development through the centuries, and now its climax, comport with what would be expected of such a vital principle of sound exposition.

It is first to be remembered that the 2300-year time period of Daniel 8:14, and its 1844 ending, is based upon the widely recognized tie-in with the seventy weeks of years of the adjacent chapter (Daniel 9), both of which have the same beginning. And the strength and spread of this proposition is also far greater than most of us have been aware. Here, in condensed form, follows the fascinating story of the advancing application of the year-day principle, beginning with the "seventy weeks" of Daniel 9:24, first applied by the Jewish translators of the Septuagint before the time of Christ as weeks "of years"—the only prophetic time period in Daniel directly applicable at that early time, before the Christian Era, and pertaining exclusively to the Jews.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 1, pp. 169-174.

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This earliest application of the seventy weeks of years by the Jews, reaching to the cutting off of the Messiah, was then carried over into the Christian church as the foundational principle and example of all time-prophecy calculation. It thus became a part of sound, accepted exegesis, and because of its relation to Christ the Messiah, has become the special heritage of Christianity, now with a definite Christian connotation. And this application, be it particularly observed, has never been lost from the teaching of the Christian church in any of its major branches. Such was the factual and logical beginning of time-prophecy exposition for the prophecies of Daniel.

But centuries passed before any further application, by Christian scholars, was made to the longer time periods—the 1260, 1290, 1335, and the 2300 year-days. For centuries there was constricted vision of these principles, as apostasy and repudiation of the earlier prophetic interpretation precepts held sway. And Jewish writers were again the first to extend the basic year-day principle to the remaining time periods of Daniel. This they were already doing back in the eighth and ninth centuries, as attested by the writings of the well-known Nahawendi of Persia and the illustrious Saadia of Babylonia.<sup>30</sup> From that time forward, a score of noted Jewish expositors came to apply this identical year-day principle to Daniel's various time periods, at least six of these Hebrew writers antedating the first Christian interpreter so to do.<sup>31</sup> So this exposition rests upon the perception of two paralleling religious groups.

But it was not until more than a thousand years of the Christian Era had passed, and the Papacy had been identified and denominated the apostate system of Christianity of multiple prophetic depiction—beast, Babylon, harlot, man of sin, mystery of iniquity, son of perdition, and so forth—that a similar conviction on time prophecy first came to Catholic Abbot Joachim of Floris, in Calabria, Italy, who

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, chap. 8.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

became the most noted expositor of prophecy of the Middle Ages. It was in 1190 that he declared that the prophesied "woman" in white, of Revelation 12, who fled from the pursuing dragon for 1260 days, was simply symbolic of the Christian church fleeing from persecution for 1260 years. "A day," he averred, "without doubt being accepted for a year and a thousand two hundred and sixty days for the same number of years."<sup>32</sup>

He did not know just when they began or when they should end, but he thought possibly by A.D. 1260. Nevertheless, he soundly applied, or extended, the year-day principle to the church fleeing from persecution for that fateful 1260-year period. This was an advance of utmost importance, for Joachim here set the pattern for hosts of others to follow in applying the principle to other time periods of prophecy.

Joachim's immediate followers, scattered over most of Europe, and naturally called Joachimites, or Spirituals, five times applied the now-established year-day principle to all the remaining longer time periods of Daniel. Villanova, about 1292, specifically interpreted the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 on the year-day principle, as ending at the second Advent.<sup>33</sup> This, be it particularly observed, was long before the Protestant Reformation, and once more constituted a distinct advance in the developing application of the year-day principle for this longest of all prophetic time periods. There was no agreement as to just when to date these periods, and just how to begin and end them. But a norm was set up that was ere long destined to become almost axiomatic among Christian expositors. The key to time prophecy was in their hands, and came to be commonly accepted by practically all interpreters.

#### Close of 1260 Years Clears Way for 2300

More and more, from the twelfth century onward, the focal point of concern and conviction came to be the Papacy

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 713.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 29-31.

as Antichrist.<sup>34</sup> And along with that was the inseparable corollary: Just when and where were its allotted 1260 years (or 42 months, or 3½ times), and the related time periods, to be placed and dated? At first there was great disparity as men groped for light. But closer and closer men came to accurate placement of those 1260 years. Finally, Drue Cressener of England, in 1689—exactly a century before the French Revolution broke out in 1789—declared that they began under Justinian's legal recognition of the primacy of the pope, in the sixth century, and that this fateful period of special papal dominance would end about, or shortly before, 1800.<sup>35</sup> Soon others, such as Fleming, took essentially the same position.<sup>36</sup> As a consequence, there was wide expectancy of a climax during the French Revolution, and a widespread declaration of the period's ending followed immediately after the events of 1798.<sup>37</sup> This too came to be widely accepted as axiomatic, and standard exposition.

The great apostasy was fast developing during the breakup of the Roman Empire. By the time of Justinian the popes had begun to be "men of the state," and ultimately they were to be "masters of the state." The imperial rescript, issued by Justinian in A.D. 533, explicitly recognized the bishop of Rome as "*Head of all the holy churches.*"<sup>38</sup> And yet from the spring of 537 Belisarius and his army were under siege in the city of Rome, along with the bishop of Rome and his retinue, and the city was surrounded by a host of Ostrogoths. This did not end until the spring of 538, when a second army from Justinian smote the Ostrogoths, drove them away, and freed the city. Thus the bishop of Rome was brought into position where he could, ere long, begin to exercise that primacy that had been designated by Justinian. So the provision of 533 went into effect in 538.

But the 2300 year-days had long intrigued men. And by

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 32.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 588-596.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 636-639, 642-649.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 33.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 511.

1440 Nicholas Krebs of Cusa had issued his impressive *Conjecture Concerning the Last Days*, in which he dated the 2300 years as extending from Persia—the power with which the prophecy of Daniel 8 begins—to the end, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the second Advent.<sup>39</sup> Cusa, as one of the most illustrious philosophers, scientists, and clerics of his day, a Roman Catholic prelate, gave prominence and authority to this interpretation. He was remarkably clear visioned as to the fallacies of papal claims to supremacy.

Then the Protestant Reformers quickly came to accept the application of the year-day to the various time periods of both Daniel and the Apocalypse. And among these early illustrious expositors was Johann Funck (d. 1566), of Germany, who in 1564 not only wrote extensively on the accepted seventy weeks, but dated them precisely from 457 B.C. to A.D. 34, without, however, making any connection between them and any other prophetic time period.<sup>40</sup> And then noted expositors in France, Germany, and England began to do essentially the same—dating the seventy weeks from approximately 457 B.C., as the “seventh year of Artaxerxes.”<sup>41</sup> That date and position likewise came to be considered axiomatic by many.

But another entire century passed before John Tillinghast, Independent clergyman of England, in 1654 declared the seventy weeks, or 490 years, to be a “lesser Epock” within the greater one of the 2300 years,<sup>42</sup> though he was not clear as to the precise relationship and timing. Here again was another distinct advance, another link in the steadily forming chain of time-prophecy exposition. Then in different lands various men, such as Thomas Beverley of England, began to stress the 2300 years as extending from the time of Persia to earth’s closing events—the end of the world, the kingdom of Christ, and the New Jerusalem.<sup>43</sup> The momentum on prophetic interpretation was increasing, and the emphasis on this

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, chap. 5.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 308-313.

<sup>41</sup> Such as Nigrinus, Bullinger, Cappel, Sir Isaac Newton, in Vol. II.

<sup>42</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 2, pp. 570-573.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 581-586.

particular phase was cumulative. Nevertheless, the 2300-year prophecy was one of those "portions" of the book of Daniel, relating to the last things which had remained largely sealed until the time of the end.<sup>44</sup> It was the last of Daniel's great time prophecies to be clearly perceived.

Then finally, just before the tremendous upheaval of the French Revolution, and the subsequent ending of the 1260 years in 1798, Johann Petri of Germany<sup>45</sup> (and afterward Hans Wood of Ireland)<sup>46</sup> asserted that the 2300 years began synchronously with the seventy weeks, with the shorter period leading to the *first* Advent, and the longer period destined to lead up to the events connected with the *second* Advent. This too was another decidedly new and advanced and really revolutionary principle of application. Petri's starting point, 453 years *before Christ's birth*, is actually essentially the same as the 457 B.C. of other interpreters. Thus the eighteenth century ends and the nineteenth begins, as mankind enters what many contemporaries considered the "time of the end," the "latter days," or "last days."<sup>47</sup> It was clearly discerned to be the ending of one epoch and the crossing over into the beginning of a new era.

#### Simultaneous Outburst of Witness on 2300 Years

Then it was, that at the close of 1810 and the beginning of 1811, within two or three months of each other, two other men of different nationalities, on opposite sides of the Atlantic, published similar conclusions, on the 2300 years. These expositors—"J.A.B." (evidently John Aquila Brown) of England,<sup>48</sup> and William C. Davis of South Carolina<sup>49</sup>—began the two periods synchronously, though "J. A. B." dated them 457 B.C.-A.D. 1843, and Davis (like Petri), 453-1847.

And following this lead there broke forth, both in the Old World and the New, a veritable chorus of voices, heard

<sup>44</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 585.

<sup>45</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 2, pp. 713-719.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 719-722.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4 (forthcoming).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 291, 404-408.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 391-396; fuller discussion in vol. 4.

on three continents and in eight different countries (with many of them in Britain and on the Continent), all terminating the 2300 years on the aforementioned basis, and fixing upon 1843, 1844, or 1847 as the closing date. Some three-score scholarly men, representing various denominations and springing from various leading walks of life, similarly wrote and published *prior* to Miller's first book on prophecy in 1836.<sup>50</sup> This was apart from the oral heralds, who left no published works, but made the same application. Thus Miller was by no means the first, and by comparison only belatedly began to publish his findings and convictions.

But in that very same year, 1836, Bishop Daniel Wilson of India published virtually the same position (453-1847), and this from the Anglican mission press of Madras, India.<sup>51</sup> And that initial book by Miller expressly declared that "one or two on every quarter of the globe have proclaimed the news, and agree in the time."<sup>52</sup> And Miller named four—Davis of South Carolina, Mason of Scotland, Irving of England, and Wolff of Asia—with allusion to many more around New York State and New England. This declaration was literally true. And these facts are tremendously impressive. They have a vital bearing on our whole relationship to the heralding of the terminus of the 2300 years in 1844.

Miller was definitely not the originator of this interpretation, as he publicly insisted, though he came to his own individual conclusions solely through personal study.<sup>53</sup> Rather, it was literally a worldwide, simultaneous awakening on the approaching end of this great prophecy, as the message now due the world. And upon investigation Miller then found this large group of widely scattered men who had previously, or contemporaneously, reached similar conclusions, many of them independently of all others. It was a spontaneous emphasis without a parallel in all past time.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 744, 745; also vol. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 617-622.

<sup>52</sup> William Miller, *Evidence From Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year 1843* (1836), p. 193 [i.e., 197].

<sup>53</sup> See *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 4.

I would press upon this point. The significance of this simultaneous awakening must not be lost upon us.<sup>54</sup> The conclusion seems inevitable that the time had come, in the providence of God, for investigation and emphasis to be placed upon this climactic feature of all time prophecy—the terminal date of the last and longest prophetic time specification. That a new and epochal event in the plan of redemption was approaching, hundreds of investigators were firmly persuaded. Various men in different countries were impelled to study and to proclaim the approaching end of the 2300 years, and its climactic events. They were not all in agreement as to just which would be the precise terminal year—whether 1843, 1844, or 1847. But they were definitely convinced that its close was near. And they differed, moreover, as to just what was about to take place—the beginning of a temporal millennium, the second coming of Christ, or the cataclysmic end of the world. But in any event, some tremendous event was impending. Of that all these expositors were convinced. There was widespread expectancy and concern. And the church at large was aroused and deeply stirred.

Still others, though definitely sympathetic, declined to fix upon a precise year, but averred that a new epoch was assuredly at hand in the great prophetic outline, and a fateful hour in the plan of salvation was indeed approaching. Many of these men labored and fellowshipped with the Millerites, though not seeing eye to eye on all points. Such constitutes the impressive historical background which, step by step and point by point, lay back of this climactic end-feature—two thousand years of logical, progressive build-up in presenting a case of time prophecy to the world, unparalleled in the annals of man.

#### **“Times” Changed as Verily as the “Law”**

The progressive application of the year-day principle was not, however, without its challenges and setbacks. Its accept-

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<sup>54</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 357.

ance was not all a smooth advance. The most conspicuous onslaught was against the 1260-year application to the papal dominance, and the countering opposition came from the Roman Catholic Church. The prophetic prediction of Daniel 7:25 declares that the little horn should "think to change the times and the law" of the Most High. (A.R.V.) There is evidently more to this expression than some of us have been aware of. Mark well that this power was to think himself able to change the designated "times" of God, as well as His "law." The change in the law of God involved, of course, primarily the fourth commandment. But these "times" of God are also significant—times determined and appointed beforehand, along with the bounds of man's habitation.

Many allusions to the various "times" of God appear in the Word. Thus, when the "fullness of time" was come, God sent forth His Son. Then Jesus came preaching that "the time is fulfilled." Again, the "times of refreshing" are alluded to. And we read further of the "times and the seasons" as being under God's control.<sup>55</sup> Thus God, in His infinite foreknowledge and power, appointed a specific period during which this apostate Christian power would exercise its special dominion, and at the close of which it would receive a stroke by the sword, which would later be healed. The "times" of Daniel 7 evidently included the 3½ "times" of verse 25, or the 1260 years of papal dominance as portrayed in this chapter, which extended from Justinian to the French Revolution.

Thus Rome attempted not only to change the Sabbath of the Most High but to change the delimiting "times" of God's appointment—the specified 3½ times—so as to avoid their application to herself. This was accomplished by the papal counterinterpretations, through pushing them on into the future, and compressing them into a tiny 3½ literal years at the end of the age, as in Futurism; or, perchance, setting them back into the past, as in Preterism. Both devices alike placed Antichrist's reign outside God's stipulated 1260-year

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Eph. 1:3, 4, 10; Gal. 4:4; Mark 1:15; Luke 21:20, 24; Acts 1:6, 7; Acts 3:19, 21; Acts 17:24, 26; 1 Thess. 5:1.

of change (with) times.

span covering the Middle Ages, one before and one after. And this daring attempt to change the prophetic "times" of God's appointment has been so successful that Protestantism today has largely adopted Rome's spurious "time" shifts, just as verily as she has adopted her Sunday-Sabbath change.

#### Steadily Expanding Spread of Prophetic Voices

Consider these developments again from a different angle. Just as verily different groups of men, in times past, were impelled to proclaim progressively, first the currently present dominance of Rome as the fourth and final prophetic world power; and then others, a little later, were constrained to assert the division of Rome into the predicted ten parts as taking place before their eyes; and following that, the clear identification of the Papacy as the fulfillment of all the diverse symbols of Antichrist was attested by literally hundreds of Reformers in all lands; and finally men like Cressener, Fleming,<sup>56</sup> and others, proclaiming in advance the approaching end of the 1260 years, *as dated from Justinian*; with others, like Edward King and Richard Valpy, recognizing the precise terminal fulfillment in the captivity of the pope in February, 1798.<sup>57</sup> Such is the amazing setting and framework for the nineteenth-century heralding of the impending judgment hour and the imminent second Advent.

But in comparison, this heralding of the approaching terminus of the 2300 years had a far wider, more numerous, and noteworthy body of heralding expositors than any previous fulfillment—betokening its far greater importance. The territory over which the cumulative witness to prophetic fulfillment was spread has steadily expanded through the centuries. At first it was limited to the Old World—the scene of the dominance of Rome as the fourth empire, and next of Rome's division, and then of the major portion of the little horn's special 1260-year epoch. Finally, with the colonization and later the nationalization of North America, exposition

<sup>56</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 2, pp. 588-597, 641-649.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 35.

followed over here almost automatically as an integral part of the New World enterprise. Thus the last two centuries of papal domination and the dramatic close of the 1260 years were attested by North American as well as European voices.

But in the great second Advent awakening of the nineteenth century, Inter-America and South America, as well as distant India, Africa, and Australia, were swung into the orbit of the proclamation, having their individual voices even in these far-flung outposts. Thus the witness grows as time progresses, and intensifies as we near the final phase of the "everlasting gospel" movement. And the approaching terminus of the 2300 years was consequently the most widespread prophetic message ever heralded to men up to that time. Only the exploits of the final threefold message will surpass it in vigor and extent. So the tempo, spread, and the volume of prophetic exposition increase.

#### Climactic Point of All Time Prophecy

Again, in every instance of major fulfillment and recognition throughout the centuries, with the coming of the hour, the heralding men have always appeared and given the message due. There is nothing in this old world more powerful than a prophetic truth whose time has come. And I would repeat that this phenomenon was the most widespread, the most numerous, and the most emphatic of all in the nineteenth-century Advent awakening. The emphasis through the years had principally been the expression of individuals. In contrast, in the nineteenth-century Old World awakening, prophetic conferences were held and various prophetic periodicals devoted chiefly to prophetic exposition were published. And there was widespread agitation by hundreds of clergymen—Established and Nonconformist, or Independent. There was, nevertheless, diversity of opinion as to the precise year, as to the specific event to take place, and as to the acceptable line of reasoning and evidence to be employed. Thus the Old World witness soon became scattered and enfeebled.

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But in North America a distinct interdenominational movement arose, penetrating all Protestant faiths, which swept multiplied thousands before it. An entire battery of more than thirty periodicals was issued, a whole series of more than a hundred conferences was held, and an amazing succession of 125 camp meetings, with widespread organized evangelism in all forms, drawing literally thousands of public heralds into one of the most remarkable religious developments of all modern times.<sup>58</sup> And the momentous terminus of the 2300 years in 1844 lay at the heart of it all. It was the climactic point of all time prophecy.

That is the historical background, growth, and climax of the year-day principle in Bible time prophecy. Its validity could not be gainsaid either by the most erudite of the opposing clerics or by the most blatant infidels and deists of the time. The hand of God was clearly over it and the power of God manifestly upon it. That is our remarkable spiritual ancestry for the year-day principle, and it is a noble one. It completely matches the outline prophecies climaxing in our day. That is our historical heritage, and it stands without impeachment. That is the factual background of the Advent movement of 1844, the immediate forebear of the great three-fold message and movement of today.

#### **Virtually Every Exposition Has Been Anticipated**

Furthermore, though the statement may sound strange, it is nevertheless true that practically every exposition of prophecy that we hold today, and which was heralded by the great Advent or Millerite movement of the first half of the nineteenth century, was anticipated and taught by others before us. This was true not only of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12—both the outline prophecies and the time periods, the 1260, 1290, 1335, and the 2300 years, the king of the north, and the like—but of the Revelation as well. And in the Apocalypse, not only were the seven churches, seals, trumpets,

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4.

and the witnesses all anticipated by some, but the beast symbols as well—including Protestantism (and the United States) for the second symbol of Revelation 13, and the two horns as civil and religious liberty, and the plagues still future. And in the field of signs of the times the Lisbon earthquake of 1775, the darkening of the sun in 1780, and the falling of the stars in 1833 were all recognized as signs by some at the very time of each fulfillment.

Therefore virtually nothing is original with us. Truly, <sup>N 12</sup> others have labored, and we have entered into their labors. (John 4:38.) The foundations were all laid in former generations. But that very fact makes our witness doubly strong, for it ties us into the established witness of the past. And it removes the stigma of novelty, fantasy, freakishness, and irrationalism from us. It is undeniable that if our interpretations are irrational, inconsistent, and childish, then some of the finest scholars of almost every faith were irrational, illogical, and childish in their expositional utterances. But such will not be conceded. Therefore we are strengthened and sustained by the great and good of the centuries. We are not alone; we stand in good company. These prophetic truths that we stress are not innovations—strange notions, condemned and unshared by others. We stand incontrovertibly in the line of sound transmission. We are the latter-day restorers and continuators of sound exegesis. That is our enviable position today. Of this we need to be conscious, and this we need to set before the world.

#### Time to Take Our Rightful Place

The psalmist invites us to look upon Zion, to ponder the strength of her walls, her imposing towers, and sturdy abutments, and to consider how beautiful she is for situation—the joy of the whole earth. "Walk about Zion," we are admonished, "and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

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Ps. 48:12-14. We shall be wise in following this inspired counsel.

Oh, that we might somehow see the strategic strength of our real position. Would that our horizons might be pushed back a little farther, that we might see more clearly and fully the beauties of our wonderful heritage. Would that our sights might somehow be lifted, that we might envision the key place that God has designed for us to occupy in these latter times. It is time for us now to take our rightful place. We have been too long on the defensive. Without appropriate challenge we have allowed ourselves to be considered an insignificant heretical sect, oddly different, and springing up too late to have any rightful place in true Protestantism.

We are *not* an heretical sect. We are *not* merely one of the welter of divergent denominations of the day. We are in the designated line of God's true church of the centuries. We stand toward the close of His continuing line of witnesses, in the seventh and final phase of His great sevenfold church of the years. This grand line reaches from apostolic times down to remnant days. And we are on the stage of action at a time when all the treasure truths of the Christian Era have become our glorious heritage, and are to be presented to the world again in all their inherent beauty.

It is therefore time to lift our heads. It is high time to rejoice in the place that God has given us in His wondrous scheme of things. We are the continuators and consummators of the arrested Reformation. We are among God's last prophetic witnesses, once more bearing aloft the torch of truth that has been passed on from the hands of Jewish, of Catholic, and particularly of Protestant spiritual ancestors in the imposing line of prophetic expositors of the ages. I believe with all my heart in such an apostolic succession of truth as the centuries have witnessed. I believe that godly men, of the finest intellect, have passed the torch of truth on from one hand or group to another, not in so-called apostolic succession but in the succession of prophetic truth, for two thousand years.

The Waldenses, Lollards, and Hussites were once in that line, as were later the early Lutherans, Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and many other groups in their day. Ours is a noble spiritual ancestry. These and others constituted God's true succession of witnesses, in the remnant section of which we stand today. Our place near the close of that line is as fixed and certain as is the identification of the final figure in the famous Rushmore memorial in South Dakota. Even Edward Gibbon, brilliant infidel historian, was constrained—doubtless unwittingly—to use the very figures and words of the prophecy when he spoke of the “gold,” and the “silver,” and the “brass” giving way before the “iron monarchy of Rome.”<sup>59</sup> Prophecy has exerted a far greater influence upon mankind than we have usually recognized.

#### Provides Master Key for Various Groups

A clear grasp of these historical backgrounds of prophetic interpretation is a master key in the hands of the skilled workman to unlock a hundred avenues to the heart. It will open a way through a diversity of situations. It is adaptable to Jew, Catholic, and Christian alike. In Catholic circles it enables one to become master of the situation, when the origin of the basic Catholic departures and fallacies is fully known as a background. Effective recourse can be had to the true teachings on prophecy that were still retained by some of the highly revered Fathers of the early church, which the first Protestant Reformers and we have simply carried on to consummation. This is a priceless asset. We can then go on from that starting point.

In Jewish contacts there is much advantage in every way, through stressing the teaching of many of their greatest medieval writers on prophecy, with which we are in definite harmony and upon which exposition we can build. The sequence of the four prophetic empires, with Rome as the

<sup>59</sup> Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 38, par. 1, under “General Observations,” at the close of the chapter.

fourth, the year-day principle for all time periods in Daniel, a "time" meaning a year, and "king" standing for kingdom, are all cases in point. These are historic Jewish interpretations. Even the little horn of Daniel 7 as the Papacy was clearly expounded by Don Isaac Abravanel, noted Jewish rabbi and powerful minister of finance in medieval Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, and who doubtless had a part in financing the voyage of Columbus, who, incidentally, spoke of his great venture as a fulfillment of prophecy. Abravanel gave a clear exposition of Daniel's great outline, with which we are in essential accord. Yet Abravanel's interpretation of Daniel 7 anticipated our day by four and one-half centuries. This agreement we can well stress.

And from these elemental features we can go on to papal persecution during the 1260 years—for the Papacy's hand was also heavy upon the Jews. And from thence we come to her presumptuous change of God's original seventh-day Sabbath, still revered by the Jew whether observed by him or not. Thus there is an invaluable tie-in, and a tremendous appeal. Respect is engendered for our loyalty and obedience to God. The logic, soundness, the historicity of such exposition, and our oneness in such matters with such revered Jewish teachers become a key to the opening of hearts in this great racial and religious group.

In the approach to Protestants acquaintance with denominational origins and particularly with the prophetic exposition of their own founding fathers—whether Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Anglican, Campbellite, or what not—affords an incomparable opening by which this master key can be used with disarming and telling effect. Tremendous advantage is thus gained by a tie-in with names that are highly revered. And legitimate capital can be made of their own expositors of basic prophetic interpretation. This may all be unknown to them, but it affords the supporting element for initial confidence in the soundness and sanity of our own fundamental positions on prophecy. Let us use this entering wedge.

Thus we can go from the known to the unknown, and from a particular sector of Protestantism to the essential oneness of all original Protestant interpretation of prophecy. Their key men were expositors. In this way confidence and respect are engendered. When oneness of background in prophetic truth is apparent, we can then lead on from the simple fundamentals to the unfolding story which begins where their spiritual forefathers left off. This technique can be of greatest advantage and importance to us. This is truly raising up the foundations of many generations. And it is likewise a wise, winsome procedure. It gives us a firm foundation. It provides us with a psychological advantage, as we are thus enabled to stand in the place of orthodoxy, and be accounted worthy of the respect that is our rightful due.

Then we can go on to any Protestant group, and show the fundamental Protestantism of our teachings. In this way we can adapt our approach to the background of an individual or a group, or meet the predominant religious complexion of a community. That constitutes a skilled approach. It is using the prophetic key wisely, so as to gain access to different hearts and thus to master difficult situations.

There is one related suggestion. We can build upon specific personal interests, and capitalize upon different callings or professions. There were noted physicians, educators, lawyers, scientists, mathematicians, librarians, college presidents, governors, judges, poets, architects, bankers, and even kings—as well as preachers, rabbis, and priests—among the prophetic expositors of the centuries. When we approach a representative of any of these particular groups, a tactful allusion to past men of prominence in their particular craft or profession creates immediate interest and sympathy, and affords an effective starting point. The same is true with various nationalities—German, French, English, Scottish, Swiss, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Colonial American, Argentinian, Mexican, and others. By starting with a point or person of common interest, we can then lead on into our full, related exposition. Try it, and observe its effectiveness.

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### III. Old World Awakening and New World Movement

#### Amazing Extent of Preparatory Advent Awakening

As we cross the threshold of the nineteenth century, we enter a manifestly new epoch in the affairs of mankind. It was a time fraught with prophetic significance, and was so recognized by many expositors of the day. Numerous men sensed that they had entered what must be the "time of the end," or the period known as the "last days." A widespread interest in prophecy developed on both sides of the Atlantic. And the new focal point of this interest, as already noted, was the approaching terminus of the 2300 years, with its attendant judgment hour and the impending second Advent. This was deeply significant. Few, however, have been aware of the power and moving character of this really remarkable agitation. Let us therefore look first at this aspect.

The great second Advent awakening even included certain Roman Catholic heralds. And this was felt in both the Old World and the New—in Italy, Spain, and France, as well as in Mexico and South America. Most conspicuous among these expositors within the pale of Catholicism was the now well-known Manuel Lacunza, whose remarkable treatise, *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, was first circulated around the turn of the century.<sup>60</sup> This was first distributed in manuscript form in two hemispheres, and then from

<sup>60</sup> *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 3, chap. 17.

1812 onward began to be printed in a half-dozen lands in several languages—in Spain, England, Mexico, France, Italy, and possibly in the United States.

This remarkable work had considerable effect upon various Roman Catholic priests. In Europe secret societies of priests formed to study it. And no town of any size between Havana and Cape Horn, here in the Western World, was said to have been without its copy. And Lacunza's book was the means of intensifying interest in the second Advent even among Protestants, as yet generally lethargic over this growing emphasis. The primary concept of Lacunza, that the second, premillennial, personal return of Christ in transcendent glory would usher in the stone kingdom before the judgment of the world and the smiting of iniquity, was anathema to the Roman Church. And it was inevitable that his treatise should before long be placed on her *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. But there were others, such as Père Bernard Lambert and Judge Pierre Jean Agier, both of France, propounding really astonishing views on prophecy.<sup>61</sup> The beast was identified as Christian Rome, and time was waxing late.

However, the most pronounced development in prophetic study was, of course, among the Protestants. A leading Anglican periodical, *The Christian Observer*, of London, founded in 1802, with a Boston edition as well, became the initial forum for the discussion of Bible prophecy, and a whole procession of colorful interpreters continued for years to troop across its pages.<sup>62</sup> But, as we have seen, there were two widely divergent schools of thought, among these students of prophecy, as concerns coming events. These were the premillennialists and the postmillennialists. The first group looked for a cataclysmic end of the age, which would be tied in with the transcendent scenes of the second Advent. The other body anticipated a thousand years of world betterment, with an increasingly potent reign of peace and righteousness before the end.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 324-326, 482-485.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 16.

These two fundamentally opposite philosophies of salvation, which, of course, are irreconcilable, met in head-on collision under the impact of the second Advent awakening. Convictions were deep, and the ensuing battle was intense. But the premillennial position came to the fore and seemed to dominate the scene for the time, growing in extent and influence among the various religious groups. In the Old World, however, it was an emphasis within the churches, not a separating movement, and did not affect denominational relationships.

#### Division Arises Over 2300-Year Issue

Moreover, among the premillennial Adventists in Britain at this time, there were two groups, sharply divided over whether the key number in Daniel 8:14 is rightly rendered 2300, as in our standard Bibles, or whether it should read 2400 (which was later shown to be derived from an earlier misprint in the edition followed by the common English printings of the Septuagint translation). William Cuninghame, prominent expositor of Lainshaw, Ayrshire, and author of twenty-one books on prophecy and the Advent, was an outstanding defender of the 2300-year position, whereas James H. Frere was the champion of the number 2400.<sup>63</sup> This conflict began about 1813. But, curiously enough, both groups ended their periods of conflicting length at essentially the same time—about 1843, 1844, or 1847.

The chief difference was that the 2300-year adherents customarily began their chronological timing with the seventh of Artaxerxes, in 457 B.C., whereas the proponents of the 2400 years began back a century earlier, when they understood the vision was given. Thus the two dates were ended essentially together, though on a totally different basis. Hence the combined emphasis of the two groups resulted in a virtual identity of exposition as to the end year of this long prophecy.

Furthermore, the 2300-year group began the calculation

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<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 20.

of the longer period synchronously with the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24, taking this newly discovered relationship as the master key to unlock the mystery of the timing, and therefore disclosing the terminus of the longer period. This was universally true in the North American movement soon to follow. On the contrary, the 2400-year men, of Britain, made no connection between these two periods, and in time inevitable friction developed between the two groups over the involvements of their calculations.

There was common belief in both camps that the special 1260-year period of the Papacy's spiritual supremacy ended around the time of the French Revolution. And the 391 years of the sixth or Turkish trumpet—the hour, day, month, and year prophecy of Revelation 9:15—were constantly discussed and frequently calculated, some placing this period from 1453 to 1844.<sup>64</sup> Such expositors ended it at nearly the same time as the 2300 years.

The two witnesses were frequently looked upon as the two Testaments, and the three and one-half years of their slaying as connected with the French Revolution.<sup>65</sup> There was widespread belief that the days, both of the Papacy and of the Turk, were soon to end. And the pouring out of the fifth vial upon the "seat of the beast," or Rome, was recognized generally as accomplished. And the sixth vial, to dry up the Euphrates, regarded as the Turkish territory, was generally believed to be part of the current prophetic fulfillment.<sup>66</sup> Prophetic exposition was at high pitch, and moved in accelerated tempo. The interest was widespread among the laity, and the writing and the preaching of the public heralds were vivid and intense.

#### Character and Characteristics of Old World Awakening

The intellectual caliber of the participants in the Old World Advent awakening is noteworthy. They were men of trained minds and conspicuous attainment. There were

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 744, 745.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

teachers, lawyers, physicians, historians, and linguists. Others were librarians, statesmen, architects, and military men. They embraced laymen as well as clergymen. And they were a cosmopolitan group, several hundred of the British expositors being Anglican churchmen and more than a thousand being Nonconformist or Independent ministers. Such were the spokesmen and leaders. No attempt has been made to calculate the number of adherents, but the figures would run high.

Various organizations were formed to herald the second Advent message. The Society to Promote Christianity Among the Jews was the first, founded by Lewis Way, under whose auspices Wolff did most of his far-flung traveling, heralding the Advent and emphasizing the prophecies.<sup>67</sup> Branch organizations were established all over Europe, and even in America. Conspicuous men were affiliated with it, and various periodicals were established to publicize its work. The Continental Society, to revive true Protestantism on the Continent, was launched by Henry Drummond, London banker and member of Parliament.<sup>68</sup> It likewise had many branches, stated meetings, and printed reports.

There was also the Society for the Investigation of Prophecy, with periodic meetings for the joint study and exposition of prophecy, and remarkable papers vigorously interpreting prophecy.<sup>69</sup> And the Reformation Society was established by Way and Frere. The Protestant Association was yet another organization, with its chief burden to call men "out of Babylon."<sup>70</sup> And in these groups the 2300 years, as ending in 1843, 1844, or 1847, was often singled out for special emphasis. The judgment-hour message of Revelation 14:6, 7, was similarly stressed. And the flying angel of Revelation 14 was considered as already under flight, representing the work of these societies, and of the missionary and Bible Societies as well—with further developments soon to come.<sup>71</sup>

And besides these more formal organizations, there were special study and lecture groups, with meetings in London,

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 22.  
<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 23.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 26.  
<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 646, 500.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 744, 745.

Edinburgh, Paris, and other places. In addition there were specific conferences on the prophecies and the Advent, as at Albury Park, beginning in 1826, in Edinburgh, and at Powerscourt House.<sup>72</sup> Partly from these latter meetings the Plymouth Brethren developed under the leadership of John Nelson Darby. And from this group Protestant Futurism in time has spread widely in fundamentalist circles.

And in addition to the numerous books, pamphlets, and tractates devoted to prophecy, there were various periodicals issued, the leading ones being *The Jewish Expositor* (London), *The Christian Herald* (Dublin), *The Prophetic Herald*, *The Investigator . . . on Prophecy*, *The Morning Watch*, and *The Watchman* (Paris).<sup>73</sup> These all stressed the climax of prophecy and the approaching second Advent, and often included emphasis on the 2300 (or 2400) years, as ending around 1843, 1844, or 1847. There were also women prophetic writers, like Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna.<sup>74</sup>

This great British awakening was matched by a somewhat similar emphasis on the Continent—in Germany by Johann Heinrich Richter, secretary of the Rhenish Missionary Society, with his *Erklärte Haus-bibel* (The Family Bible Explained), and Leonhard Kelber, author of *Das Ende kommt* (The End Is Coming), both stressing the 1843 or 1847 terminus of the 2300 years. And in Holland there was Heinrich Heintzperter; in Switzerland, Alphonse M. F. Nicole, doctor of jurisprudence and deputy; and Bishop Daniel Wilson in India, likewise emphasizing the end of the 2300 years about 1847.<sup>75</sup> Then there were two other Swiss expositors of note—Prof. Louis Gausson and Bishop Samuel Gobat. In addition, the more general declarations of the child preachers in southern Sweden were impressive.<sup>76</sup>

As to the extent of this witness, the independent testimony of William Thorp, Mourant Brock, and James Leslie indicates that there were many hundreds of public heralds

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 23, 30.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 414-420.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 640-645.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 299, 300, 489, 620, 702.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 485, 486, 687 ff., 671 ff.

—well over a thousand—proclaiming the judgment hour and the imminent Advent.<sup>77</sup> And this, be it remembered, antedated the main Millerite movement in America. There was truly a tremendous stir, with powerful preaching and immense audiences, many gatherings being held in the open air. That was the extent and the vigor of this great Old World awakening. It was a formidable affair.

#### Glimpses of Sanctuary and Sanctuary Truths

Phases of the sanctuary truth were stressed by such men as John Tudor and Frederick Nolan, who believed that the typical Mosaic feasts of the Old Testament had been superimposed, in their antitypical reality, upon the Christian Era. They believed that mankind had now entered, or was entering upon, the great day of atonement, when the temple was opened in heaven and there was seen the ark of His testament in the most holy place.<sup>78</sup> This is significant because it antedated the clearer and stronger emphasis appearing a little later in North America. But we do not always remember this British angle.

At this time the seventh-day Sabbath was also revived by such men as the noted patriot Francisco Ramos Mexia of Argentina, in 1820 and 1821, and the approaching second Advent was aggressively heralded.<sup>79</sup> And the publisher James Begg of Glasgow, Scotland, in the early thirties sought to introduce its consideration among the Millerites in North America, and the Advent heralds in Britain, though without success. But the hour had come to begin to emphasize these neglected truths, soon to come sharply to the forefront, and these were advance notes of what were ere long to be points of major emphasis in the American movement.

#### Futurism Introduced Among Protestants

It was in the midst of this widespread Advent awakening in Britain that the Futurism of Ribera's Jesuit counterinter-

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 611, 706, 592.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 506-509, 608-610.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4

pretation was introduced among Protestants. Samuel R. Maitland, revolting against the swelling prophetic emphasis on the approaching Advent, repudiated the year-day principle for the 1260 years as applying to the period of papal dominance during the Middle Ages. This dissenting note was taken up, in turn, by James H. Todd of England and William Burgh of Ireland. A future Antichrist, to dominate for three and one-half years at the end of the age, was substituted. More or less confusion inevitably resulted.<sup>80</sup>

This same development likewise profoundly influenced John Henry Newman of the High Church Anglican group. It removed the stumbling block in his search for certainty in the authoritarianism of Rome, when Rome was thus cleared, to his satisfaction, of the stigma of being the Antichrist of prophecy. Thus it was that he felt clear in slipping into the arms of the "mother church." This was all part of the contemporary Oxford Tractarian Movement.<sup>81</sup> Times were tense, and the issues increasingly complex. Crosscurrents and countermovements developed, and soon disintegration of the Advent witness began to take place. But before long a number of able men sprang into the breach, rallying to the defense of the year-day principle—men like Alexander Keith, Thomas R. Birks, William Cuninghame, Joshua W. Brooks, and Edward B. Elliott. Even the writings of astronomer Jean de Chéseaux, of Switzerland, were also invoked.<sup>82</sup> But it was too late. The fatal disintegration was under way, and nothing seemed able to stop it. The Old World Advent awakening collapsed.

#### Causes of Old World Awakening Breakdown

This Old World Advent awakening breakdown really came over the issue of the return of the Jews, and the anticipated restoration of spiritual gifts, looked for by the powerful Presbyterian preacher, Edward Irving of London, and others.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 542, 656-661.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 663-669.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 365, 368, 369, 381-385, 606, 623, 707, 716-718.

But Irving was tragically deceived by the "utterances" that broke out in his own congregation, which in the end brought him to disillusionment, expulsion, ostracism, and ruin, so that he died of a broken heart.<sup>83</sup> It was not long until some of the editors gave up publication of the periodicals that had been devoted to the discussion of prophecy.

"Double dating" likewise came in—like the 1260 years from 533 to 1793, but more plausibly from 606 to 1866, with growing emphasis on the later dates. This "continuationism" pushed the dates of expectancy on beyond the 1843, 1844, and 1847 anticipation over to 1866 or 1867. This became so pronounced and so general that, when the crucial mid-forties came, most eyes had already become fixed upon the future 1860's.<sup>84</sup> Thus this great Advent awakening in Britain passed without a climax.

But at the very time that the fateful "utterances" broke out in Irving's Regent Square church in London, and odium was thus brought upon the whole second Advent emphasis as a tragic result, William Miller began his first public presentations in North America. And the emphasis and leadership shifted, shortly thereafter, to the New World, which soon became the center of an actual Advent *movement*, in contrast to a mere *awakening*, soon far surpassing the earlier *agitation* in Britain and on the Continent. That constitutes the larger background. And the pioneering emphasis, which had such a remarkable spread and force in the Old World, needs to be borne in mind in any evaluation of the impact of the doctrine of the second Advent upon the consciousness of Christendom in the first four decades of the nineteenth century.

#### Revival of Interpretation at Turn of Century

In North America the turn of the nineteenth century likewise marked the beginning of a new impetus in prophetic study. In fact, an unprecedented investigation of the prophe-

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 514-526.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 27.

cies concerning the last things seemed to begin in the very year 1798. In this land the conviction came upon many that mankind had entered a new epoch in the prophetic outline of the centuries, frequently denominated "the time of the end," "the latter days," or the "last days."<sup>85</sup> Consciously or unconsciously they also came to use these very expressions of Holy Writ in their writings, as descriptive of this new day. The French tilt with the Papacy during and following the French Revolution, along with the tidal wave of infidelity that had swept over Europe, and had left its telltale marks even upon America, stimulated the study of prophecy as nothing else had done for decades. The captivity of the pope, early in 1798, was similarly recognized by a sizable group of scholarly men as a fulfillment of prophecy—the close of the fateful 1260 years. What world-shaking events were next to come was the question in many minds.

May 9, 1798, was set aside by the President of the United States as a nationwide day of special fasting and prayer, and scores of sermons were preached in churches and missionary societies, based on the prophecies that they believed were in process of fulfillment. These were delivered in the pulpits of various denominations. And in the new century, books, pamphlets, and periodical articles, bearing on prophecy, began to issue forth. Many of these were most explicit and convincing. And their writers were spread over all denominations—Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Lutheran, Episcopalian.

Moreover, these men were scattered all the way from New York and the New England States, out to the Western frontiers and down South. Illustrious names, such as President Timothy Dwight, of Yale, and the Honorable Elias Boudinot, former president of the Continental Congress and then director of the mint, were in the forefront of this early prophetic interpretation.<sup>86</sup> Periodicals like the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* and the American edition of the *Chris-*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

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*tian Observer* became the mediums for the new discussion. A marked revival of prophetic interpretation was on.

The stream of exposition widened, and the signs of the times were stressed. There was a rising tide of literature on the time prophecies—the 1260, 1290, 1335, and especially the 2300 years. The best of the previous British Advent awakening writings were reprinted in North America,<sup>87</sup> and an able, indigenous literature on prophecy soon developed in this land.

But the supreme point of interest and discussion in it all, as we have seen, was now the terminal point of the 2300 years. There soon developed a distinctive dual shift of interest and emphasis: In the Old Testament interest shifted from Daniel 7 over to Daniel 8, with the outline of chapter 7 and its time period regarded as largely fulfilled, and its interpretation now considered established and axiomatic. The paralleling shift in the New Testament was from Revelation 13 over to Revelation 14—from the recognized wounding of the papal “beast” in 1798, on to the flying angels of Revelation 14. That was the setting for the great second Advent movement in America.

#### Pre-Millerite Expositors Lay Sturdy Foundations

The American pioneer in the widespread heralding, over here, of the approaching end of the 2300 years in 1843-1847, was William C. (Davis) of South Carolina, a Presbyterian minister of note. His impressive pathfinding treatise on the millennium passed through a series of editions in America, between 1811 and 1817, with one reprint in Great Britain in 1818.<sup>88</sup> It therefore became rather widely known. It was unquestionably Davis who set the basic interpretative pattern in America, followed by numerous other expounders—that the tie-in of the seventy weeks with the 2300 years, as its first segment, constitutes the key that unlocks the timing of the 2300 years. The two periods begin together, he held, and

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 391-396; also vol. 4.

are checked and certified by the cross, as set by prophecy in the seventieth week. Thus the end year of the 2300 and the beginning of the millennium was set for 1847.

Joshua I. Wilson, Presbyterian moderator and teacher of prominence, of Ohio, in 1828 preached a remarkable sermon out on the Western frontier, concerning the approaching cleansing of the sanctuary (the church) in 1847.<sup>89</sup> This created so much favorable discussion that, after Wilson had presented the sermon in Cincinnati, he was requested to repeat it in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, then in Wheeling, West Virginia, and finally in Louisville, Kentucky—four times in four widely separated States. His position was practically the same, and increased interest and further inquiry resulted.

Then came Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ, sometimes called by his name, who in a locally famous debate with the deist Robert Owen, in 1829, made a brilliant defense of the deity of Christ. In this he uses the same argument and dating for the seventy weeks and the 2300 days, contending that the longer span was nearing its close. Samuel M. McCorkle of Tennessee, of the Disciples of Christ, wrote in similar vein in 1829. There was little difference in reasoning or evidence employed, and he ended the major period at the same time, although he, unlike the other three, was a premillennialist.<sup>90</sup>

And then followed a succession of proclaimers of essentially the same date—David McGregor, of Maine, 1843; and President Charles Wheeler, of Rector College, West Virginia, 1843 or 1844. Then there were A. J. Krupp, of Philadelphia, John Robinson, of Cincinnati, and others, all presenting about the same evidence and concurring in about the same time. In 1834 the highly trained Baptist clergyman, Robert Scott, in New York State, expounded similarly, fixing upon 1843/1844 for the end of the 2300 years. Also José de Rozas, of Mexico, in 1834 and Adam H. Burwell, of Canada,

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

in 1835, similarly arrived at 1847. It should be particularly observed that all of these and still others in North America had made their declarations *before* the publication of William Miller's first book in 1836. He was, therefore, definitely not the originator of this prophetic exposition. He was but one of many.

But these men on both sides of the Atlantic all formed part of that far-flung advance guard that preceded the Millerite movement, and were not connected therewith. They were the first to affirm the principle that the seventy weeks comprise the initial segment of the 2300 years. Their position was essentially the same as that taken by scores, if not hundreds, in the Advent awakening in Europe, although there was some variation in dating. This was now the accepted procedure in such exposition—to begin the two periods together, which provided a clear and logical basis for calculating the end year of the longer period, which they understood would terminate in the cleansing of the sanctuary—whatever that might be and whatever it would involve.

There was difference of view on this latter point. Some thought of this momentous coming event as the cleansing of the church from all pollution and apostasy, or the restoration of the Holy Land. Others believed that it meant the cleansing of the earth by fire, for the removal of all sin and corruption. Almost all these scholars thought that the second Advent was somehow connected inseparably therewith, and that it probably involved the millennium in some way. But they all held the grand terminal date of the 2300 years to be at more or less the same time, whatever the event. And the question was not so much the time as the event. So this large group of scholarly men, some threescore strong, scattered over the Old World and the New, and even resident in the Orient, were all persuaded that a great and critical hour for mankind was just in the offing. Such was the setting when Miller first began the public declaration of his own belief in the ending of the 2300 years "about the year 1843," on essentially the same line of reasoning and evidence.

### Position of Cross Determines Terminal Year

Here in America the Old World issue over the 2400-year contention had no part or place in the discussion. Over here all were united on the soundness and certainty of the number 2300 as signifying that many years. The slight variation in dating them grew out of the difference in locating the year of the birth of Christ and the true place of the cross in the last or seventieth week in the seventy weeks of years. At first nearly all in both the Old World and the New held to A.D. 33 as the crucifixion year. Some put this commonly accepted A.D. 33 cross at the *end* of the seventieth week. Consequently, the 1810 remaining years of the 2300, beyond A.D. 33, would then lead to the year 1843.

Others, placing the same A.D. 33 cross in the *midst* of the seventieth week, thereby ended the seventieth week in A.D. 37. This consequently extended the 1810 remaining years to 1847. Both groups, however, had exactly the same intent. This minor divergence in the placing of the cross in that last "week" and a slight inaccuracy in the true date of the cross, which came to be discovered, fully account for the variation between 1843, 1844, and 1847, as the end year of Daniel's major prophetic period. But in reality the difference was slight, and the essential unity on the timing was most impressive. Widespread expectancy was the result. And this was all before the Millerite movement, or at least outside the Millerite orbit.

This large group who pioneered in this particular interpretation, many of them able and learned men, of various denominational affiliations, had put down strong footings and laid sturdy foundations upon which the succeeding Millerite movement built its imposing structure of interpretation. The names we have noted were the men they quoted in their publications in justification of their own positions—pressing hard on the soundness of the calculation argument used, as well as emphasizing the dependable scholarship of the various men who had sponsored and supported this thesis,

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Such were the broad and substantial foundations upon which the Millerites built. They were not at all alone in their position. And they were by no means the first to interpret the 2300 years in this fashion. They did not derive support for their contentions from ignorant sources, or rest upon questionable precedents. This interpretive formula did not stem simply from one religious group or sect, but was derived from representatives of all the leading religious bodies. It did not come from one obscure section of the land or even from one single country. Instead, it sprang into being simultaneously in various lands and nationalities and languages, in both hemispheres. It had a brilliant ancestry. The Millerites built upon the foundations of their predecessors and contemporaries. Few, if any, previous advances in prophetic interpretation had ever had such an extensive and solid groundwork.

### **Eight Progressive Stages in American Movement**

The American second Advent movement passed through a series of distinct stages or developments. There was a steadily progressive growth. Like a tiny rivulet coming from a single spring, it was in time joined by other rivulets. And these grew larger in combined volume and swifter in current, as stream after stream and river upon river merged to form a mighty waterway. This not only turned many modest mill wheels along the banks, but sent huge turbines spinning as well, producing power and light, and even upbearing the ships of sea upon its bosom. Such is the epitomized story of the Millerite movement. Its distinct expansions or accelerations, eight in number, may for convenience be listed as follows:

1. The period of the *solitary public labors* of William Miller, beginning in 1831. His was at first a solitary voice, crying in the wilderness of the small towns and rural sections, "Behold, Christ cometh soon, the second time; prepare to meet Him." This voice was augmented only by a few of his

own periodical articles, a pamphlet, and his initial work in book form, in 1836. This period extended to 1838.

2. The time of early group endeavor, as Fitch, Litch, Bates, and a growing number of other able voices and facile pens joined Miller, augmented by an increasing number of periodical articles, pamphlets, and books from others, and with better methods added and greater facilities employed, adapted to city labor. This covers 1838 and 1839.

3. The era of the second Advent conferences—first the sixteen general conferences, composed of preacher-delegates from all faiths, who had now joined the Advent movement. These groups assembled in order to come to united views, and to formulate joint statements for the press concerning the prophecies and the Advent, thus to publicize them to the world. During this time Joshua V. Himes became the great publicist and organizer of the movement. First, the Signs of the Times was launched, and then The Midnight Cry, followed by some thirty other periodicals. This utilization of the power of the press included a Millerite daily, a quarterly journal in more of a literary style, and even a paper for women edited by a woman. Millerite periodicals covered the eastern half of the States.

And the conferences were brought to their climax by the authorization of a standard "1843 chart" for their preachers, and the launching of a succession of camp meetings to reach the populace at large. The first conference was in 1840; the second conference taught a "trial judgment," and gave major emphasis to the premillennial character of Christ's second Advent. Some 2,000 copies of a 176-page printed report were sent to the clergy of America, and to missionaries in most other lands, with separate reprints of the component addresses. Along with these general conferences were 120 paralleling local conferences, designed to bring the second Advent faith to large popular assemblages and many communities.

4. The era of the camp meetings—thirty in four months' time, and 124 in the two years 1843 and 1844. These ranged

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in size from sometimes 4,000 to 10,000, and utilized the largest canvas pavilion in America, with a seating capacity of about 5,000. These camps generally closed with their impressive "parting" ceremony. A farewell song was sung, and all present, clasping their neighbors' hands, formed two moving concentric circles, so that each could bid a solemn good-by to every other pilgrim on the way to the heavenly city. This was in 1843-44.

And to the giant camp meetings were added large temporary tabernacles (the one in Boston seating over 3,000). There were also theater, hall, tent, grove, and great open-air meetings. Matters moved forward on a large scale. There were daring plans and exploits, and an amazing coverage of the populace of North America, for in 1840 there were only 17,000,000 inhabitants—New York City having less than 400,000, Philadelphia and Boston 90,000 each, and Washington, D.C., then but 23,000. The Millerite movement was, in America, the most widely discussed religious phenomena of the time.

5. *Miller's crucial "year 1843,"* ending in the spring of 1844, witnessed a great influx of adherents, with an increased tempo in heralding the approaching end of the 2300 years, and the correction of the earlier calculation from March over to April.

6. The augmenting emphasis of the *second angel's message* in 1843-44, when great religious bodies rejected the message of the second Advent by expelling from their communions many believers in the Advent, both laity and clergy. Then a loyal core of some 50,000 (possibly up to 100,000) withdrew from the churches to form the distinctive second Advent movement (one newspaper estimated a million general adherents). This too was in the latter part of 1843 and in 1844.

7. The *tarrying or slumber time*, from April 19 to late summer, 1844, during the early part of the Jewish year "1844," when it seemed that the Bridegroom tarried, as all the virgins "slumbered and slept," while the Advent company

waited for the heavenly Bridegroom's return, as portrayed in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.

8. The *seventh-month movement*, which brought the great Advent movement to a dramatic climax on October 22, 1844, thus ending the distinctive Millerite phase—this, in turn, to be followed by the unfolding recognition and proclamation of the *third angel's message* as it began to take wing. That is a breakdown of the Millerite movement into its component phases.

#### Miller Stresses Full Gospel in Prophetic Setting

Every great movement is made up of its individual participants, each bearing his allotted message and making his special contribution. Take Miller himself, for instance, that mighty messenger of God for his time, who moved multitudes in his day. His first *written declaration of prophetic faith* was penned in 1822, and his first sermon preached in 1831. Compare and contrast it with the first sermon of John Knox, Scottish Reformer, preached in the castle of old Saint Andrews in 1547. Knox gave a remarkably full and sound exposition of the *prophetic line of Daniel 7*, with emphasis on the *papal little horn's* still heavy dominance, to be brought to an *end by divine intervention* at the appointed time.<sup>91</sup> Scenes of *judgment* would form the climax.

But Miller's first sermon, taking Daniel 7 with its 1260 years as a background and setting, now largely fulfilled, passed on to Daniel 8 with the end of 2300 years as the climactic close of all time prophecy.<sup>92</sup> And this shift over to Daniel 8 was indicative of the fundamental advance over Reformation emphasis, and became the new focal point of emphasis in the entire Advent movement. Daniel 7 was now taken as largely fulfilled, and its interpretation as axiomatic. It was treated as established, standard exegesis, with the message of Daniel 8 as the new present truth due the world. This was a decided advance over and beyond the burden of Reformation

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 445-450; on Miller, see vol. 4.

<sup>92</sup> See vol. 4.

days. And this concept carried with it mighty revival power.

But the throbbing heart of Miller's message was more and more the "everlasting gospel." He was no mere lecturer on bare prophecy. He was pre-eminently a heart-warming gospel preacher, with special emphasis centered on latter-day events and expectations of prophecy. And his fundamental emphasis was twofold. Positively, it was the full saving gospel of Christ, now in its imminent second Advent setting, with redemption solely through His grace as its very heart. This was always in the forefront. Miller's message was not merely an intellectual theory, or theological doctrine concerning latter-day events. It was not simply a body of prophetic beliefs, used with heavy accent and telling force, though that was included as an integral part of the whole. His well-rounded 1822 statement of faith reveals it all most clearly, and presents it in beautiful balance. It was, first of all, a proclamation of Christ's wondrous saving power, placed in the inevitable judgment-hour setting. That is why there were mighty revivals under Miller's personal, dynamic preaching, and great numbers accepted the second Advent faith. There was an irresistible appeal coupled with an inexorable logic that arrested the attention and won the hearts of men.

And the prophecies, which he so effectively stressed, found their rightful place as the divinely designated setting for the triumphant climax of this saving power of Christ, about to be accomplished. So powerful was Miller's gospel appeal that hundreds of rank infidels were soundly converted. The prophecies, therefore, became the medium for making the maximum appeal. This we have not always sensed. But emphasis upon the 2300-year prophecy, with its climax in 1843-44, was only part of a balanced preaching of all the prophecies. Miller was never an extremist. He was not lopsided or top heavy in his presentations. As his sermon outlines attest, Miller was truly a herald of the everlasting gospel, with special emphasis on the hour of God's judgment, and appropriate stress upon the preparation imperative to meet our Saviour and ministering Priest, now so soon to come in all

His kingly power and glory to complete the redemption of men. His earnestness was compelling.

A painstaking examination of Miller's "Text Books," as his diary was called, giving the texts for all his sermons during his full-time ministry, from 1834 onward to 1844—as well as access to considerably more than a hundred of his sermon outlines, preserved on small sheets or slips of paper, along with many manuscript sermons<sup>83</sup>—at first puzzled me. The emphasis was quite different from what I had anticipated, for his book of lectures is chiefly of addresses on doctrine and prophecy. But rarely ever did Miller begin a series of sermons with a message on the judgment hour of Revelation 14:6, 7. The prophecies were only part of his burden. They provided the time setting. They formed the climax of his many-sided appeal. They afforded urgency for decision, and brought the immediacy of prophetic fulfillment to bear upon the strong gospel presentation he had already made.)

Rarely did he preach from Daniel 8:14 until he had laid down a solid gospel foundation. It was but the climax of the full-rounded message that he preached. This is a vital principle of preaching procedure for us to grasp. We can learn much from him in preaching techniques. Miller was a sound and powerful preacher of the gospel in its full latter-day, present-truth setting. That was the secret of his unusual power, and the obvious reason for his great success as a soul winner. There were six thousand conversions of which there is record.

On the other hand, *negatively*, Miller's message was a stalwart denial of, and a ringing challenge to, the Whitbyan postmillennial theory of a thousand years of world betterment and world conversion before the Advent. It was a complete rejection of the roseate concept, so popular at the time, of the establishment of the kingdom of God and everlasting peace by dint of human endeavor, without an antecedent second Advent to bring it to pass.

This false concept of world betterment seriously compli-

<sup>83</sup> Originals in Adventual Collection, Aurora College.

cated the latter-day heralding of the message of the second, personal, premillennial Advent of Christ, creating strong opposition to its reception. Two diametrically opposite philosophies were thus joined in inevitable conflict. So the heralding of the message of Christ's imminent return was opposed and confused by these false views struggling for a foothold and battling the true position.

That was really the basic issue of Millerism—the truth of premillennialism versus the falsity of postmillennialism. It was not primarily the terminus of the 2300 years in 1843 or 1844. Scores of noted clerics agreed to that dating. But two irreconcilable philosophies concerning redemption were brought into mortal combat under the impulse of the Millerite movement. And many ministerial stalwarts, like Henry Dana Ward, Henry Jones, and Nathan Whiting, though not concurring wholly as to the precise year set by most of the Millerites for the Lord's return, took their stand staunchly by Miller's side as militant premillennialists. Premillennialism, with final redemption at the Advent, was the rallying battle cry. In fact, these men aided materially in the revision of the earlier erroneous year 1843 to the corrected year 1844, stressed in the seventh-month movement.

And what was true of Miller's fundamental concept of his gospel mission could be said of scores, yes, hundreds of his able associates. Charles Fitch was a conspicuous example. There was a ringing gospel emphasis in his preaching that was most pronounced and tremendously effective, for it was God's designated emphasis for the hour—the "everlasting gospel."

All prophecy, these men held, clusters around the two contrasting Advents of Christ. They are the inseparable focal points of all prophecy. The divine transactions of the first Advent laid the foundation for the ineffable glories of the second Advent. And the second Advent is based upon and brings to completion the redemptive acts and mission of Christ's first coming. Again, the first Advent provided the atoning sacrifice imperative for the salvation of mankind,

and inaugurated His indispensable priestly mediation, based upon and applying that infinite provision. The second Advent terminates this twofold ministry of Christ and brings the plan of redemption to its triumphant close.

#### How Miller Calculated the Jewish Year 1843

There were two distinct phases or major epochs in the Millerite movement—the original “1843” phase and the later “1844,” or seventh-month phase. The earlier “1843” phase, as launched by Miller, looked to the “Jewish year 1843” as the climactic year, within which the coming of the Lord was expected—with the attendant resurrection of the righteous dead, the translation of the righteous living, and the destruction of the earth by fire, which would at last compass the destruction of sin and sinners.

So the first, or “1843,” phase was really but a preliminary, preparatory alarm, like the ancient blowing of the trumpets; and the second, or “1844,” phase was the actual giving of the judgment-hour message. The first was merely the heralding of the Advent truth in general, stressing the imminent coming of the Lord, with the earth or the church generally regarded as the sanctuary. In the second phase, in contrast, the heavenly sanctuary began to be understood with the consciousness of the antitypical day of atonement at hand. The eyes of men were lifted to a High Priest, ministering in the heaven of heavens, who, they believed, would emerge from the heavenly sanctuary on the specific twenty-four-hour day of October 22. Thus the earlier message swelled into a loud cry for that time.

Like many noted interpreters before him, on both sides of the Atlantic, Miller based his calculation of “1843” on an A.D. 33 cross, which he placed at the *end* of the seventieth week of years. This, as we have already seen, was identical with the position of many others prior to him. And this A.D. 33 cross, plus the remaining 1810 years of the 2300, gave him, he reasoned, “1843” as the end year of the great 2300-year span. The formula therefore became  $33+1810=1843$ . But

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Miller himself had always qualified his expectation by saying "about the year 1843." He recognized the possibility of a slight error in the records of history as well as in human chronology and in calculation. It was his associates who, as the movement got well under way, became increasingly positive and assertive about the year 1843. Some became quite dogmatic and abandoned the early caution of Miller, stressing "1843" without any reservations.

The year 457 B.C., as the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the date of the royal command to rebuild and restore Jerusalem, was so commonly accepted by practically all Bible scholars of the day, that Miller and his associates took that date unquestioningly for the joint beginning of the seventy weeks and the 2300 years, regarding it as established and virtually unchallenged. Regarding it as axiomatic, they centered their study on the end events of the seventy weeks, the date of the cross in relation to the seventieth week, and the end events of the interrelated 2300 years, which they believed would fall in 1843 or 1844. Only later was the 457 B.C. date challenged by critics. But now that has been re-established through the scholarly contribution of our own Doctors Lynn Wood and Siegfried Horn, of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

When Miller was pressed to define, or delimit, his year 1843, he suggested "March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844," roughly, as its general limits. He knew the Jewish sacred year ran from spring to spring, rather than from January to January, as with our common civil years. And Miller knew that the Jewish Passover (on the fourteenth day of the first month) was tied to the full moon, which was commonly understood as being the first full moon after the vernal equinox. So he simply took the equinox as the approximate beginning of the Jewish year, and gave it as his opinion that the Jewish year "1843" would extend from March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844. But that, in reality, was but an equinoctial year, not a Jewish year at all—for no Jewish year has 365 days. Nor does the Jewish year begin with the equinox.

Jewish  
year —

The Jewish year is a lunisolar year. The months, which are governed by the moon, run from one new moon day to the next new moon day. Since the moon's period is approximately  $29\frac{1}{2}$  days, on this lunar basis the Jewish months commonly alternated in length, with 30, 29, 30, 29 days in sequence through the first seven months of the annual feast period, or from the Passover on through the Feast of Tabernacles with occasional minor adjustments in the closing months of the year. Twelve of these lunar months totaled 354 days, the length of the common Jewish year, which was eleven days shorter than the solar year. This shortage must, of course, be rectified. So the year was brought into step with the sun by the simple device of adding, or intercalating, an extra month at the end of every second or third year.

This was done seven times in every nineteen-year cycle by a fixed sequence, at the close of which the sun and moon returned to the same starting place, and the next nineteen-year cycle was then begun. These embolismic years, with the leap month added, ordinarily total 384 days. Under this simple provision the total number of days in each nineteen-year cycle equaled, approximately, the total days in the same number of regular solar years. So we should remember that there were just as many lunisolar years—no more and no less—in the Jewish calendation as there were solar years in the common calendation. It is a prophetic year, not a Jewish year, that has 360 days. That is derived from the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times as equaling 42 months and also 1260 days in the prophetic calculation.

#### Miller's Associates Restudy the Jewish Calendation

As the Advent movement grew, studious and well-informed men joined its ranks. Moreover, Miller's periodic illnesses prevented his participation in many of their larger conferences and other meetings. So the leadership gradually shifted to other shoulders. Some of these men soon became anxious about the basis of Miller's formula—457 B.C.+490 years=A.D. 33, and A.D. 33+1810 years=1843. First of all, the

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cross was, according to the prophecy, to be in the "midst" of the seventieth week, not at its extreme end. That was undebatable, they felt, under the specifications of the inspired prediction. But would that "midst" of the week be in A.D. 30 or 31? They soon found that William Hales, the noted chronologist, whose volume was widely circulated at this time, placed the cross in A.D. 31. That was point number one.

Then there was the law of the "full years." Miller's formula (457 B.C. + 2300 years = A.D. 1843) necessitated all the year 457 B.C. and all the year A.D. 1843, in order to make up the full 2300 years. But since the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem did not go into effect until the autumn of 457 B.C., 2300 full years would of necessity reach over beyond "1843" to the corresponding autumn of the Jewish year "1844." This all drove the Millerite leaders to an intensive restudy of the entire question of Jewish calendation, particularly to find the reason for the divergence in the popular dates for the crucifixion.

Millerite scholars like Bliss, Whiting, and Apollos Hale combed the libraries of the Eastern cities and sought to master the intricate problem. Nearly two years were spent in this great search for the facts and the truth. They soon found that the A.D. 33 cross was based on the common rabbinical calendation, which was in well-nigh universal use among the modern Jews, but which was not the calendation in vogue in the first century, at the time of Christ's death.

The Mosaic calendar stipulations, which had dated from the Exodus, were inseparably tied to the three harvest seasons of Palestine. The Passover, and its attendant "wave sheaf" of newly ripened barley, must always come in the time of the barley harvest, which tallied largely with April. And the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, must similarly come when the next harvest, that of the wheat, was ripe. And the remaining harvest, of the vineyards and olive yards, must be out of the way before the journey to Jerusalem was undertaken for the great Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles that followed.

And these Millerite investigators found, further, that after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the consequent dispersion of the Jews over the empire, they had begun to get out of step in the observance of their solemn days in the various parts of the world, sometimes celebrating them on different days in different sections. There was no longer a common center, as at Jerusalem of old, from which word could go out to ensure unison on the day of celebration. And so, as a matter of convenience, and to bring about uniformity in the timing of their festive days, as well as under Roman duress, the beginning of the sacred year was shifted, and its Passover moon tied to the easily ascertained vernal equinox.

This device brought uniformity in celebration, but at the same time violated the express stipulations of the Mosaic law of the feasts. It did not touch the sequence of the days of the week. But it generally threw the whole series of typical feasts back one moon, or month, early, so that the Passover was frequently celebrated in March, the very time of the latter rain in Palestine, and therefore before the barley was ripe. And in consequence Pentecost similarly came before the new wheat had ripened, and the Day of Atonement likewise came in the very midst of the harvest of the vineyards and olive yards. However, there were no longer any annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and the Mosaic feast system had long before lost its former significance.

#### **Protesting Karaites Restore Original Calendation**

This change in the beginning of the Jewish year had been brought about by the rabbis, with headquarters in Sura, Babylonia. And this began to take place about the same time that the change of the Sabbath was accomplished by the apostatizing Christian church—traditionally in the latter part of the fourth century of the Christian Era. So this calendar change would have to be recognized and corrected, in the calculation of the true time of the antitypical day of atonement, or last-day judgment hour of the first angel's message, just as verily as the change of the Sabbath would have to be

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recognized and God's true rest day restored in the final phase of the threefold message, that is, the third message, which the remnant church must proclaim. Both must alike be restored.

By the eighth century certain of the Jews, centered at Jerusalem, began to protest the various traditions and unauthorized changes that had come largely to supersede the Mosaic law. And they specifically protested this change by the rabbis from the Mosaic calendation that involved definite violation of the clear mandate given to Israel.

These protesters became known, in time, as Karaites (or Caraites). They were much like the early Protestants of the Protestant Reformation, protesting the unauthorized departures from the earlier Christian faith. These Karaites returned to the Mosaic barley harvest timing of the sacred feasts, again celebrating them frequently one moon later than the rabbinical Jews and thus restoring, in their practice, the approximate calendation followed by the Jews in Old Testament times. This once more placed their Passovers normally in April, and their Days of Atonement usually in October. And by the Middle Ages some 40 per cent of the Jews were Karaites, including many of the great scholars of Jewry.

So the Millerites found that by the Middle Ages there were these two rival Jewish calendations. The rabbinical Jews used the popular revised calendation, which had been largely adopted through expediency. The Karaite minority attempted to restore the original Mosaic calendation. These were frequently one moon, or month, apart. Moreover, they found that the A.D. 33 cross was based on this later rabbinical calendation, which had not yet come into vogue in the first century A.D., when Christ was crucified. And they found, further, that a Friday Passover could have occurred in A.D. 31, according to the Karaite calendation. This was highly significant.

And they reasoned that as the seventy weeks of years began in 457 B.C., under the operation of the older calendation; and as Christ died in the midst of this seventieth week of years —still under this same type of calendation in the first century

of the new dispensation—therefore the calendation to be followed in determining the end of the 2300 years (which they had now come to believe would occur on the tenth day of the seventh month of the sacred Jewish year 1844) must be calculated under the same principles.

They also found that the Karaite "Jewish year 1843" actually ended at sunset of April 18, 1844. April 19 would therefore be the civil equivalent of the first day of the "Jewish year 1844"—beginning the sunset before. They therefore deliberately corrected the ending of the year "1843" from Miller's original March 21, or the day of the equinox, over to April 18, 1844. This latter date consequently became the last day of "1843," within which Jewish year they had first looked for their Lord to come.

Meantime, this study of Jewish calendation had led them into the study of the Mosaic types—the Passover, the wave sheaf, Pentecost, the Day of Atonement, et cetera, which were fulfilled in the antitypical realities of the Christian Era. And not only were they profoundly impressed that Christ did die in the year (A.D. 31) specified by the great outline time prophecy, in the "midst" of that seventieth week of years; but they were convinced that He died, as our Passover, *on the very day of the month demanded by the Mosaic type* (the fourteenth day of the first month), and that He arose on the very day of the wave sheaf (the sixteenth), as the first fruits of the dead. And the Holy Spirit had fallen when Pentecost, the specified fiftieth day, had "fully come." (Acts 2:1.) These early types had all, therefore, meticulously met their antitypical realities in the events clustered about the *first* Advent. The Millerites consequently came logically to believe that the Day of Atonement, with its attendant Feast of Tabernacles and jubilee release, would similarly be fulfilled in connection with the approaching *second* Advent.

And as the Day of Atonement was clearly appointed for the tenth day of the seventh month, it became a comparatively simple matter to calculate, by means of adding the standard 177 days from the first day of the true *first* Jewish month of

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the year "1844," or April 19, to the first day of the *seventh* month, or October 13, 1844. The notable "tenth day," or great day of atonement, would therefore fall on October 22, 1844. That would surely be the great day of atonement and cleansing of the sanctuary.

Thus the Millerites deliberately, and after extensive and thorough study, rejected the revised rabbinical calendation, with its September 23 day of atonement for 1844, as one moon too early. And they intelligently and unreservedly espoused the Karaite reconstruction of the original Mosaic calendation, and so awaited the great day of atonement one moon later, on October 22. It was this reasoning that led logically and Biblically into the great seventh-month phase, or movement, centered in the seventh month of "1844," instead of the Jewish year "1843." Thus it was that their eyes and hopes were now fixed on October 22. The spring disappointment was somewhat minor, for their eyes were soon fixed upon the seventh-month expectancy and the seemingly inexorable conclusions involved. But the passing of that final day, without the fruition of their hopes, was bitter indeed.

#### **Seventh-Month Movement a Transition Step**

This study of the Mosaic types and of the priestly ministry of the sanctuary service committed to ancient Israel, and fulfilled in the antitypical realities of the Christian dispensation, led the Millerites toward an entirely new concept of the sanctuary and its cleansing. Miller originally regarded the church, or probably the earth, as the sanctuary, which was to be cleansed by fire. But in the seventh-month movement the emphasis began to be turned from earth to heaven as the sanctuary. The one thing, however, that seemed to impress them about the day of atonement was that, when the High Priest had finished His ministry in the heavenly most holy place, He would come out to bless His people on that great day of separation, of judgment, and of cleansing the sanctuary.

As yet they only saw that Christ, after dying as our aton-

ing sacrifice on the cross in A.D. 31, in exact fulfillment of the specification of the seventy-week prophecy, ascended on high to minister as our great high priest in the heaven of heavens, or holy of holies, as they then looked upon it. And to those who wait for Him He would soon appear the second time without sin unto salvation.<sup>94</sup>

They therefore awaited the emergence of Christ our High Priest from the heaven of heavens on the stipulated day of atonement (October 22, 1844), to ble<sup>s</sup>s His waiting people. And that would, they thought, be His second coming. That was as far as their study at that time carried them. The seventh-month movement was therefore a transition step, or stage, between Miller's earlier concept of the earth as the sanctuary to be cleansed by fire, and the perfected understanding of the two apartments of the antitypical heavenly sanctuary, and the corresponding two phases of Christ's heavenly ministry, perceived only after the disappointment by a small group who were to become the Seventh-day Adventists.

And so that seventh-month concept of our great High Priest emerging from the heavenly holy of holies, on the specific day called for in the type, in the end year of the great 2300-year prophecy, was their basis of justification for fixing upon a specific day for their Lord's return. It was primarily the fulfillment of a prophetic type, on a specific day, just as definitely as Christ died on the day of the Passover type, and rose on that day of the wave sheaf type. Not until after the great disappointment, followed by weeks of intense restudy of the sanctuary truth, the types, and related themes, was it all clarified.

<sup>94</sup> See vol. 4.

## IV. Prophecy's Pre-eminence in the Closing Scenes

### Light Dawns on the Third Message

As all are aware, on the morning after October 22, the day of the great disappointment, Hiram Edson and a companion were crossing Edson's field in New York State, meditating and pondering on the why of their disappointment, and the failure of Christ to appear at the time expected. Edson and his Millerite companions had just spent long hours in prayer, most earnestly pleading with God to send light to make clear the nature of their mistake. And now it flashed into his mind that, instead of *coming out of* the most holy place, Christ, our great High Priest, had for the first time *entered into* the most holy place, and had a work to perform therein before coming to this earth.

Edson and his companion sought out a third friend, likewise a student and a searcher for truth. This trio then began an intensive joint study of the entire system of typical Mosaic offerings, the sanctuary and its services, and their antitype in the book of Hebrews. They came to the clear and united conviction that there were two phases to Christ's ministry, not simply one—as previously they had conjectured. They saw that their mistake lay not in the chronology, or dating, of the period, but in the event at its close—a misunderstanding of the nature and length of the day of atonement. The second phase of Christ's ministry had assuredly begun. But it was not to be completed in a twenty-four-hour day at all,

but obviously covered a period, lasting perhaps for years. And so it was that clarification came, and understanding of the larger aspects of the sanctuary service grew clearer and clearer.

#### Key Positions All Spring From Bible

Four beams of added light, one joining the other, began to shine upon and focus on the "little flock"—that faithful little group of Adventist adherents clinging to the leading hand of God in the seventh-month movement, and now beginning to draw together in renewed fellowship after the disappointment of 1844. These four luminous truths were (1) the sanctuary light, (2) the Sabbath truth, (3) the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, and (4) an increased understanding of the final segments of the great outline prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Further advances were made, particularly the specifications of the third angel's message—the mark of the beast, the two-horned beast, the image of the beast, the name and number of the beast, the time of the plagues, and the like.

In the seventh-month movement, although some of the Adventists had seen Jesus Christ as a ministering high priest in the heaven of heavens, they did not as yet perceive the two phases of that heavenly ministry. They simply saw that after He had finished His priestly work in heaven above, or the holy of holies, as they called it, He was to come out on that antitypical day of atonement to bless His waiting people—which would also be His second Advent. The seventh-month movement was consequently a transition step, or stage, between the earlier position of Miller on the sanctuary, and the later, fuller, and more accurate understanding of the sanctuary truth.

But the perception of the sanctuary, Sabbath, and kindred truths of the third message all began before the Spirit of prophecy appeared in the remnant church. This timing is significant. The Spirit of prophecy was not manifested in Maine until about two months after Hiram Edson and his associates, with their open Bibles, had begun the study of the

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Old Testament prophetic types in conjunction with Hebrews 8 and 9 and related scriptures.

Therefore we are truly Protestant in our sanctuary teachings, in that they were derived from the Bible, and the Bible only, as our rule of faith and practice. And it should be added that no major prophetic or doctrinal truth was ever initially brought to this people through the Spirit of prophecy. Rather, our positions were first derived from Scripture, and then were confirmed and sometimes amplified by the Spirit of prophecy, just as details already existent, but which might not otherwise be seen by the human eye unaided, may be brought out by a magnifying glass.

Next note the Sabbath, which has now, in a unique sense, been committed to us for enunciation to the world. But back in the years 1843 and 1844 the Seventh Day Baptists were having days of prayer and fasting that God would raise up other friends in behalf of His downtrodden seventh-day Sabbath. Incidentally, Sabbath observance had been brought over to this country in 1664 by Samuel Mumford, a Seventh Day Baptist, out of a remarkable background of seventeenth-century Sabbath revival in the Old World, which cannot be covered here except for two brief backward glimpses.

In the year 1682 Dr. Peter Chamberlen, noted court physician to three British kings, James I, Charles I, and Charles II, wrote a treatise addressed to the Jews who had been allowed to return to England after their exile. He described himself as "having been the First that endeavored to rescue that commandment from the Triple-crowned-little Horn's Change of Times, and Laws, as was foretold by your Prophet Daniel."<sup>95</sup> Then he proceeds with his treatise. He had the facts concerning the change.

And just a few years later, in 1735, from the German Seventh Day Baptist Ephrata Cloister, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a band of twelve made a trek over to Philadelphia, and stood on the steps of the courthouse and pro-

<sup>95</sup> See forthcoming *Prophetic Faith*, vol. 4.

claimed the seventh day as the Sabbath. On one occasion one of their leaders discoursed on the "power of the beast."<sup>66</sup> Two of their writings charged the change upon the little horn of Daniel 7:25 or the Antichrist.

With us, the restoration of the Sabbath truth developed independent of, and apart from, the sanctuary light, which was discerned in New York State. Sabbath observance, on the other hand, made its appearance in Massachusetts and Maine, and other places, as the result of a tract by Thomas M. Preble, who, in the summer of 1844, had in turn probably received the Sabbath truth from Rachel Oakes (later Preston), Seventh Day Baptist and then Adventist, of Washington, New Hampshire.

The Spirit of prophecy, on the other hand, was manifested up in Maine in December, 1844. Thus its appearance was providentially timed, for it came at an hour when men were studying desperately, and wondering seriously whether God had really been leading in the great seventh-month movement. Christ had not come as expected. The righteous dead had not been raised. The Advent believers were still in this same old world, which had now been made bitterly hostile by the episode of the disappointment. The new sanctuary concept—with its understanding concerning the High Priest entering into instead of coming out of the most holy, and now ministering in the second and final phase for the faithful—had not yet spread beyond New York State. And Sabbath observance was still confined to two or three Adventist preachers as a personal practice. And with it all there was general uncertainty.

It was just at this time that Ellen Harmon (later White) was given her first and what was perhaps the most remarkable vision of her whole career as a special messenger for God—that of December, 1844. She then saw the pilgrim pathway stretching clear through to the city of God, with the light of that "true midnight cry," shining like the penetrating

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

beam of a giant searchlight, reaching clear through to the celestial city. She saw the marching saints. She saw the perplexity of some and the weariness of others. The city proved to be a long way off—much, much farther than any had anticipated. The journey was such a long one. And some, in discouragement, took their eyes off the city and the lighted way and stumbled off into the dark and wicked world below.<sup>97</sup>

The view did not explain the nature of their mistake. It simply gave assurance that the hand of God was definitely in that seventh-month movement. This particular concept, it should also be added, was contrary to her own personal views, as well as to those of most of the Adventists. But it held them steady while they studied from their Bibles the nature of the disappointment and found their way through to full understanding. And later, when the emerging Sabbatarian group had reached their conclusions from the Bible, the Spirit of prophecy spoke out to confirm and sustain their sound positions. It is not only impressive but awesome to see how God has timed these sequences, and the way they all came to be fitted together under His guiding grace. We are truly Protestant in our relation to the Bible as the source of our faith.

And now, to these three new truths—the sanctuary, Sabbath, and Spirit of prophecy—were added those clear Adventist teachings carried over from the seventh-month movement. These were (1) the imminent, premillennial second Advent, (2) the great outline prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, with their integrated time periods, (3) the first and second messages, of the judgment hour and Babylon's fall, and (4) the immortality only through Christ. To these, other related truths began to be studied and added, particularly the implications of the third message.

### Third Message New Focal Point of Study

After this period of individual or small-group study came the initial series of Sabbath Conferences of 1848, in which unity was achieved concerning the component features of

<sup>97</sup> Ellen G. White in *Day-Star*, Jan. 24, 1846, p. 31.

the third angel's message, the foundations of the Adventist Church were strongly and firmly laid, and the fundamentals of our faith were clearly defined and established. These conferences were blessed occasions. Their sessions were marked by the spirit of importunate prayer. Entire nights were spent in earnest intercession before God. The participants reviewed and reasserted their faith in the major outline and time prophecies and reaffirmed adherence to the basic principles of the gospel and the evangelical faith.

But the area of prophetic study centered in the stipulations of the third angel's message. The identity of the beast was unquestioned. But what was his "mark," his "name," his "number"? And what were this second beast and the "image"? (Miller had thought the two beasts were perhaps two symbols of Rome—civil and ecclesiastical, or pagan and papal.) Was this two-horned beast Protestantism perhaps involving another power, in the Western world, as some had before suggested? And what about the timing of the plagues? Were they poured out during the period of the French Revolution? Was the fifth plague visited upon the seat of the beast when Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner in 1798? Or were all the plagues yet future? And what about Revelation 17 to 19: the woman on the scarlet beast, with its seven heads and ten horns; the fall of mystic Babylon and her final overthrow in plagues and judgments of God? These were the questions yet to be answered.

These were the features that now became new focal points of prophetic study. As the great spotlight of interest and investigation had slowly shifted forward, along through the centuries, and rested first on the first angel's message and then on the second, as they came into being, so it was now focused on the third message. Thus the message concerning the beast and his mark—and his name and number, and the image of the beast, and all the other involvements—began slowly to unfold and clarify until the essential structure of the Advent faith, in the form of the threefold message as we know it today, was progressively brought into being.

### Everlasting Gospel Adapted to Every Age

In the grand prophetic outline there has always been a present truth for every age—a special emphasis for every time or epoch as it comes to pass. There was a present truth in Peter's day—Rome's dominance was the setting, as the fourth and final world power in the prophetic series of four, with the breakup to follow. And when Rome's division was under way, that became the next area of present truth. After that the dread Antichrist was to come, that disastrous "falling away," which was to be identified and exposed. That too, when it became an actuality, was present truth during the Middle Ages. And finally, the events of the last days, and of the imminent second Advent, were to be stressed as the last present truth for man. Thus the spotlight of emphasis has gradually shifted forward along the master outline, from point to point and place to place, as history has fulfilled prophecy. So each major period has always had an immediate present-truth emphasis.

There is, consequently, a distinctive present truth for this present hour. In the great prophecy of Matthew 24, enunciated by Jesus Christ, the supreme Prophet of all time, He makes announcement that when "*this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . then shall the end come.*" Matt. 24:14. Be it never forgotten, therefore, that ours is fundamentally a *gospel* message. It is the same everlasting, saving gospel of all ages, only now with special emphasis on the approaching establishment of that prophesied kingdom of God for which the saints of old have most earnestly longed and prayed and labored. Nevertheless, it is to be a genuine *gospel*, in and for these latter times.

Our divine charter, our inspired mandate for today, is amplified under the terms of the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-10, with its emphasis on the tremendous events of these last times. But these, in turn, are simply the unfolding of the final phase, and the accompanying closing events of that same everlasting gospel. Timeless, unchanged and un-

changeable, undeviating and undiminished, the everlasting gospel is wondrously adapted and applied to every major epoch of man, and climaxes with the great judgment-hour message and its ensuing expansion into the threefold message. There is but one gospel for all time. But it attains a fullness and completeness, and is to receive in these last days an emphasis never before known. The times and the events in the climax of the plan of redemption are to be faithfully declared. But never is the essence of the glorious *gospel heart* to be overshadowed—the transforming power of God unto salvation in every age.

It is a complete gospel we are to herald. First, it saves from the past, through justification, caring completely for the guilt and the penalty of all past sins through the substitutionary, atoning death of our Saviour. Second, it saves from the present power, dominion, and mastery of sin, through sanctification by the indwelling of Christ in the soul through the Holy Spirit, who comes to the redeemed child of God as the "personal presence of Christ to the soul,"<sup>88</sup> as Mrs. White so aptly phrased it. And third, it will save completely and finally from the future presence and possibility of sin, through glorification, when Christ comes the second time in power and great glory. Brethren in the ministry, that is the gospel for which the world is waiting, for which it is longing, for which it is dying. And that is the glorious gospel we are commissioned to give to the world.

It cannot be overemphasized that prophecy is primarily the depiction of the great redemptive acts and provisions of God down through the ages, unfolding the relationship of part to part and development to development. Ponder the grand outline and the progression of events that carry us down through the ages. It takes in the chronology of the plan of redemption, the divine plan of the ages in outline, the great controversy between Christ and Satan in sequence, and particularly the glorious outcome. That is where, in the

<sup>88</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1892, p. 738.

latter times, the present-truth threefold message enters the picture. Its setting is, of course, in Revelation 12 to 14.

Observe the logical sequence. In the first eleven verses of Revelation 13 we find the depiction of the great apostasy, and learn that the dragon of Revelation 12, symbolizing pagan Rome, gave his seat, his power, and great authority to this beast power. The seat was given over by Constantine, and power and great authority were legally confirmed by Justinian. And then, finally, the special 1260-year dominance of the Papacy was to end with the deadly wound by the sword, which occurred in 1798. But just as that was taking place the prophet saw another gentler, more youthful power emerging from the earth, the Western world, which would do a special work. That is presented in verses 11-18. Then we are carried into the unfolding outline of the threefold message due the world at that time, which is so familiar to all of us—the heralding of the hour of God's judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the warning against the beast and his identifying mark.

Nevertheless, all this was to be but the unfolding of the “everlasting gospel,” with due application and emphasis upon the time and warning features, as the negative side, while at the same time heralding the positive saving gospel for this time. Thus: “The whole of the gospel is embraced in the third angel's message, and in all our work the truth is to be presented as it is in Jesus.”<sup>60</sup> The two are to be inseparable.

It is this combined gospel invitation and warning, keyed to the hour, that result in a people keeping “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” as seen in Revelation 14:12. And this sublime prophecy comes to its climax in the second coming of the Son of man in power and great glory. That is the harvesttime, when the obedient “wheat” of earth is gathered into the eternal garner of God, and the grapes of disobedience are cast into the wine press of His wrath.

<sup>60</sup> E. G. White manuscript 19, 1900.

That is the inspired, infallible picture of the everlasting gospel, operating in its present and final setting.

### Prophecy Basically the Portrayal of Redemption

We have just observed that prophecy is not merely the inspired outline of the course of empire, and of the vicissitudes of the church, though these form an integral part of it; that it is not merely a divine depiction of the great controversy between good and evil, though that is likewise a vital, component factor. Instead, prophecy is fundamentally the portrayal of the tremendous redemptive activity of God, centering around and exhibited in the first and second Advents of Christ, with all that lies between these transcendent events, and all that follows thereafter.

These embrace the heart not only of the gospel but of the great seventy-weeks-of-years prophecy of Daniel 9, and the inseparable 2300-year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, tied in therewith. The first of these prophecies reaches its focal point in the cutting off of Jesus Christ as our atoning sacrifice in the midst of the epochal seventieth week of the series, followed by His resurrection and ascension to the Father.

The second, and related or interlocked, prophecy compasses the first phase of Christ's priestly ministry in heaven above, after the sacrifice of Himself on earth; and its climax is reached with His entry upon the second and final phase of His heavenly ministry—the judgment phase, which is to end in the close of probation, the transcendent scenes of Christ's second Advent, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the translation of the righteous living, the cutting off of the wicked, the binding of Satan, and the great millennial period. And from thence it leads on to the final destruction of all evil and the restoration of all righteousness, with the new heaven and earth forevermore.

That is the essence of all prophecy, with Christ as the central figure, who should ever be kept foremost in all our study and exposition of prophecy. The sequence of nations, the persecution of the church, the ascendancy of ecclesiastical

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apostasy, the time of its dominance, and numerous other related features are simply waymarks along the grand highway of redemption.

And so the great truths of prophecy, unfolding like the dawn, have steadily advanced. And they will become more and more brilliant as this movement approaches its destined climax. And the reason for it all is specifically given by the Spirit of prophecy: "Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole."<sup>100</sup>

The outshining radiance of Christ, our righteousness, will be brought as never before into the final phase of the preaching of the third angel's message. That is applied righteousness by faith, which will become increasingly the center and throbbing heart of the threefold message, without the diminution of one iota of our distinctive warning message for the world. It is this that will illuminate our final witness.

### Prophecy's Place in the Final Scenes

We are assured that the intensive, reverent, and loyal study of prophecy will bring tremendous rewards and imperative advances. We are told that it will bring most tangible results. Observe these vital statements on the relation of prophecy to the welfare of the church:

"Let not the solemn scenes, that prophecy has revealed are soon to take place, be left untouched. If our people were awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed by John, such a reformation would be made in our churches that many more would believe our message. . . . Advance new principles, and crowd in clear-cut truth."<sup>101</sup>

That is clearly a reformation resulting in increased soul winning. Note again:

"There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. . . . When we as a people understand what this

<sup>100</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 198.

<sup>101</sup> Ellen G. White in *Pacific Union Recorder*, Jan. 14, 1904.

book [the Revelation] means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival."<sup>102</sup>

We are all aware of the genuine revival and reformation insistently called for in the Spirit of prophecy writings. Consecrated study—a deeper and more spiritual delving into the prophecies—will help to bring about just such a revival. Again we read, "When the books of Daniel and the Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience."<sup>103</sup>

Does not the solemn importance of the matters that we are considering become increasingly clear? Note once more:

"Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God will bring from the books of Daniel and Revelation truth that is inspired by the Holy Spirit. They will start into action forces that cannot be repressed. The lips of children will be opened to proclaim the mysteries that have been hidden from the minds of men."<sup>104</sup> (Italics supplied.)

Study the prophecies anew, we are solemnly admonished, and use them wisely to the maximum of their power. God speed the day! We need to take these entreaties most seriously to heart. Fellow workers, this is the day of the listening ear, the day of the inquiring lip, the day of the receptive heart. This is the day that calls for new approaches commensurate with the hour, for new techniques adequate for the time, for new skills and labors adapted to these challenging opportunities, and for new approaches and appeals. This calls for a new candor concerning the heart of the Adventist mission and message. It involves a new approach to mankind, with emphasis on Christ as the radiant center of all, and righteousness by faith as the glowing heart of the third angel's message—the "third angel's message in verity." And best of all, it involves new results.

All this calls for a material strengthening of our presentations. We have been too apologetic, too timid, too cringing. We have too often hidden our name and our witness. But the spirit of inquiry is abroad in the land. Distraught men

<sup>102</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 112, 113.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>104</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 17, 1897, p. 514.

want to know what Seventh-day Adventists have to say concerning this dark hour and the troubled future. Brethren, we should be ready with the answer whenever the opportunity presents itself. Yea, more; we should wisely create opportunities. We should be tactfully aggressive. We must not fail God in these tremendous times.

#### **Differentiate Between Fundamentals and Inconsequential**

We are to put prophetic things first, and keep secondaries in their subordinate place. There is a commonly recognized—as well as a Spirit-of-prophecy-designated—group of primaries, fundamentals, essentials, or centralities that constitutes the essence of Adventism. If we believe in and adhere to these fundamentals, we are truly Adventist. If we do not so believe, we are not truly Adventist—no matter what we may believe about secondary items. And upon these primaries we are, and will continue to be, united.

But there are, on the periphery, many secondaries or non-essentials over which there have ever been, and will doubtless continue to be, honest and legitimate differences of opinion. But we are to be judged by our loyalty and adherence to the fundamentals, not inconsequential. We have no right to judge one's fundamental allegiance to this message by his view on some secondary matters.

On essentials there must be unity. On nonessentials, and upon many details, there should ever be charity and liberty. It was thus with our pioneers. Our difficulties today arise when we confuse these two categories, and place a secondary in a primary place, agitate concerning it, cause division over it, and judge our brethren by a self-chosen, arbitrary measuring rod of orthodoxy on such minor items. Let us concentrate on the great fundamentals of prophecy. We shall then be so fully engaged with primary matters that we shall have scant time for the inconsequential minutiae that have little effect upon our happiness, and still less upon our salvation. Let us preserve a wholesome balance and maintain a clear differentiation. Let us confirm and emphasize the verities of the

Advent faith, and not speculate and debate upon the moot points, or press upon dubious areas.

"We are not to permit our minds to be diverted by minutiae that practically amount to nothing. If our brethren would consider the important matters pertaining to eternal life and eternal death, many of the smaller matters that they desire so much to adjust, would adjust themselves."<sup>105</sup>

### The Fundamentals Clearly Defined

Prophecy, in its larger aspects, should have an increasingly greater place in our colleges, our Seminary, our preaching, our teaching, and above all in our personal study. But in it all we are to emphasize the Christ-centered fundamentals. Around the fringe, in these many inconsequentials, let us avoid making issues of minor matters, or dogmatizing upon such items as have oftentimes brought division or acrimony into the church. Let us never forget that the real landmarks, the actual fundamentals, are relatively simple and few in number—but basic. And these are clearly pictured for us in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*:

"The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth; [also] the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks."<sup>106</sup>

And this inspired counsel, it might be added, was given when men in a former Bible Conference had been greatly agitated as to whether the Huns or the Alamanni constituted one of the ten horns of Rome's division. And the protagonists of the two positions were so worked up over this minor issue

<sup>105</sup> E. G. White letter 16, 1903.

<sup>106</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 30, 31.

that when one would meet another on the street, he might ask, "Are you a Hun or an Alamanni?" Mrs. White rebuked "this slight difference of ideas" that was allowed "to unsettle the faith, to cause apostasy, to break up unity, to sow discord." That is wise counsel that should ever be heeded.

#### Designated Place in Transmission Line

We have seen how that portion of the book of Daniel pertaining to and sealed until the last days<sup>107</sup> was largely reserved for understanding until the early nineteenth century. The problem of its interpretation involved the precise relationship of the seventy weeks to the 2300 years, in order that the exact beginning and ending of the 2300, and, consequently, the transcendent events to take place at their close, might be calculated. But the background for this calculation has been a gradual, progressive build-up of sound interpretative principles covering the past two thousand years. The history of prophetic exposition is really the tracing of the reverent outreach of man after sound and accurate interpretation, and the right application of true prophetic principles. It was limited and faulty at first, but progressive and corrective in development, and has led on to the fuller light of today.

Our position at this time may be described as the logical and inevitable consummation of this progressive unfolding of prophetic interpretation, perceived as fast and as far as history has clearly fulfilled prophecy. We are thus tied inextricably into, and are dependent upon, the true interpretation of the stalwarts of the centuries past. We consequently find ourselves to be their legitimate inheritors and virtually the only expositors, at this time, of this majestic line of prophetic exposition covering the entire Christian Era.

The greatest and most reverent students of prophecy of the past—Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant—are therefore our spiritual ancestors or forefathers in this unique line of

<sup>107</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 585.

unfolding exposition. Ours is the consummation of the prophetic faith of these illustrious spiritual forerunners, recovered and retained, perfected and completed, and fitted to meet the needs and expectations of time's last hour. These are the "foundations of many generations," as we have seen, which we, as restorers of the Sabbath, have been commissioned to raise up in these latter times.

That is our relationship to the past. And it is a position of strength, yes, of invulnerability. Men cannot scoff at our positions without scoffing, perforce, at the greatest and most godly scholarship of all past time in this field. They cannot repudiate these prophetic truths without repudiating the teachings of their own founding fathers. This they are beginning to see. And that undercuts the entire platform of valid criticism. This very situation stops the sneers of those inclined to ridicule and make sport of so-called new and strange positions invented by modern upstarts.

May I press the point that this places us in a highly favorable position, where disdain is steadily changing to wholesome respect. This acknowledgment may be reluctant with some, but with others it is confessed with admiration. Such a readjustment of the situation changes our whole relationship to the modern religious world. Men are forced to acknowledge that we are respectable Christians, not a freakish cult or sect, and that in prophetic interpretation we, rather than they, are the really orthodox.

More and more we are coming to be rightfully recognized as a bona fide Christian body or denomination, not an erratic, illiterate offshoot. This has recast our position with many. Our status is being steadily changed, as thoughtful, fair-minded men have come to understand our unique position in the Christian world today. It is we, not they, who have picked up the fallen torch of prophetic interpretation from the hands of the preoccupied post-Reformation leaders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is we, not they, who are now carrying on.

We should be keenly conscious of our rightful place.

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God designs that His people today, like Israel of old, shall be "the head, and not the tail" (Deut. 28:13) in the heralding of prophetic truth. We should be recognized as standing out in front, at the head of the line, sharing light and understanding with others, and changing the darksome pathway of history into the luminous highway of prophecy.

#### Following the Blueprint Brings Results

The gathering up of the gems of prophetic truth that have lain scattered through the accumulated rubbish of error over the centuries, and the resetting of them in the framework of the "everlasting gospel," so they will meet "the wants . . . of the minds and hearts of fallen men who could not be reached by any other agency," is already being richly rewarded. And it is only beginning. This work, I believe with all my heart, has been done in the timing and providence of God, so there might come into our hands a special means of appeal and evidence that would reach men who could be touched only by that approach.

As to the results of following such a Spirit-of-prophecy-designated course, the publication of these substantial findings on the real ancestry of our prophetic interpretation is already having its effect on scholars in the religious and educational fields. They are changing from disdain and deprecation to respect for Seventh-day Adventist positions. Various letters tell of what these findings are coming to mean to them, and express their indebtedness to Seventh-day Adventists.

Such have come to believe that we have a rightful place in the Christian church, instead of belonging in the category of the cults and strange sects, to which we have usually been assigned. A new day has assuredly dawned when religious leaders come to recognize that Seventh-day Adventists are not a narrow, peculiar little sect in the rising religious tide of these latter times, but have a rightful place in God's great line of Christian churches. A number of these men have gone on record to the effect that Seventh-day Adventists have made

a contribution to the Christian church at large that no one else has ever attempted, and all Christendom is indebted to them.

A profound change is taking place in the minds of various prominent editors, writers, and teachers. Remarkable book reviews have appeared not only in the United States and Canada but in Britain. Many of these reviewers are changing from the erstwhile antagonism to wholesome appreciation. This is quite natural and understandable. For if they challenge the fundamental positions that we hold on prophecy, they are thereby challenging and repudiating the positions of their own founding fathers. Ours is a heritage springing alike from Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant sources. And that very fact gives us a many-sided advantage, for we can call upon each group to witness to the historical soundness and supporting testimony of this past scholarship.

Note a few tangible results. A year ago a prominent educator, head of a department in an Ohio college, wrote that he was producing a new book, to be called The American Church. It would deal with the solid, substantial, evangelical bodies in America, with each denominational sketch prepared by a representative of the respective denomination. He had already brought out a previous volume dealing with the Pentecostals, Latter Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, Salvation Army, and the like. But now he wanted to present the substantial group—the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Reformed, Episcopalians, et cetera. And he asked that a chapter of some twenty pages be written with documentation and bibliography that would set forth the beliefs, history, church polity, and present activities of Seventh-day Adventists. [This was prepared and accepted, and is coming out this winter. And the volume, mark you, is confined to the strong, leading, respected churches—with Seventh-day Adventists assigned their rightful place therein.]

Again, through the reading of these volumes on prophetic interpretation several editors of major encyclopedias, reli-

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gious and secular, have come to accept articles on the history, beliefs, and work of Seventh-day Adventists that give a true picture. In other instances, misleading and distorted statements concerning Adventists, appearing in previous editions have been rectified. Surely the Lord is working in behalf of His church in this way.

I am persuaded that ten years ago such things would have been unthinkable. I do not believe they could have happened at that time. Back before the first world war the modernist preachers were complacent and set in their belief that the world was on the verge of the millennium, with the dawn of eternal peace just ahead. Then came World War I, the shock of which rocked them back on their heels. But they found their way out of the dilemma with the plausible explanation that it had been "the war to end all wars." We now stand at the dawn of perpetual peace, they confidently asserted. But World War II broke forth. And again their complacency was tremendously shaken and their confidence in their own theories fatally undermined. Man after man began to say, "We have been mistaken." Now some of these men are beginning to inquire, "What do you Adventists have to say about these troubled times? And what of the future? What do you understand Bible prophecy to indicate?"

It is sobering but inspiring to get letters like one from the president of a Baptist seminary in Canada—a man who had been so prejudiced that he would not appear on the same platform with an Adventist in a temperance rally a few years ago, and yet is now giving three full pages in his journal to commending and publicizing these Adventist volumes on prophecy, and also writing editorials on the Antichrist, molded by the evidence presented.

Another letter, from the head of the department of history of a great university, bears a handwritten "P.S." at the close, stating that he has "channels" through which he can be of help to us. And he has been. Still another, from one of the leading Bible teachers of America, tells of learning that a leading religious journal was planning to bring out an anti-

Adventist number. He wrote me that, upon learning about it, he wrote to the editor and said, "Keep your hands off the Seventh-day Adventists. They are Christians. Don't touch them." And the proposed issue did not appear.

Such incidents could be continued at length, but time and space forbid. Some of these men, my fellow workers, are proving to be friends indeed, and behind the scenes they are lifting their voices in our behalf. I firmly believe that some such men, as we are assured in those penetrating Spirit of prophecy statements, will yet take their stand by our side in the crisis hour of earth's last movements. And this better approach on prophetic interpretation is doing its allotted part, just as predicted. We never make a mistake when we follow the blueprint.

### To Reach the Neglected Upper Classes

In pondering these matters I am led to think of the challenges brought before us by the Spirit of prophecy concerning certain neglected upper classes—groups who have heretofore not had adequate opportunity to hear God's message for today or to know what we really believe. In our opening study we noted how we are destined to come out of obscurity into the spotlight of scrutiny and investigation, where the world's great men will search us through and through. And we are warned that if we are not confirmed and established, if we are not thorough Bible students, "the wisdom of the world's great men will be too much for us."<sup>108</sup> A paralleling statement is that "the wisdom of the world's great men will lead us astray."<sup>109</sup> We are admonished that our ministry should be far in advance of the position that is occupied today, and that now, when the time has come for men to spring into action, "they have the preparation to make."<sup>110</sup> How tragic!

We need to sense God's solicitous concern over these

<sup>108</sup> E. G. White letter 65, 1886.

<sup>109</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 546.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 715.

neglected "higher ranks of society." We are told that He "will add to the ranks of His people men of ability and influence who are to act their part in the warning of the world."<sup>111</sup> We are not to be content merely to bear our warning witness to them. Some of these men are yet to respond and link arms with us in the march to the kingdom, and join in the final heralding of the message. We must not forget the Protestant ministry, the professional men, and others of prominence. Hear this:

"We have a work to do for the ministers of other churches. God wants them to be saved. . . . We must labor for them earnestly. . . . The call to be given 'in the highways,' is to be proclaimed to all who have an active part in the world's work, to the teachers and leaders of the people."<sup>112</sup>

And catch this further elucidation: "Those who bear heavy responsibilities in public life—physicians and teachers, lawyers and judges, public officers and businessmen—should be given a clear, distinct message."<sup>113</sup>

This is a clear mandate. Here is an inescapable commission in our preaching blueprint. We have neglected this partly because we have not known how to labor for these classes. We are also to bear this in mind: Leaders are to be "sought out with tender affection and brotherly regard."

"Men in business life, in high positions of trust, men with large inventive faculties and scientific insight, men of genius, teachers of the gospel whose minds have not been called to the special truths for this time,—these should be the first to hear the call. To them the invitation must be given."<sup>114</sup>

Too often we have reversed matters and made an unfortunate approach to a community. We have all too frequently pitched our tent or established our church on the wrong side of the railroad track. We have pulled against the tide, and labored under the handicap of prejudice, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation. These mistakes should not be perpetuated. We should go out into the *highways*, Mrs. White

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 110.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 77, 78.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>114</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 230.

urges, as well as into the byways and the hedges.<sup>115</sup> Even some of the rulers, we are told, will respond, and will stand with us in the hour of crisis. The picture that is brought before us by the Spirit of prophecy is truly amazing.

Some of the "rulers," the same counsels tell us, whom Satan now "controls"—for "God has His agents, even among the rulers"—will yet be converted to the truth. . . . At the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble.<sup>116</sup> Think of it! Rulers, among others of prominence—and some of these (former enemies), joining the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists. Yes, even former persecutors. Do we dare believe it? Brethren, I am just simplehearted enough to believe that when the Lord's messenger to the Advent people has thus spoken, we shall see these very things fulfilled. God help us to rise to His expectation for such an hour. And here is essential counsel on the method of approach:

"There are some who are specially fitted to work for the higher classes. . . . Let those who work for the higher classes bear themselves with true dignity. . . . We must become exponents of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, by which our own sins have been forgiven. Only thus can we reach the higher classes."<sup>117</sup> (Italics supplied.)

That has been our weakness and our lack. The fundamental emphasis indicated in this blessed counsel is that Christ is to be made foremost in our every approach—Christ exalted in every sermon, every song, every prayer, in clear, winsome, present-truth setting and urgency. This is the priceless secret of access to the hearts of these neglected classes, some of whom have been under the impression that we are not even Christians, but just some legalistic sect. And all too often, in our anxiety for immediate decision on the law and the Sabbath, we have occasioned these misunderstandings and created our own difficulties. But observe:

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 230.

<sup>116</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 203, 204.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 82.

"The greatest men of earth are not beyond the power of a wonder-working God. . . . God will convert men who occupy responsible places, men of intellect and influence. . . . Time and money will be consecrated to God, means will be brought into His treasury, talent and influence will be converted to the truth, and new efficiency and power will be added to the church."<sup>118</sup>

"Some who were once enemies will become valuable helpers, advancing the work with their means and their influence."<sup>119</sup> "Sometimes hearts of the persecutors are susceptible of divine impressions, just as was the heart of the apostle Paul."<sup>120</sup>

Thank God for these marvelous assurances. This movement is not going to close in obscurity in a corner, but in the open in a blaze of glory. It is my profound conviction that the majority of God's children are still in the churches of Babylon, mother and daughters. But under the power of the loud cry thousands in a day will heed the call and will come out, and there will be one fold and one Shepherd. That is our hope and our goal. Every consecrated effort should be bent to that end. And prophecy is to play its vital part.

### The Time and the Call to Advance

A little more than a century has now passed since 1848, and we are again in a Bible Conference—some 450 of us—in 1952. The time has fully come for a definite advance, a forward move, a mighty expansion, with corresponding spiritual power to possess and accompany us. Here is God's message to this people for this hour, as recorded in Isaiah 54:

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left. . . . Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded. . . . For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed; saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 83. (See *Gospel Workers*, pp. 344-350.)

<sup>119</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Sept. 30, 1902, p. 7.

<sup>120</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 238.

every tongue that shall rise against thee, in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord." Verses 2-5, 10, 17.

It is wonderfully comforting to have the consciousness of the distinct guidance of God behind us and the assurance of His leading providences going on before us. We now need greatly to enlarge our vision and definitely strengthen our stakes. God wants us to be the pre-eminent preachers and teachers of Christ in all the world. He wants us to be the foremost exponents of true and full righteousness by faith anywhere on this globe. He desires us to be the foremost expositors of Christ-centered prophecy to be found anywhere among men. And in and through it all He wishes us to be the pre-eminent preachers of the everlasting gospel among all heralds of the gospel.

Men should turn instinctively to us to find Christ and His message for men in this final crisis hour of human history. We must not fail the expectation of our God, or of the world, in this time of tremendous opportunity and responsibility. In all things He desires us to be the head and not the tail, to be in the front of the battle, and not in the rear. And the sure word of prophecy is to be kept in the forefront as never before, as the foundation and authorization of our faith:

"Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' . . . Let our ministers and teachers explain these prophecies. . . . Let them leave out of their discourses matters of minor consequence, and present the truths that will decide the destiny of souls."<sup>121</sup>

Never should the saving gospel be separated from the majestic prophecies of the Word.

### **Rising to the Challenge of God's Expectation**

Now is the time for us to spring into action. Now is the time for us to "arise, shine," and to enter increasingly into

<sup>121</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 196.

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our rightful place of vantage. This is the time to lengthen our cords, to strengthen our stakes, and to break out on the right hand and on the left. This is the time to let this old world know that there is a movement on earth that represents the voice of God in these latter times. Ours is not a strange wild cry, but a guiding voice in the wilderness of these modern times of despair, that is carrying forward God's message of the centuries. Through us, men are to hear the faithful witness of the past. Ours are the hands that must raise up the foundations of many generations, that must revive the apostolic teachings and restore the Protestant Reformation positions. Yea, more, through us they are carried on to consummation.

I call upon this Bible Conference to rise to the challenge of God, to new standards brought before us, to new heights of ministry, to new heights of fidelity to the Word, and to a new emphasis upon the great centralities of our faith. Let us be done with minor and moot questions that sometimes obsess the minds of men for months and years on end and become their great disconcerting burden. Mrs. White counsels us to put those divisive things away and concentrate on the great centralities. Then our time, our minds, and our hearts will be so filled with the greater things of the kingdom of God and the consummation of the great controversy that we shall have no time or interest in the lesser matters.

As we have seen, in the mind and plan of God the clear principles and applications of prophetic interpretation that have been built up through the centuries are to come to their peak of consummation in these latter days. But in connection with such emphasis we are as never before to uplift the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. We are to dwell upon His spotless righteousness, which will clothe us completely, covering the sins of the past and imparting to us the very righteousness of Christ for triumphant daily living, and which will carry us through the coming time of trouble when we must stand without a mediator during the final hour of test.

### We Must Not Fail God in Time's Last Hour

In closing I would submit that there is but one valid reason and satisfying explanation for our existence today—that the hour for the proclamation of a great prophetic truth had come. And with the coming of the hour the requisite heralds appeared, in accordance with God's uniform pattern of operation throughout the centuries. Thus it was that a movement was born; and the hand of God was manifestly in its establishment, its upbuilding, and its direction. It is wonderfully comforting to know that when the hour comes for a vital message to be given, God sends forth His Spirit and lays His hand, as it were, upon the shoulders of men widely scattered throughout the various countries of Christendom—and they respond and declare His message.

The background for our witness to the world has been logical and progressive, and is inescapable. Ours is the inevitable climax of two thousand years of unfolding prophecy and steadily increasing perception of its true intent. Remember that each major feature in the great outline prophecies was perceived as it came to pass. And each vital time period was recognized when men were living therein, or as its time of terminus was approaching. And each step has been logically progressive and unassailable.

The case for this final phase of prophecy, buttressed by two thousand years of background and build-up, therefore becomes unanswerable and unassailable when studied in the light of evidence and of reason. It is the product of "many generations" of the conspicuous scholarship of the centuries. It sweeps in every loyal religious group in its illustrious background. It is not the invention of some modern upstart sect. Instead, it is the outgrowth of the Christian church as a whole, and is the product of the reverent scholarship of the entire Christian Era. If others now refuse to accept the message due, they thereby repudiate the fundamental principles of sound, historical, prophetic interpretation, handed down through the centuries—the year-day principle, for example,

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first enunciated by Jewish and early Christian scholars, then carried forward by medieval Jews and Renaissance and pre-Reformation leaders, and finally restored to prominence by all Reformation and post-Reformation groups, and transmitted to the New World as well.

But men turned aside from all this to adopt a specious postmillennialism, and belatedly laid hold of a Jesuit-spawned Futurism and Preterism that have deflected the exposition of the two major wings of Protestantism. But when the witness of Protestantism at large fails, God must perforce call out a people from the various Protestant churches and form a special remnant church of His own, having the full faith of Jesus and keeping all the commandments of God. And that, comrades in service, is precisely why we are here. That, I reaffirm, is the reason for our existence. We are here in direct response to the call and commission of God. That is the source of authority and of our authorizing credentials. Such is our heavenly mandate and mission.

If we stand alone, if we seem odd and different, it is because others have turned away from the founding platform of their forefathers. If we seem isolated, it is because they have repudiated the true prophetic principles of the church and the sound prophetic platform built up over the centuries. It is clearly because such organizations now refuse to hear the summons of God to give the trumpet the certain sound that He designs for this hour, that we have been called into being. His message must be given, and His call should ever be vividly in our consciousness.

So, irrespective of others, here we stand, God helping us. We cannot do otherwise. If others refuse to speak forth the message of God, we cannot and will not fail Him in this tremendous hour. That is the soundness, the orthodoxy, the logic, and the glory of our position. And in thus walking in the light, we are the most favored people in all the world today.

# **The Imminence of Christ's Second Coming**

By

ARTHUR S. MAXWELL



## Adventists and the Advent

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. . . . For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Heb. 10:35-37.

### Introduction

In the three periods allotted to the study of this highly important theme we shall consider it under the following headings:

- I. *Adventists and the Advent*
- II. *Ten Great Signs of Christ's Soon Coming*
- III. *The Final Frontiers of Prophecy*

Under (I) we shall deal with the opinions and attitudes of Adventists past and present toward the imminence of Christ's return. Under (II) we plan to present, as the title suggests, the current evidences of the nearness of this event; and under (III) we shall consider those parts of the prophetic word that still require fulfillment before our Lord can come.

### Definition

To avoid misunderstanding as to what we mean by “The Imminence of Christ's Second Coming,” we define the terms as follows:

By *Christ* we mean the Son of God, who in the ever-mysterious and ever-wonderful incarnation, came from heaven as a babe to Bethlehem; who lived in this evil world

without sin, revealing the perfect character and infinite love of God throughout His earthly sojourn; who died on Calvary for man's redemption, rose from the tomb to demonstrate His lordship over death, and ascended to the right hand of the Eternal Father to be the mediator of His people.

By *second coming* we mean the literal, personal, visible, audible, and incomparably glorious return of "this same Jesus"; that the Christ of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Gethsemane, Golgotha, and Olivet will be seen by human eyes descending from heaven with a retinue of holy angels, amid splendor and pageantry befitting His triumphant reappearance as King of kings and Lord of lords.

By *imminent* we mean near, close at hand, or, as Webster defines the word, "Threatening to occur immediately; near at hand; overhanging; impending, as in an 'impending storm.'" We use it because it suggests both indefiniteness and urgency. It enables us to avoid the charge of time setting and yet declare with conviction that "he is near, even at the doors."

### Importance

The importance of the second Advent doctrine to Seventh-day Adventists cannot be overemphasized. It is in very truth a life-or-death matter to our movement.

Seventh-day Adventists are irrevocably committed to belief in, and proclamation of, the imminent second coming of Christ. Should we for any reason whatever repudiate this truth, or cease to proclaim it with sincerity, we would destroy ourselves. Openly or secretly to deny the nearness of our Lord's return would be to invite the disintegration of our cause.

The great second Advent movement was founded upon the conviction, resolutely and uncompromisingly held by our pioneers, that the long-anticipated return of Christ was near at hand. Without this conviction there would have been no Seventh-day Adventists or any Seventh-day Adventist movement.

In other words, we were Adventists before we had any organization. We were Adventists before we owned any property. We were Adventists before we adopted the tithing system. We were Adventists before we had anything to do with food reform, or dress reform, or any other reform.

Belief in the imminent second coming of Christ is the reason for, and basis of, our existence; our *raison d'être*, as our French brethren would say. If we do not believe that Christ's second coming is nigh at hand, we do not belong to the Advent movement. Furthermore, if we no longer hold this belief we have no business here today.

It was a deep-rooted, unshakable conviction that Christ was soon coming that inspired our pioneers to embark on their incredible global program, sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, sacrificing their substance to build mission stations, hospitals, dispensaries, sanitariums, schools, academies, colleges, publishing houses, administrative buildings—an amazing array of institutions—on all the continents and islands of the world.

True, love for the lost was a mighty factor in the accomplishment of this colossal undertaking. So was sympathy for the poor and needy; so was a yearning to help the helpless, raise the fallen, and bring light to those in darkness and the shadow of death. But belief in the imminence of Christ's second coming was the spark that fired the engine of this vast missionary enterprise. In every heart dwelt the conviction that there was but a short time for the work to be done; that it must be accomplished here and now, in fulfillment of prophecy, before time should run out.

This fundamental link between what we have and what our pioneers believed should never be forgotten. Every building we own, though bearing no visible name, is stamped with the invisible inscription, "This was built by men who believed in the soon coming of Jesus." Every student in our colleges, every employee in our publishing houses, every nurse in our sanitariums, should realize that the buildings in which they labor and learn are a product of the Advent

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movement, an outgrowth of the Advent faith. Without that faith these institutions would not exist and, mark it well, without it they cannot be sustained.

#### Urgency of Restudy

What is our attitude toward this fundamental doctrine today, one hundred and eight years after our founding? Do we believe it as sincerely as did our fathers? Most of us do, no doubt. Are we as zealous in its propagation as were they? Most of us are, I trust. However, more and more frequently the statement is heard that, while officially we stand where we stood, privately some have strayed far from our original position.

It was after profound study of the Scriptures that our pioneers were convinced that the coming of Jesus could not be much longer delayed. Even the disappointment of 1844 seemed to be only an added spur to their faith.

To them the Lord's return was their dearest desire, as it had been the blessed hope of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles down the ages.

They stood with Job and said: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job 19:25.

They stood with David and cried: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. . . . He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." Ps. 50:3, 4.

They stood with Paul and declared: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16.

They stood with Peter and said: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.

They stood with John and declared: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1:7.

They believed in the soon return of the Lord with a deep, abiding fervency. Listen to the hymns they sang!

"The Coming King Is at the Door" was composed by F. E. Belden in 1886. What eager anticipation is revealed in its chorus:

"At the door, at the door,  
At the door, yes, even at the door;  
He is coming again,  
He is coming again,  
He is even at the door."

Then there was Belden's hymn, "We know not the hour of the Master's appearing; yet signs all foretell that the moment is nearing." And Annie R. Smith's haunting song, "Long Upon the Mountains," of which the last stanza runs:

"Soon He comes! with clouds descending;  
All His saints, entombed, arise;  
The redeemed, in anthems blending,  
Shout their victory through the skies.  
O, we long for Thine appearing;  
Come, O Saviour, quickly come!  
Blessed hope! our spirits cheering  
Take Thy ransomed children home."

And how can we forget her lovely hymn, "How Far From Home?" of which the last stanza runs:

"Not far from home! O blessed thought!  
The traveler's lonely heart to cheer;  
Which oft a healing balm has brought,  
And dried the mourner's tear."

#### What Our Pioneers Believed

That there may be no doubt as to what these founders of the great second Advent movement taught regarding the imminence of Christ's second coming, we quote the following statements from denominational publications:

##### **From the *Review and Herald***

In an article by James White:

"While some view the race improving, and rising almost to perfection, it is in fact sinking in darkness and becoming corrupt, ripening

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for the sickle of Him that is soon to put on the garments of vengeance, and ride forth upon the white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same article Elder White declared:

“Reader, this is our true position; Christ is at the door. Are you prepared to welcome Him? If you are not, delay not one hour. Make haste and get ready!”<sup>2</sup>

In an article on “The Day of the Lord,” by G. W. Holt:

“The gospel day is almost over. The 6,000 years are nearly past. The great day of the Lord’s wrath is near and hasteth greatly. The glorious Jubilee will soon begin. . . . Reader, prepare to meet thy God.”<sup>3</sup>

In a short editorial on “Modern Phenomena of the Heavens,” James White wrote:

“We may know that our Lord is coming, that He is near, and more, that He is ‘even at the doors.’ . . . The judgment is upon you. Christ is coming; He is at the door. O, get ready to welcome the dear Saviour.”<sup>4</sup>

In an article on “Signs of the Times,” G. W. Holt wrote:

“The pilgrims are about to leave this dreary wilderness, where they have so long journeyed, for a far better and a more healthful clime. Sell your poor farms in this barren waste, and buy one that is incorruptible and undefiled . . . in the New Earth.”<sup>5</sup>

In an article on “Peace and Safety,” M. B. Smith wrote:

“Dear brethren, let us observe the many way-marks that God is giving us, to show us where we are in the world’s history and may He help us all to be sober, and watch unto prayer, inasmuch as the end of all things is at hand.”<sup>6</sup>

In an article entitled, “Truth,” R. F. Cottrell wrote:

“The present truth is that God is now moving out a message, Rev. xiv, 9-12, by which to restore His down-trodden truth to all the remnant of His little flock, in order to prepare them for translation into His everlasting kingdom at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is near, even at the door.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> August 11, 1853, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> March 23, 1852, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> October 28, 1852, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> June 23, 1853, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> January 27, 1863, p. 70.

<sup>7</sup> August 18, 1863, p. 91.

In an article on "Thoughts on the Second Advent of Christ," J. A. Smith wrote:

"That blessed day is near at hand. God's people are now waiting for the Lord."<sup>8</sup>

**From the *Signs of the Times***

D. M. Canright wrote:

"The whole world seems to be ripe for some great revolution and all are looking for it with fear and dread. The Lord foretold this as a sign of the end. . . . The winds are now only being held a little while till God's message may be given to the world."<sup>9</sup>

In an article on "Our Present Position," James White wrote:

"The great prophetic times of Daniel and John have served their purpose in bringing us to this position at this time. . . . But they have terminated. . . . The signs of the end, in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, have appeared. . . . A world is to be warned of swiftly approaching destruction, when a vast work is to be accomplished in a very short period."<sup>10</sup>

James White wrote regarding the day of Christ's return:

"Most dreadful day! And is it near? Yes; it hasteth! It hasteth greatly!"<sup>11</sup>

**From the Writings of Ellen G. White**

"I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer. . . . The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over."<sup>12</sup>

"My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, 'Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come.'<sup>13</sup>

"The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: 'The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master's return. There remains but a little period of watching now.' . . .

<sup>8</sup> November 17, 1863, p. 195.

<sup>9</sup> June 25, 1874, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> December 31, 1874, p. 89.

<sup>11</sup> March 11, 1875, p. 137.

<sup>12</sup> *Early Writings* (1851), p. 58.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

"The coming of the morning . . . is right upon us."<sup>14</sup>

"The day of God is hastening on."<sup>15</sup>

"Our ministers are not doing their whole duty. The attention of the people should be called to the momentous event which is so near at hand. . . . Time is drawing to a close. Eternity is near."<sup>16</sup>

"The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor."<sup>17</sup>

"We are near the close of time. I have been shown that the retributive judgments of God are already in the land."<sup>18</sup>

"The day of God's vengeance is just upon us."<sup>19</sup>

"All heaven is astir. The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority."<sup>20</sup>

"Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted."<sup>21</sup>

"The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are now taking place before our eyes."<sup>22</sup>

"The return of Christ to our world will not be long delayed. Let this be the keynote of every message. . . ."

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven.

"It cannot now be said by the Lord's servants, as it was by the prophet Daniel: 'The time appointed was long.' Daniel 10:1. It is now but a short time till the witnesses for God will have done their work in preparing the way of the Lord. . . ."

"Our time is precious. We have but few, very few days of probation in which to make ready for the future, immortal life. . . ."

"The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed [by men of science] to any other than the true cause."<sup>23</sup>

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. . . . Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones."<sup>24</sup>

"Go to your rest at night with every sin confessed. Thus we did

<sup>14</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 192-194.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 608.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 9-12 (Sept. 25, 1881).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 451.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 464.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 711.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 406-408.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 11 (1909).

when in 1844 we expected to meet our Lord. And now this great event is nearer than when we first believed."<sup>25</sup>

"Let every human intelligence who professes the name of Christ testify: 'The end of all things is at hand; prepare to meet thy God.' . . . The Lord is coming very soon."<sup>26</sup>

"The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly."<sup>27</sup>

"Soon there is to be trouble all over the world. . . . We have no time to delay. With earnestness and fervor the message must be given."<sup>28</sup>

### An Overpowering Conviction

Space forbids the quoting of all the innumerable similar statements to be found throughout the writings of the founders of the great second Advent movement. I have quoted sufficient to reveal the fact that belief in the imminence of Christ's second coming was an overpowering conviction among them. What they wrote is on public record. We dare not repudiate it. To suggest that they did not mean what they said, or that they changed their minds, or that they were wrong in their estimate of the significance of the prophecies, would be to place our whole cause in jeopardy. If we should now begin trying to explain away these definite, forthright, unequivocal declarations, we would destroy ourselves and become the laughingstock of the world.

These men and women were great Bible students, mighty in the Scriptures, as anyone who takes the trouble to read their writings will readily admit; and it was from a diligent study of the Word, and in particular of the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, that they drew their deep certainty that the coming of the Lord was at hand.

Well might some of us today turn back the pages of our denominational literature and examine the powerful presentation of the second Advent message in sermon and Bible study by the now-sleeping leaders of our cause. They knew what they believed, and why. They had a solid foundation

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

under their faith. Invincible in debate, they produced chapter and verse to support every position they took.

### **Anchored to Prophecy**

The second Advent movement that we represent today is not just another temporary upsurge of interest in Christ's second coming, like others that have occurred from time to time throughout the centuries of the Christian Era. It is true that there have been several Advent movements in times past. But never one like that which began in 1844 and has lasted till today. And the difference? This last and greatest of all the Advent movements is anchored to a time prophecy the beginning and end of which are known.

The great second Advent movement of our time is founded not only upon all the great prophecies referring to our Lord's return, but in particular upon the prophecy of the 2300 days in the eighth and ninth chapters of the book of Daniel. Unless we have been lamentably misled, that prophetic period most certainly ended in the year 1844, with the divine pronouncement, "The hour of his judgment is come."

This, I repeat, is the sheet anchor of our cause. It is this that precludes any possibility that we may represent just another Advent movement which, given time enough, will melt away and be forgotten.

How vital this prophecy is to our entire denominational structure may be seen from these words of James White:

"If the vision did not speak in the autumn of 1844, then it never spoke, and never can speak. It was then as clear as the noon-day sun, that all the evidence that was brought to prove that the 2300 days would end in 1843, proved that they would end in the fall of 1844. . . . We believe that the appointed time did not tarry, that the vision did speak in 1844, and that the time for cleansing the Sanctuary then came."<sup>20</sup>

From the clear conviction of our pioneers, that this great prophecy met its fulfillment in 1844, sprang every other

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<sup>20</sup> *Review and Herald*, Dec., 1850.

teaching that we have, every dollar of our resources, every building that we own. Today this same prophecy should give us full confidence that our pioneers were not misled, but ere long will be gloriously vindicated before all the world.

#### **Tied to an Event**

This being so, we are driven to the conclusion that our Lord's return cannot be much longer delayed.

It must now be apparent to all that our Lord Jesus Christ must come, and come soon. As no other Christian body in the world we are tied to an event. Therefore, if there is one people above another that should now be praying with unexampled earnestness, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," it is ourselves. Of all people we must not, dare not, permit ourselves to become careless or indifferent toward this sublime event that is now of such supreme importance to us and to the world. And of all people we should be making the most thorough spiritual preparation to meet Him face to face.

And may we not have confidence that our Lord will honor the faithful witness of His Advent people? They have espoused His cause, obeyed His will, expounded His prophecies, proclaimed His message. He cannot, He must not, He will not, let them down.

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## Ten Great Signs of His Coming

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity. . . . And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. . . . And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, you see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, *know ye* that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Luke 21:25-31.

I rejoice in the certainty of our Lord’s assurance. We are not to be left in doubt. We are to know. And may a new certainty come into our hearts as we pursue our study this afternoon.

### Introduction

In the first of these three studies on the imminence of Christ’s second coming we considered the vital importance of this doctrine to Seventh-day Adventists. It was the inspiration of the pioneers of the great second Advent movement and should be the prime concern of all who claim to be promoting and supporting this cause today. We found that these Advent pioneers were moved by an overpowering conviction that the coming of Jesus was near, even at the doors. Their belief was based, not only upon the expiration of certain time prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revela-

tion, but also upon the appearance in the world about them of conditions that seemed to fulfill various other Bible predictions describing the last days.

Before proceeding to consider the signs that confront us now, in the midst of the twentieth century, we should perhaps glance a little more particularly at the evidence available to our fathers in the faith a hundred years ago, or less. What sort of events impressed them as being signs of the times? The answer is most illuminating. We have space for but a few illustrations from the hundreds available.

### Signs Our Fathers Saw

Listing many signs of Christ's coming, James White referred to the "Lightning Train," just introduced on the Rochester-New York run. This train, he said, covered the 400 miles in eleven hours, and occasionally reached a speed of a mile a minute. "Mails move rapidly by the power of steam," he wrote, "so that publications may be sent thousands of miles in a few days. The way, then, is prepared, and the prophecy is being fulfilled." The prophecy he had in mind was Nahum 2:3, 4.

In the same article Elder White quoted from the book of Job, "Canst thou send lightnings?" and went on to say, "The Magnetic Telegraph is here referred to, by which news is communicated hundreds of miles in a few seconds. . . . These things are foretold signs of the coming of the Son of man, plainly fulfilled before their eyes."<sup>30</sup>

In an article on current events in the light of prophecy, M. E. Cornell quoted 2 Timothy 3:4, 5, pointing as fulfillment to "corruption and villainy" in high places, religious lotteries, gambling in fashionable churches, and, in particular, to a certain theatrical show in the San Jose, California, music hall.<sup>31</sup>

"At the Telegraph Office, Washington, on December 11, 1873, an experiment was carried out in the presence of Mr. Creswell, the

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 11, 1853, p. 55.

<sup>31</sup> *Signs of the Times*, June 11, 1874, p. 11.

Postmaster-General of the United States. . . . On that occasion the President's last annual message of 11,500 words was transmitted from Washington to New York, a distance of 290 miles, over a single wire, in 22½ minutes, the speed obtained being over 2,500 letters per minute. . . . This is but one item out of thousands showing the wonderful increase of knowledge in this fast age." <sup>32</sup>

In an article entitled "Increasing Foretokens of the End," reference was made to Matthew 24:14 and, by way of fulfillment, to the fact that the circulation of the Bible had reached 160,000,000 copies in 200 languages.

In the same article, dealing with "distress of nations," there appeared the following comment:

"Every nation is revising its navy, its army, its weapons of offense and defense, expecting war, . . . paying the largest rewards to the men that will invent the most powerful and most destructive engines of war. . . . There is not a king in Europe at this moment that has not his hand upon his sword-hilt."

Farther on, this author wrote:

"When war next comes, Trafalgar, Alexandria, the Nile, the Peninsula, Waterloo itself—nay, the Crimean war, will be but the battles of pygmies in comparison of the battles of Titans likely soon to be." <sup>33</sup>

Similar quotations could be multiplied almost without number, from which the tremendous fact emerges that the pioneers of the great second Advent movement built their globe-conquering, world-embracing plans upon what must seem to all of us today to have been very slender evidence. Yet it was not slender to them. Each happening, each event, was, in their estimation, a clear fulfillment of prophecy, a certain indication that the end of the world was approaching.

Were they mistaken? They were not. What they beheld were the first phases of an unfolding revelation; the first streaks of light before the dawn; the first muted notes before the grand orchestral music; the first scent of hay before the full, rich odor of the harvest field.

They saw the bud, and we the flower. They heard the faint

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, June 25, 1874, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1874, pp. 65, 66.

cry of far-off warning voices, and we the raucous shout of multitudes close at hand. They saw the gleam of distant beacons, and we the full glow at the harbor mouth.

An engineer crossing the western plains of North America sees but an occasional signal turning from red to green as he rolls along the vast, empty landscape. But as he draws near Chicago the lights increase. And the very multiplication of warning signals, if nothing else, tells him that his long journey is almost over.

So it is with the great second Advent movement. Its pioneers from time to time saw evidences—meager enough, to be sure—that convinced them that the prophecies heralding the return of Jesus were being fulfilled. They knew that they were on the right track, and were moving in the right direction. But today, as signs thicken about us, more numerous, more brilliant, more startling than ever before, we who have our hands upon the throttle of the Advent engine cannot but know for a certainty that the task is almost finished and home is but a little way ahead.

If our pioneers could rise from their dusty beds today and see what we see—the global, earth-shaking developments that have grown out of the small, embryonic events they thought were signs of Christ's coming seventy, eighty, one hundred years ago, they would beyond question move up and down these aisles seeking to shake us, individually, out of our lethargy, our indifference, our secret doubts and criticisms, crying, **THIS IS IT!** This is what we dreamed of! This is what we expected! The coming of Christ must now be almost here!

What are the great signs of *our* day? In what terms is God speaking to *us*? By what evidence would He convince His people *now*—after the lapse of a hundred years—that the end is approaching?

The number of indications of the second coming of our Lord will vary from one individual to another. But we offer here ten indisputable signs which we believe should not only satisfy our own hearts as to the solemnity of the time in

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which we live, but also appeal to all men of good will as sound, unmistakable evidence that Christ's second coming is at hand.

### **Signs of Our Times**

These ten great signs we would classify under four main headings:

1. Material Preparations for the End: the Wild, Swift Pace of Modern Life.
2. Political Preparations for the End: the Confusion and Fear Among the Nations.
3. Social Preparations for the End: the Corruption and Decay of Humanity.
4. Religious Preparations for the End: the Final Conflict for the Soul of Man.

We have listed these signs as "Preparations for the End" because, in our opinion, that is exactly what true signs always are. Each condition, or event, not only is indicative of the approach of the end, but plays some part in preparing mankind for the final consummation. Every true sign is also global, not necessarily in extent, but in that its meaning can be understood and appreciated by people of every nation under heaven.

#### **Material Preparations for the End: the Wild, Swift Pace of Modern Life**

Says prophecy: "Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12:4.

In the early days of the Advent movement our pioneers believed that this prediction was intended only to foreshadow the increasing understanding of the book of Daniel in the last days. But as years went by and they found themselves in the midst of an amazing increase of scientific knowledge and a host of dazzling inventions, they began to see a new and wider meaning in this remarkable prophecy.

And what shall we say today as we behold all the marvelous developments of this twentieth century—atomic submarines, supersonic planes, and stratospheric rockets? What shall we say when confronted with the truly staggering advances in all methods of communication and transportation, all the marvelous discoveries in medicine, astronomy, and every other phase of human activity? Suddenly, after thousands of quiescent years, the floodgates of knowledge have been opened, and a tide of ideas, plans, and ambitions has poured into the human mind.

Faster and faster moves the pace of life; speed and still more speed is the demand of the hour.

The fantasy of the magic carpet of the *Arabian Nights* has become a reality. Radio and television now bring the world to our door in a moment of time, and jet-propelled skymasters carry us to the remotest parts of the globe in a matter of hours.

On August 15, 1951, test pilot Bill Bridgeman attained a speed of 1,238 miles an hour in a U.S. Navy Skyrocket, the same plane which a week earlier had broken the altitude record at 79,494 feet—nearly sixteen miles high!

Recently Princess Margaret and her mother left England at 12:25 P.M. in a BOAC Comet Jet Airliner, flew 1,850 miles over the Swiss Alps, Italy, and southern France, at a height of eight miles, and arrived back in England at 4:20 P.M. the same afternoon. Imagine the princess' great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, taking such a trip!

One morning in August, 1952, three British airmen left Ireland after breakfast, flew to Newfoundland in a Canberra jet bomber and back to Ireland in time for supper.

In a truly remarkable way the world has shrunk to a fraction of its former size. Far-distant places have been drawn close together as though compressed by mysterious, omnipotent hands. All nations have become neighbors in reality, if not in spirit. Boundaries have been made ridiculous by the triumphs of radar, supersonic flight, and other discoveries in the realm of electrodynamics and aerodynamics.

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Moving pictures made in California are seen around the world. Broadcasts originating in Moscow are heard simultaneously in London, Washington, and Calcutta. Atomic blasts in Siberia are registered immediately in a dozen listening posts thousands of miles away.

By means of the latest radio microphones one man can now speak to fifty million. By means of the latest printing presses he can speak to millions more. By means of television he may soon be both seen and heard around the world.

Surely the hand of God has been in all these amazing material developments of our time. He has made it possible for His last message of mercy to be given with great swiftness to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

The material preparations for the end are well-nigh complete. More inventions may come, and will come: but more are not necessary to the speedy completion of God's purposes.

#### **Political Preparations for the End: the Confusion and Fear Among the Nations**

Said Jesus: " 'There will be signs in sun, moon, and stars; and on earth anguish among the nations in their bewilderment . . . ; men's hearts are fainting for fear, and for anxious expectation of what is coming on the world.' " Luke 21:25, 26, Weymouth.

Never at any time in history have these words fitted world conditions so exactly as they do today. Never before were all nations so filled with dismay and bewilderment.

Our pioneers thought in terms of the Napoleonic Wars, the Peninsular War, the Crimean War. But we have lived through two global wars which, in their costliness, destruction, and human suffering, have exceeded all previous wars since man first lived upon the earth. We have seen great nations desolated and decimated, their cities, towns, and villages left in piles of rubble. We have seen thousands of ships—whole navies—sent to the bottom of the sea. We have seen unnumbered multitudes made destitute through the

collapse of their currency, and multitudes more reduced to slavery by tyrannous conquerors.

As if this were not enough, we have witnessed the discovery of atomic power, the atomic bomb, and the hydrogen bomb. And by what has happened at Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Bikini, and Frenchman Flat, we know that man now has the power not only to destroy his civilization but also to wipe himself off this planet.

The race for armaments, which used to be a race for better bows and arrows, better rifles, longer-ranged naval guns, or bigger dreadnoughts, has become a race for atomic weapons, with nations stockpiling them at feverish speed.

One wonders what more evidence is needed to convince us that this prophecy of Jesus applies to our time and that the end of all things is at hand. Do we have to wait until the bombs fall, and the destruction comes upon us, before we shall be convinced?

It is of great significance that, while some Adventists are becoming more and more complacent about current trends, men of the world—statesmen, scientists, news commentators, and others—are expressing increasing concern about them.

When the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* was first published in 1945, a clock appeared on its cover with the minute hand at eight minutes to midnight. In 1948, when it was learned that Russia possessed the atomic bomb, the minute hand was moved up to three minutes to midnight. The other day I wrote the editor, asking if there had been any change in his estimate of the gravity of the world situation. "None whatever," he replied, in substance. "On the clock of time it is still three minutes to midnight."

In recent weeks I have been in correspondence with many leading men in the United States on this subject and have been surprised at their willingness to express their personal opinion concerning the solemnity of the times.

Dr. Robert Gordon Sproul, president of the University of California, wrote me on April 23, 1952, as follows: "I

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still believe there isn't much more time. In fact, there is four years and ten months' less time now than when I spoke to Rotary [on this subject] in 1947."

Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, associate director of the Ford Foundation, in a letter dated April 21, 1952, said, "I believe the world can explode at any minute and that the more powerful the governments of the world become the more likely the explosion is. Anything can happen anywhere at any time."

One of the best-known and most reliable of news commentators, now working for the Voice of America, who requests to remain anonymous, wrote to say, "We still have only a short time to create a supranational organization to enforce total disarmament, if we are to avoid atomic war. And any war on a world scale will be atomic. And any atomic war will be lost by both sides."

On March 31, 1948, Henry Wallace said, "Time has run out; that is all there is to it." The other day I wrote to ask him if he still believed as he did then. He replied by quoting an address he gave in Boston on April 27, 1952, in which he said, "The whole world is undergoing the most violent birth pangs as it strains, in this time of very great need, to bring forth the era of the General Welfare which was conceived by the prophets and religious leaders of old. It has been a long period of gestation but finally 'time and space devouring' science heralds the approach of the appointed time. If this child of the future is stillborn . . . we may expect rivers of blood running through mountains of misery as this century moves to its tragic close."

Writing in *The Christian Century* of May 14, 1952, the editor of that journal said:

"Toynbee calls this a time of troubles. It is also a time of horror. And the depth of the horror is revealed by the fact that we are not horrified by what we are doing. . . . We are learning to live complacently with our own savagery; that is the damnation which is overtaking us."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Page 581.

Thus the voices of doom are ringing out their warning concerning the lateness of the hour. These men of the world do not have the light of prophecy to guide them as Adventists claim to have, but one and all they have become deeply impressed that some tremendous catastrophe is approaching, and cannot be long delayed.

It is of no small interest to note that the Greek word *aporia* in Luke 21:25, translated "perplexity" in the King James Version and "bewilderment" by Weymouth, has the suggestion of total frustration, as though the Lord said, There shall be distress of nations, with *no way out*. "Without a passage out" is the rendering in Young's *Analytical Concordance*. No solution to problems. No relief for fears. No end to worries. Significantly, this is the only place in the New Testament where this particular word is to be found, and it is used by our Lord to depict the state of world affairs just before His return. Do we see such conditions today? We have but to think of the failure of the League of Nations and the similar fate hanging over the United Nations. Men striving their utmost to prevent oncoming disaster, and finding none. Men at the end of their tether, as H. G. Wells put it in the last book he wrote before he died. Men struggling to avoid the fate that is rushing upon them, but unable to do so. How true it is that today, in all the world, there is distress of nations, with *no way out!*

And in all this we see the political preparations for the end. Not only in the lining up of the nations for Armageddon, but in the revelation of man's total incompetency to direct and govern himself. Again and again he has tried to bring in Utopia, but always in vain. Today he needs no further opportunity to demonstrate his utter ineptness, his total failure, and his desperate need for a divine Deliverer.

#### **Social Preparations for the End: the Corruption and Decay of Humanity**

Said Jesus, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Luke 17:26.

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The days of Noah were evil days. The earth was "filled with violence." Gen. 6:11. It was filled with cruelty and lust. "They took them wives of all which they chose." Verse 2. Indeed, so wicked did men become that at last "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Verse 5.

Have we arrived at a similar period in world history? Are social conditions today comparable to those existing before the Flood? Let the facts speak for themselves.

Consider the violence of our time, as revealed in the global tragedies of World Wars I and II and the threatened terrors of World War III. Recall the barbarities perpetrated, not only upon the battlefield, but behind the lines, upon countless millions of civilians. Remember the massacres of Katyn and Lidice, the pogroms of Warsaw, Rovno, and Dubno, and countless others. Remember the revolting cruelties of Belsen and Buchenwald and the other concentration camps which dotted Europe for years and still defile it today.

Remember that there are more people living in slavery today than at any other time in history. Remember the terror inspired by secret police in all countries behind the iron and bamboo curtains. Remember the mass deportations and executions still going on. Then ask yourself whether the earth is "filled with violence" again.

Consider the mounting crime statistics—not in uncivilized lands, but where Christianity has been known and taught for decades and centuries. Think of the crowded prisons in America, filled largely with youth under twenty-five years of age. Think of the recent revelation of lawlessness in high places, the graft, bribery, and corruption among men who should have been models of integrity and honor. Think of the spreading delinquency among children and their shocking acts of vandalism. Think of the enormous quantities of liquor being consumed and the consequent drunkenness and crime. Think of the craze for opium, heroin, and marijuana among youth and the fearful results upon

their minds and bodies. Then ask yourself whether pre-Flood conditions are not now staring us in the face.

Consider the growing laxity on all moral issues, especially the increase of divorce, both in the world and in the church. To have a sequence of wives, described as consecutive polygamy, has become such routine procedure as to be commonplace. Notices of marriage now regularly include the number of previous experiences in matrimony both bride and bridegroom have had. How like is this to the course of those antediluvians who "took them wives of all which they chose"!

Consider also the most serious trend of all—the universal dissemination of ideas that lead to lawlessness. Incessantly, by the most potent avenues of education ever devised, there is being poured into the minds of youth and children a flood-tide of evil thoughts. By radio, television, comic magazines, and smutty books and papers, there is being created a tolerance not only for liquor and tobacco, which would be bad enough, but for cruelty, lust, murder, and crime of every sort and description. With reckless unconcern the dispensers of all this wickedness are making certain that in the not-far-distant future every imagination of the thoughts of men's hearts shall be "only evil continually."

What further evidence do we need that the words of Jesus are being fulfilled, and that the last days are upon us? History is repeating itself. The days of Noah have returned. Preparations for the end in the social life of the world are almost complete. Widespread decay and corruption demand the swift and final judgments of God.

#### **Religious Preparations for the End: the Final Conflict for the Soul of Man**

Significant as are the harbingers of Christ's soon coming in the material, political, and social phases of modern life, those in the realm of religion are even more important. Of the many that might be mentioned we have chosen seven.

##### *1. The Wrath of the Dragon*

Says prophecy: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and

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of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:12, 17.

The archenemy of Christ has manifested himself in several guises down the ages, notably as the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These prophetic terms are used to describe his malicious activities under paganism, papalism, and false Protestantism.

As the end approaches we should expect to see the wrath of the devil manifested through these same three agencies in a notably exacerbated form.

The dragon spirit, always violently opposed to the cause and the people of God, was revealed in the pagan empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. But what shall be said of its reappearance in our day? Before our eyes there has formed, like some ghastly ghoulish nightmare, the most fearful and virulent form of paganism the world has ever seen.

As Whittaker Chambers has said in his book *The Witness*, this astonishing phenomenon is nothing but a new religion—or an old religion in a new form—which is being driven forward by the vision of *man without God*. The very deification of materialism, it is posing "the most revolutionary question in history: God or man?"

Spreading like the Black Death, this anti-God, anti-Christian movement has already seized upon and ensnared more than a third of the inhabitants of the globe. Using the most modern methods of propaganda, it seeks to undermine, and cause the disintegration of, every government that has not yet yielded to its wiles. And wherever its power is established there the light of truth, freedom, and every Christian teaching is stamped out.

Its triumph means the death of Christian missions, Christian schools, Christian hospitals; indeed, the followers of the

faith must even denounce their Christian friends or suffer martyrdom.

If this is not an evidence of the wrath of the dragon, foretold to be seen and felt in these last days, what else is it?

#### 2. *The Rise of Papal Power in America*

Says prophecy: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth. . . . And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Rev. 13:11, 12.

It is not necessary to produce proof that the "beast," or nation, mentioned here is the United States, or that the "first beast," whose deadly wound was healed, has reference to the Papacy. These facts are generally acknowledged. What we need to remember is that the United States could never fulfill this prophecy unless there were to occur an important change in the balance of its religious life. Obviously an overwhelmingly Protestant America would never require anyone to pay special respect to the papal power. Only an America which had come in large measure under the control of the Catholic section of its population could act in this fashion.

Fifty years ago anyone suggesting that such an eventuality might occur would have been deemed mentally unsound or seriously disloyal. But what shall be said today, with more than one fifth of the population Catholic, and the hierarchy in virtual control of the press, the movies, the radio, and reaching for a strangle hold even on American education itself?

If anyone doubts the present power of Catholicism in America, let him read Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*.

"There is no doubt," says this author, "that the American Catholic hierarchy has entered the political arena, and that it is becoming more and more aggressive in extending the frontiers of Catholic authority into the fields of medicine, education and foreign policy. . . . It tells Catholic doctors, nurses, judges, teachers and legislators what they can

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and cannot do in many of the controversial phases of their professional conduct. . . . It uses the political power of some twenty-six million official American Catholics to bring American foreign policy into line with Vatican temporal interests.”<sup>35</sup>

We are all acquainted with the efforts of the hierarchy to persuade the President of the United States to appoint an official ambassador to the Vatican. If this should ever happen, and if such an appointment should ever be approved by the Senate, it would be one of the most disastrous events in American history. It would mean that this country, for the first time, would have a preferred church in its midst, with access to the President, the State Department, and Government secrets denied to all other religious bodies. It would mean that a papal nuncio would be the dean of all ambassadors in Washington, working incessantly to bring United States politics, education, finance, and religion into line with the policies of the Vatican. The very possibility that such a thing might happen presents the greatest threat to religious liberty ever to appear on the horizon of this freedom-loving land, and affords clear proof that the final events that shall fulfill this dramatic prophecy cannot be far distant.

### 3. *Reunion of Protestantism*

Says prophecy, “And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth . . . ; saying to them . . . , that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” Rev. 13:14.

It was the opinion of our pioneers that this passage had reference to a federation of the leading Protestant churches, which, when clothed with power by the state, would behave in a manner similar to that of the Papacy, and thus form an “image” to the “beast.” They saw some slight indications that a reunion of the long-separated Protestant denominations might take place, but at most it was a highly problematical development when Uriah Smith wrote his *Daniel and the Revelation*. But what would these pioneers say today if

<sup>35</sup> Page 4.

they could see what we see?—a National Council of Churches and a World Council of Churches. True, these bodies wield no special authority as yet. They would, at the moment, vehemently deny any aspirations to power, or any desire to persecute. Their leaders are for the most part men of vision and high principle, who seek only the good of Christendom. But these men will not always be in the positions of leadership. The organizations which they have so diligently formed could easily fall into less honorable hands. Someday, according to the prophecy, these organizations will link up with the "beast" in the final persecution of the true children of God.

Thus the reunion of the churches has become another of the great signs of our times, affording still further evidence that the long-predicted events of the last days are right upon us.

#### 4. *The Rise of Spiritism*

Says prophecy, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Tim. 4:1.

We are all aware of the enormous growth of spiritism since the Rochester rappings of 1848, when the strange experiences of the Fox sisters set off the modern revival of this very ancient cult. Fostered by the terrible toll of death in two world wars and the understandable yearning of the bereaved to communicate with their departed loved ones, it has spread with incredible rapidity throughout the world. It boasts many "churches" as well as a "church" literature, and the number of its mediums purporting to link the living with the dead is legion.

What is new in this case is the fact that so many influential people have accepted the basic teachings of spiritism as true. Early this year the long-kept secret of Mackenzie King's advocacy of spiritism found its way into the press, together with the report that this famous prime minister of Canada actually consulted the spirits on matters of state. As the story unfolded it was revealed that many of his friends, holding

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responsible positions in England and the United States, were also practicing spiritists. Startling as this information is, it is only what we might have expected in fulfillment of the words of this prophecy concerning the activities of "seducing spirits" in the "latter times."

In this connection mention should be made of the wide publicity now being given to supposedly supernatural occurrences. With increasing frequency we are told of the appearance of "balls of fire" in the heavens, of the sun turning blue or "dancing in the sky," and of mysterious appearances of the Virgin. It could well be that the mind of man is being conditioned for some great deception. Multitudes of unthinking people, ever ready to believe the miraculous, would be easy prey for some startling, spectacular hoax such as, for instance, the appearance of Satan himself as an angel of light, perhaps even impersonating Christ in one last bold and reckless attempt to lead the human race into rebellion against its Maker.

So late is the hour, and so great the danger from "seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," we would all do well to make sure our faith is founded, not upon miracles, but solidly and foursquare upon the word of the living God.

##### 5. *The Proclamation of the Gospel*

Said Jesus: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

Although it is true that the gospel was given to the Roman world in Paul's day, and to most of Europe in Luther's day, it is only in comparatively recent times that there has been a large-scale, concerted effort to bring about the fulfillment of this prophecy on a global scale.

With the expiration of the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and the beginning of "the time of the end," there came upon history's stage the modern missionary movement. Christians of all denominations suddenly became imbued with unexampled zeal to carry the gospel to earth's remotest

bounds. Unnumbered heroes of the cross left their homelands to tell the heathen about Jesus. In process of time the Advent people joined in the great crusade, stirred with the conviction that they must carry to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of His soon return.

Never in all history has the name of Christ and the message of Christ been made so widely known throughout the world. And never were so many facilities available for God to make a short work upon the earth.

The printing press has made it possible for the Bible to be produced in vast quantities in more than eleven hundred languages. It has multiplied the Word through tracts, periodicals, and books beyond all reckoning. Much of the world has been covered with Christian literature as by the leaves of autumn.

Radio has made it possible for men of God to speak the message of salvation to vast audiences of millions upon millions of people. As the power of broadcasting stations increases, the message is carried ever farther and farther afield, even into the last dark hinterlands of humanity.

Television has made it possible for the living preacher to step, as it were, right into the homes of the people with God's final call of mercy; and as this amazing new channel of communication becomes more and more popular, in more and more countries—as is bound to happen in the immediate future—it will present the church with perhaps the most potent means of finishing its task.

From time to time the question is raised as to whether the work of giving the gospel to the world can ever be finished. Some point to the unentered, or partially entered, fields; others, to the large birth rate in certain non-Christian lands, and the unceasing onward march of new generations. But are not these facts known to God? Was not Jesus aware that these conditions would prevail in the latter days when He uttered His great prophecy? And have we not been told that God has a thousand ways of making known His truth of which we have no knowledge?

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We are not among those who believe that the world must be converted before Jesus can return. Nor do we consider it necessary to the fulfillment of His prediction of the universal promulgation of the gospel that churches must be established in every city and village around the globe. All that is called for is the preaching of the gospel "*for a witness* unto all nations." The name of Jesus must be made known to all people. His offer of salvation must be proclaimed everywhere. And then shall the end come.

With all the marvelous means of communication now available—placed by God in the hands of His church with such wonderful timing—this seemingly insuperable task may well be accomplished sooner than we think.

#### 6. *Closing Doors of Opportunity*

Says prophecy, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." Rev. 10:7.

Some day the preaching of the gospel—the ever-blessed mystery of God's love for lost mankind—will be finished. And it will be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, which many believe began to sound in 1844. Whether it will be finished suddenly, everywhere, or in one place after another, in swift succession, will be revealed in due time. But we venture to suggest that the closing doors in mission fields are an indication that the time of the church's opportunity is fast running out.

#### 7. *All Men in Expectation*

Luke writes: "And . . . the people were in expectation, and all men mused [*"debated,"* margin] in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not." Luke 3:15.

One of the signs of Christ's first advent was the general expectation of His coming. Simeon and many others were "waiting for the consolation of Israel." Luke 2:25. Today one of the most spectacular signs of His second Advent is the amazing revival of interest in His return.

Perhaps it has come about as a result of the crushing

tragedies and disappointments of the past few decades and the shattering of the hopes of the humanists; perhaps it has sprung from a restudy of the Word of God, or the floodtide of Advent literature which has poured from our publishing houses in recent years: but whatever the cause, the fact remains that more people than ever before are now concerned about the coming of the Lord.

On November 10, 1951, General Albert Orsborn, head of the Salvation Army, wrote an editorial in the *War Cry* entitled "The Midnight Cry," in which he said: "It is my conviction that the world's clock is nearly at midnight. . . . We must sound an alarm in God's holy mountain, 'Awake! Awake! The King is at hand.' . . . Nevertheless we believe profoundly and we look with earnest expectation to the coming of the Lord and to the reign of peace and righteousness. . . . The night is real, the midnight dark and menacing, but the morning cometh!"

But most notable of the many evidences of this trend is the choice of "The Christian Hope" as the theme of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Evanston, Illinois, in 1954.

A committee of twenty-three theologians, requested to develop this theme for the benefit of the Assembly, brought in a report so ardently in favor of a literal, personal return of Jesus that it might have been prepared by our own General Conference Committee.

"There is no hope except in the crucified, risen, and coming Lord," said these World Council Adventists. "And having this hope we are to be as men who watch for their Lord, with loins girt and lamps lit, active in the Master's service and constant in prayer, knowing our labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Naturally this report aroused a storm of protest from the modernist elements in the Council. The editors of *The Christian Century* termed it a "council of despair" and "waves of poison gas." But the intensity of the controversy has made it inevitable that the whole question of Christ's

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second coming will be debated in all the member churches of the World Council around the globe. Already the Baptists have prepared an official statement on the subject. And it is being widely discussed in the religious press.

Nothing could have happened better calculated to stir up worldwide interest in the coming of the Lord. As a result of this amazing development in the World Council of Churches millions will be stirred to think of the second Advent who otherwise might never have concerned themselves about it.

Thus by leaps and bounds the great expectation is spreading, from heart to heart, from church to church, and from nation to nation. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

#### The Challenge of the Facts

In the brief time at my disposal I have presented ten great signs betokening the imminent return of Jesus. Many others might be mentioned. But this array of evidence should be sufficient to convince us all anew that His coming is indeed near, even at the doors.

Surely if it is enough to stir the world to inquiry, it should be enough to stir the church to action. It should set the Seventh-day Adventist Church afire with a new devotion to the cause it professes to advocate.

Furthermore, if our pioneers could preach of the imminence of Christ's second Advent with vigor and forthrightness, despite the limited evidence they had upon which to build their faith, with what zeal and fervor should we proclaim the selfsame message, surrounded as we are by these tremendous, heart-stirring harbingers of the approaching end?

May God in His mercy awaken us from our complacency, our lukewarmness, our indifference, and send us forth from this Bible Conference to proclaim with blazing conviction, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh"!

## The Final Frontiers of Prophecy

“Behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God.” Eze. 12:27, 28.

### Introduction

In the first of these three studies on the imminence of Christ's second coming the subject of the “Adventists and the Advent” has been dealt with. It was pointed out how essential is this doctrine to the whole program of the great second Advent movement. In the second study “Ten Great Signs of His Coming” were offered, marshaling the current evidence to prove that our Lord's return cannot be much longer delayed. In this concluding study there will be considered “The Final Frontiers of Prophecy,” those areas of prophetic revelation which await fulfillment before Christ can come again. And here it will be our purpose to show that, of all predicted events, by far the greater proportion have already occurred, leaving but a small fraction to come to pass in the time that remains.

Under the pressures of two global wars great new high-ways have been built across all the five continents, making it possible for man to reach the last geographical frontiers

of the world. As Jules Verne once wrote, "There are no more impassable deserts, no more unfathomable seas, no more inaccessible mountains." The explorer's task is done. Similarly, in the prophetic realm, we find ourselves today almost at the end of those great highways of prophecy which, beginning in ancient times, wend their way down the centuries to the last days of history and the borders of the eternal world.

Just as the men and women of American pioneer days, moving westward in their covered wagons, came at last to the High Sierras and beheld the sunny slopes and plains of California, so we today stand upon the final frontiers of prophecy, looking expectantly for the concluding scenes in the drama of the ages.

### **Seven Highways of Prophecy**

Let us consider the seven great highways of prophecy and note how they stream like ribbons of light across the highlands and lowlands of history, and converge with unerring accuracy upon our own day:

1. The Highway of the Nations.  
(The Prophecy of Daniel 2.)
2. The Highway of Religious Tyranny.  
(The Prophecy of Daniel 7.)
3. The Highway of Divine Visitation.  
(The Prophecy of Daniel 8-12.)
4. The Highway of the Son of Man.  
(The Prophecy of Matthew 24.)
5. The Highway of the Churches.  
(The Prophecy of Revelation 2 and 3.)
6. The Highway of Apostasy.  
(The Prophecy of Revelation 5-8.)
7. The Highway of the Conquerors.  
(The Prophecy of Revelation 7-11.)

Time forbids any attempt to consider these great prophecies in detail. We shall confine ourselves to a brief survey that will bring into sharp focus their unfulfilled portions.

### 1. The Highway of the Nations

The great prophetic highway outlined in the second chapter of the book of Daniel is perhaps the most familiar of all. Under the symbolism of a great metallic image, it begins in the city of Babylon and runs through the chief capitals of the ancient world. It is the main street, as it were, not only of Nebuchadnezzar's golden metropolis but also of the capitals of the Medo-Persian Empire, Grecia, and Rome. Side roads branch off to London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, and Lisbon, relics of the old divisions of the Roman Empire, but the main highway rolls on through a thousand battlefields straight into the kingdom of God.

This prediction, like a mighty beacon, shines across the centuries, illuminating the greatest events of time with the light of heaven. Glittering on the gold of Babylon, shimmering on the silver of Medo-Persia, glinting on the brass of Greece, shining on the iron of Rome, lighting up the struggles and conflicts of the modern world, it glows at last upon the face of the King of kings as He comes back to the earth in His glory. For He is the stone that strikes the image and breaks in pieces "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold." His is the kingdom that "shall . . . consume all these kingdoms, and . . . shall stand for ever."

Where are we on this prophetic highway? Certainly not in Babylon. Nor in Medo-Persia. Nor in Grecia. Nor in Rome. Are we, then, "in the days of these kings"—or kingdoms—of divided Rome? We are. And we have been in them for 1,476 years. Futile efforts to weld together the broken elements of the iron monarchy have been made again and again, as the prophecy foretold. We have seen such efforts in our own day. All have ended in failure. What more is to happen? What are we waiting for? Only the setting up of Christ's everlasting kingdom at His coming in glory.

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## 2. The Highway of Religious Tyranny

The great prediction found in the seventh chapter of Daniel parallels, for some considerable distance, the highway outlined in the second chapter. It passes through the same four capitals of the ancient empires, but then, diverging slightly, traverses the dreary millennium of papal dominance and persecution, terminating at last in the judgment and the final triumph of the children of God.

This is the prophecy of the four beasts, the ten horns, and the little horn which had "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Its application is well known to all. But where do we stand today in relation to its fulfillment? Certainly not in the kingdom represented by the lion with eagle's wings. Not in the kingdom of the leopard with four wings of a fowl. Not in the kingdom of the dreadful and terrible beast that was "strong exceedingly." All these have had their day and passed away.

What, then, of the "little horn" power, symbol of that great medieval religious tyranny erected upon the ruins of pagan Rome? Are we living under its domination? Not according to this prophecy, for the power of the "little horn" was limited to "a time and times and the dividing of time," or 1260 years. This period, as we know, terminated in 1798. We are living 154 years beyond that date. Where are we, then? Is there any indication in the prophecy itself? There is. It is found in Daniel 7:26: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."

"The judgment was set, and the books were opened" (verse 10) in 1844, as we learn from the prophecy of Daniel 8:14. That was 108 years ago. During this period we have seen an astonishing paring down of the papal power and possessions. One has but to reflect upon what has happened in Poland, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Germany, even Italy itself, to realize that right before our eyes the judgment is taking away the dominion of the Antichrist,

consuming it and destroying it unto the end. Indeed, as foreshadowed in the prophecy of Revelation 13, were it not for the revival of the papal power in the United States, and the enormous sums of money flowing from this country into the Vatican coffers, its consumption and destruction might already have been accomplished.

How far, then, down the highway of time does this prophecy bring us! We stand today between the beginning of the judgment and the final victory of righteousness, when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High." Dan. 7:27.

### 3. The Highway of Divine Visitation

In the last five chapters of the book of Daniel we find ourselves upon the greatest prophetic highway of all, which, beginning back in the same ancient empires, runs through old Jerusalem, past Gethsemane and Golgotha, and on down the ages to the same judgment scene mentioned in Daniel 7 and the final time of trouble "such as never was" that is immediately to precede the return of Christ in glory. This prophecy deserves to be called the "Highway of Divine Visitation" because it links the two Advents of our Lord—the first in humiliation, suffering, and death, the second in triumphant majesty as King of kings and Lord of lords.

This is the prophecy of the ram with two horns and the he-goat with a little horn that "waxed great, even to the host of heaven"; of the time period of seventy weeks, reaching to "Messiah the Prince" and the longer period of 2300 days reaching to the cleansing of the sanctuary; of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the centuries-long controversy between the king of the north and the king of the south, climaxed by the capture by a certain power of "the glorious holy mountain" and the standing up of "Michael the Prince."

This highway, in general outline, is clear and plain. That there are a few shadows of uncertainty about its final plunge into eternity we are well aware, and we have no intention

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at this time of entering this controversial twilight zone. Nor do we need to do so, for our sole purpose here is to point out where we stand today in relation to the fulfillment of the entire prophecy.

And where is that?

The ram and the he-goat, typifying the Medo-Persian Empire and Grecia, have long since played their part and faded away. The little horn power, representing first pagan, then papal, Rome, has acted exactly as predicted. The time period of seventy weeks, or 490 years, beginning in 457 B.C. with the command "to restore and to build Jerusalem," and extending to "Messiah the Prince," has been fulfilled to the letter in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Likewise the longer period of 2300 days, beginning at the same time, and of which the shorter period was an integral part, terminated in 1844 with the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven and the announcement of the judgment hour on earth. Furthermore, most, if not all, of the conflicts between the king of the north and the king of the south can be pin pointed upon the pages of history down to comparatively recent times.

Where, then, do we stand on this highway? Obviously somewhere between 1844 and the standing up of Michael the Prince, by which we understand the completion of Christ's work in the sanctuary and His preparation to return in glory. In other words, we are living between the first pronouncement of the judgment-hour message 108 years ago, and the beginning of the time of trouble that is to occur just before Jesus comes to raise the dead. (Dan. 12:2.)

While it would be most desirable to know with fullness of certainty—and unanimity—just which power is to take possession of the glorious holy mountain and come, helpless, to its end, such information is not of the highest importance. More information would be welcome, but it is not essential. Looking at this great prophecy as a whole, glancing down the full length of this grand Highway of Divine Visitation from start to finish, it is unmistakably clear that by far the

greater length of it passes through territory of fulfilled prophecy. What remains is but a short stretch through history's closing scenes to the glorious return of Jesus.

#### 4. The Highway of the Son of Man

Next among the great highways of prophecy is the one outlined by our Lord Himself, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke in the Synoptic Gospels. It was given in answer to the direct question of His disciples, "Tell us, . . . what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3.

In response to this question Jesus told of the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem, to be followed by "great tribulation" for His followers. "In those days" but "after that tribulation" the sun would be darkened, the moon appear as blood, and the stars would fall from heaven. (Mark 13:24, 25; Rev. 6:12, 13.)

Following these signs there would come upon the earth, He said, "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:25-27.

The sequence is most familiar to us all. We know it by heart. It stands upon the pages of Holy Writ as an everlasting testimony against those who claim that there is no way of knowing when Christ will come.

Where are we on this Highway of the Son of Man? Certainly not in the days of old Jerusalem, sacked and burned by the Romans in A.D. 70. Not in the days of the great tribulation, which, after staining the Dark Ages with blood, terminated in the latter half of the eighteenth century. All this is history. So are the darkening of the sun and the appearance of the moon as blood. As for the falling of the stars, are we not convinced that this last great celestial sign occurred in 1833? And if so, are we not living between this

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spectacular phenomenon and the shaking of the powers of heaven? Clear proof that we are is afforded by the distress and perplexity of the nations, the roaring of the multitudes for freedom and vengeance, and by the terror in the hearts of men as they look into the future "after those things which are coming on the earth."

At the very time when some are saying, as Israel said to Ezekiel, "The vision that he seeth is for many days to come," Jesus says, "When *these* things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

##### 5. The Highway of the Churches

Turning now to the book of Revelation, we find a highway which runs from Pentecost to the second coming of Christ. It parallels the highways outlined in the book of Daniel and the one traced across the centuries by the Master Himself, but has particular reference to seven stages in the religious experience of the followers of Christ from the day He ascended till the day He returns.

As we are all aware, the message to the church at Ephesus was a message to the pure and zealous church of the first century, whereas the message to the church at Smyrna was directed to the Christians who suffered dire persecution under the Roman emperors in the second and third centuries; and so on down the ages to the Philadelphia experience and, finally, to Laodicea.

Do we need to ask where we are on this highway? Full well we know that we are not in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, or even Philadelphia. Laodicea is the word that fits the present condition of the church. It is rich and increased with goods. Its members are becoming more and more prosperous, rivaling their non-Christian neighbors in the luxury of their homes, while the spirit of the world is seeping into their hearts and sapping their spiritual vitality. They prefer preachers who preach smooth things to those who challenge them to action. They want more psychology

and less eschatology, and set greater value on a university degree than on a mission experience. They have become lukewarm not only to service but to sin, so that the line of demarcation between right and wrong has become dim and fuzzy among them; church rolls are cluttered with the names of people who no longer uphold its principles, and who long since have lost their first love.

Beyond all question we stand today in the final phase of the church's experience, just before the shaking time and the coming of Jesus to take His faithful remnant home.

#### 6. The Highway of Apostasy

In the sixth chapter of the book of Revelation we have the beginning of the prophecy of the seven seals, a highway which also starts at Pentecost and runs down the centuries to the second Advent. Galloping along its first few miles is a white horse, ridden by one with a bow, a crown, and a conquering spirit—typifying the apostolic church in its zeal to win the world for its Lord.

Then, as the white horse vanishes, a red horse takes its place, its rider bearing a sword, symbolizing the strife that came into the church as it departed from the teachings of its Lord.

Next upon this highway appears a black horse, its rider carrying a pair of balances, dispensing food at exorbitant prices, fitting picture of that apostate organization which, posing as the church of Christ, sold the free gifts of God for money and built its cathedrals with ill-gotten gains.

Then comes a pale or greenish-colored horse, signifying decay and decomposition, with the figure of Death upon its back, and Hell following behind, grim symbols of a church so utterly unlike the divine pattern that it actually persecutes the true children of God.

On and on winds this Highway of Apostasy, down through the dark, bleak years of papal supremacy, past the slaughter of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Huguenots, and many others. At last, leaving behind the bones and ashes of a

million martyrs, it passes the monuments to these heroic dead as the Reformation revalues their sacrifice.

Suddenly, at the opening of the sixth seal, there is a great earthquake, the sun becomes black as sackcloth, the moon becomes as blood, and the stars of heaven fall to the earth "even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."

Thus this great highway passes through the city of Lisbon, to behold the mighty earthquake of 1755, leaps the Atlantic to New England to see the Dark Day of May 19, 1780, and the star shower of November 13, 1833, then vanishes into eternity as heaven departs as a scroll, Christ appears in His majesty, and all humanity cries out, "The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

Where are we upon this highway? Do we see the rider on the white horse going forth conquering and to conquer? Do we see the red horse, the black horse, the pale green horse? We do not. All have galloped away into the mist-covered wastes of history.

Where are we, then? We are far beyond the Lisbon earthquake, far beyond the Dark Day, and far beyond the falling of the stars. The next event on this highway of prophecy is the departing of the heaven as a scroll and the return of our Lord in glory. Indeed, if these awesome phenomena of nature were intended to be signs of the approach of the final consummation of the controversy between the church of Christ and the powers of darkness, how absurd to suggest that hundreds of years may yet elapse before the Lord shall appear! Prolonged delay would make them meaningless.

#### **7. The Highway of the Conquerors**

Yet another highway to the kingdom is provided in the prophecy of the seven trumpets. This begins farther down the centuries than the others, but terminates in the same glorious event. It parallels the other highways, but deals with political rather than religious events, tracing the story of the conquerors of the Roman Empire.

As each trumpet sounds, a conqueror leaps upon history's stage to play his appointed part in bringing about the disintegration of that mighty power which, in the words of Daniel, was "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly." First comes Alaric with his Goths, then Genseric with his Vandals, Attila with his Huns, and Odoacer with his Heruli, followed later by the Saracens and Turks.

This sequence of struggle, conflict, battle, and death continues down the centuries, but not forever. As the sound of the sixth trumpet fades away, a mighty angel cries aloud, "as when a lion roareth," "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be *finished*." Rev. 10:7.

This suggests termination, not indefinite prolongation. And when the seventh angel sounds, voices in heaven are heard saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11:15. At the same time, on earth, the nations are angry, "and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." Verse 18.

Thus this highway brings us down the years past all the conquerors of Rome to the supreme Conqueror of the universe, Jesus Christ Himself, riding down the skies to victory over all His enemies.

Where do we stand upon this highway? In the days of Alaric, or Genseric, or Attila, or Odoacer? Do we live in the days of the Saracens, or the Turks? Of course not. All the events foreshadowed by the first six trumpets are in the past. And the sixth trumpet ceased to sound more than a hundred years ago.

Where, then, are we? Look around. Are the nations angry—more angry than ever? Have they destroyed one another as never before? Do they now possess the power to bring the whole earth to ruin?

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We know these things are so. Consequently, we are driven to the conclusion that the return of the conquering Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords, cannot be far in the future.

Glancing now at all seven of the great highways of prophecy, we note that they not only converge upon our day and generation but, without exception, they are at least ninety-five per cent behind us. Looking back along their gleaming trails we see century after century of fulfilled prophecy; looking forward we observe that there is but little left to be fulfilled, only the last climactic scenes before Jesus comes again. It would seem obvious that we have arrived at history's final hour; that we are standing upon the crumbling crags of Time in sight of the eternal deep.

### **Areas of Unfulfilled Prophecy**

What else is to happen before the end? We shall mention three significant areas of unfulfilled prophecy which deserve close attention. All are signs for which we should be watching in these momentous times.

#### **I. Developments in the United States**

Turning to the prophecy found in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, concerning the leopard beast with seven heads and ten horns, followed by a second beast with two horns like a lamb, we note that here again almost all the salient features are matters of history.

The Papacy, after receiving its power, its seat, and great authority from the dragon, or pagan Rome, enjoyed full sway over the nations for "forty and two months," or 1260 years, ending in 1798. Then it received a deadly wound, which has largely been healed. Meanwhile the second power mentioned has come upon the stage of history bearing a lamblike, inoffensive appearance and posing as the champion of civil and religious liberty for all mankind.

All these events have taken place, just as the prophecy demanded. Those still to occur are as follows: (a) the lamb-

like nation is to speak as a dragon; that is, with all the authority and forcefulness of the dragon-inspired pagan empires of the past; (b) it is to show favor to the "first beast," or Papacy, and sponsor a replica of this authoritarian religious organization within its borders; and (c) it is finally to condone the persecution of minorities that oppose its plans.

How long will it take for such lamentable developments to come to pass? Not as long as some may think. Paul Blanshard has already alerted us all to the peril to American freedom latent in the enormous growth of Catholic power throughout this country. It is no longer a secret that the set purpose of the Roman hierarchy is to gain control of the United States; and this determination, coupled with the languid tolerance of most Protestants, and their incredible ignorance of the facts of history, is paving the way for the very transformation of American life which this prophecy foreshadows. Recalling the present strong trend toward government by bureaucracy, also the multiplicity of regulations, affecting all phases of life, emanating from Washington, anyone can see how easily and swiftly we might be projected into a situation in which no one could buy or sell without some mark or sign demanded by the powers that be.

In this connection we quote the following important prediction by Ellen G. White:

"To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. . . . On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. . . .

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the Papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation [meaning the United States] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propaga-

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tion of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.”<sup>36</sup>

## 2. Developments in Palestine

The recent dramatic restoration of the nation of Israel has focused the attention of mankind once more upon Palestine. Many Christians have mistakenly permitted themselves to believe that the return of thousands of unconverted Jews to their native land is in fulfillment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not realizing that, since the death of the Son of God on Calvary, there is no salvation, nor any eternal homeland, except for those who believe in Him and accept His sacrifice.

However, there is one prophecy concerning Palestine that we should all be watching with special care. Said Jesus, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21:24.

For nineteen centuries Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles. It is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Despite the amazing prowess of the Israeli troops, the ancient city of Jerusalem is still in Arab hands. A Mohammedan mosque still stands upon the site of Solomon’s Temple. Victorious as were the forces of Israel in every other part of Palestine, they failed to take the most dazzling objective of all. Mysteriously they were held back from achieving this most cherished goal, this culminating triumph, as by an unseen hand.

What could be the reason? Only that the times of the Gentiles are not yet fulfilled.

Centuries ago Israel was not permitted to enter Palestine for a certain time because “the iniquity of the Amorites” was “not yet full” (Gen. 15:16); that is, not until the probationary time allotted to the Amorites had run out.

It may well be that the same principle applies today, on

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<sup>36</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 451.

a wider scale. If so, then Jerusalem is to remain trodden down by Gentiles till the probationary time of all Gentiles has run out. If this be correct, how much hinges upon the fate of this ancient city and the power that occupies it!

### 3. The Seven Last Plagues

We mention these awful visitations upon humanity because they are among the events to happen between now and the coming of Christ. For if Christ's coming is near, the plagues are near also.

Exactly how they will happen, or how widespread they will be, or how much symbolism there is in the prophetic description of them, it is not our purpose to discuss in this connection. We wish only to emphasize that when news of the first plague—the noisome and grievous sore—is broadcast by radio and television (as no doubt it will be), and is published in the newspapers, we shall all know that probation has closed and the end is right upon us.

That, dear friends, is something to watch for. None of the other plagues, however terrible they may be, will make upon our minds anything like the impact that is made by that first shocking evidence that mankind has passed "the point of no return," that all missionary work is henceforth worthless, and that the time for the outpouring of the wrath of God has arrived. Later news that the seas and rivers have been turned to blood, or that scorching heat has caused much suffering to large numbers of people, or that great darkness has fallen upon the city of Rome, or that the symbolic Euphrates has vanished, to prepare the way for the kings of the east, will never make the same tremendous impression. These subsequent plagues, following in swift sequence, as anticipated, will serve but to add certainty to certainty that the day is at hand when the voice of Christ will be heard saying, "It is done," and He will return in glory as Victor of Armageddon.

Some of these judgments may come suddenly, without previous warning; others may involve time for preparation

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and development before they actually occur. Under the sixth plague, for instance, "the spirits of devils, working miracles, . . . go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." There is a strong suggestion here of propaganda—of inflammatory falsehoods broadcast to the ends of the earth by the three predominant powers of the latter days. And who is so blind that he cannot see the agents of these powers already at work behind their microphones today? And who is so deaf he cannot hear the lying words they are pouring forth, designed to do the devil's work, spreading hatred, stirring up strife, and preparing humanity for the final holocaust?

#### Preparation for the End

Thus we find ourselves upon the final frontiers of prophecy. Of all that was predicted by the mighty seers of old, but little remains to be fulfilled. The great highways of prophecy, which have circled the mountains and crossed the valleys of history for more than two millenniums, are about to plunge from Time into Eternity. The last things are about to happen. The last days are upon us.

Never were the words of Zephaniah so true: "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly." Zeph. 1:14. "The Eternal's great day is near, near, speeding apace! the Eternal's bitter day is near, rushing on like a warrior!" is Dr. Moffatt's rendering.

And what is the Lord's counsel to us at such a time? It is found in the exhortation of the selfsame prophet: "Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2:2, 3.

"Time is very short," He says to us through Ellen G. White, "and all that is to be done must be done quickly. The

angels are holding the four winds, and Satan is taking advantage of everyone who is not fully established in the truth. Every soul is to be tested. Every defect in the character, unless it is overcome by the help of God's Spirit, will become a sure means of destruction."<sup>37</sup>

As in the Lord's parable of the ten virgins, when the midnight cry caught them all by surprise, revealing that five were wise and five foolish, so now, to quote Mrs. White again—

"ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall."<sup>38</sup>

How is it with us? We know we are in the waiting time, the tarrying time, the watching time, but what are we doing with these precious moments of opportunity? Are we preparing for the stupendous events about to break upon the world? Are we building up our moral resources for the tests and trials of the time of trouble? Are we proclaiming the imminence of Christ's second coming with unexampled zeal? Or are we becoming indifferent, careless, self-satisfied, worldly, and so familiar with the discussion of prophecy that it has lost its meaning for us, and the very mention of signs of the times acts as a soporific upon our souls?

"It was not the will of God," says Mrs. White, "that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief.' Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 573.

<sup>38</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 412.

As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning, and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out.”<sup>39</sup>

Well may we take these words to our own hearts, as also that remarkable declaration in *Christ's Object Lessons*: “When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.”<sup>40</sup>

Perhaps we are responsible for the seeming delay in Christ's return. Perhaps He is waiting for something that we should do, some surrender we should make, some perfecting of character that must yet be accomplished in us.

But He will not wait forever. Those who take the foregoing statement in *Christ's Object Lessons* to mean that hundreds of years may yet elapse before Christ returns, because it will take a very long time before His character is “perfectly reproduced” in Seventh-day Adventists, are of all men most mistaken. God loved the people who lived before the Flood just as much as He loves mankind today; He warned them just as dramatically, and pleaded with them just as earnestly; but the time came at last when He said, “My spirit shall not always strive with man.” Gen. 6:3. There is a limit to divine forbearance. He will not restrain His anger forever.

That the character of Christ will be “perfectly reproduced” in His people before He comes there is no doubt. But this does not necessarily include all those whose names are on the church rolls. Many of these will drop out by the way. Only those who are “His people” by their own desire and purpose, who yearn for absolute identity with their Lord and Master, whose supreme ambition is to have His name written upon their foreheads, will enjoy this blessed experience. And when some—the faithful remnant out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people—have by prayer,

<sup>39</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 458.

<sup>40</sup> Page 69.

study, self-sacrifice, and utter dedication, become living facsimiles of Christ on earth, then He will come "to claim them as His own."

Shall we be among that company? Standing as we do upon the final frontiers of prophecy, expecting the last scenes of history to burst upon us at any moment, gazing as it were through the pearly gates into the kingdom of God, let us highly resolve and earnestly pray that this experience may be ours.

And may our voices join with those of God's true people in all the earth, as they send up their urgent and incessant petition, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

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# The Great Controversy

By

W. E. READ



# The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

## The Outline

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#### V. THE OUTCOME OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

The expression, "the great controversy between Christ and Satan," is a familiar one to Seventh-day Adventists all over the world. Although the term "great controversy" is not a Biblical one, the idea is given considerable prominence in the Word of God. The phrase has become part of our language in the Advent cause; whenever and wherever we use it, it is understood by our workers and believers around the world field.

This great controversy, or great conflict, is called a warfare. We read of the weapons to be used (2 Cor. 10:4), that we are to fight a good warfare (1 Tim. 1:18), and are assured that the warfare will ultimately be accomplished (Isa. 40:2). The controversy began in heaven, and is now being carried forward on earth. (Revelation 12.) The war is between Christ and His angels on the one hand and the devil and his angels on the other. In the contest all are to be marshaled. It is our privilege to enlist under the banner of Prince Emmanuel and become soldiers of the cross, or to remain among the vast legions of the enemy of souls. If we join with Prince Emmanuel, we shall be provided with the necessary armor, and can go forward in the strength of our mighty Commander, fighting the good fight of faith. When the victory is gained, we shall reign with Christ and enjoy the fruits of His blessed triumph over the hosts of darkness throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

In the Spirit of prophecy frequent mention is made of this great struggle between the forces of evil and the forces of righteousness.

"The warfare . . . , which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time."<sup>1</sup>

"The great controversy between truth and error, between Christ and Satan, is to increase in intensity to the close of this world's history."<sup>2</sup>

"The whole universe is watching with inexpressible interest the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil."<sup>3</sup>

This theme has been a matter of earnest study and contemplation all through our history. It has even entered into the titles of some of the volumes of the Ellen G. White library. Think of the five books in the Conflict of the Ages Series, and note the titles they bear:

*Patriarchs and Prophets* reveals the conflict of the ages in the lives of holy men of old.

*Prophets and Kings* portrays the conflict in the lives of prophets and kings.

*The Desire of Ages* unfolds the conflict in the days of Jesus.

*The Acts of the Apostles* emphasizes the conflict in the apostolic age.

*The Great Controversy* delineates the course of the conflict and the issues involved from the time it began.

The specific theme of our meditation is the closing scenes of this great controversy. However, in order to understand these closing events, and particularly their sequence and significance, it will be well to give thought to the over-all picture of the great controversy as it has unfolded throughout the ages.

In pursuing this, let us observe:

## Section I. The Period of the Great Controversy

### 1. *Its Beginning*

The period of the great controversy is from the inception of sin to the time when it will be finally eliminated from the universe of God. The Scriptures reveal clearly that

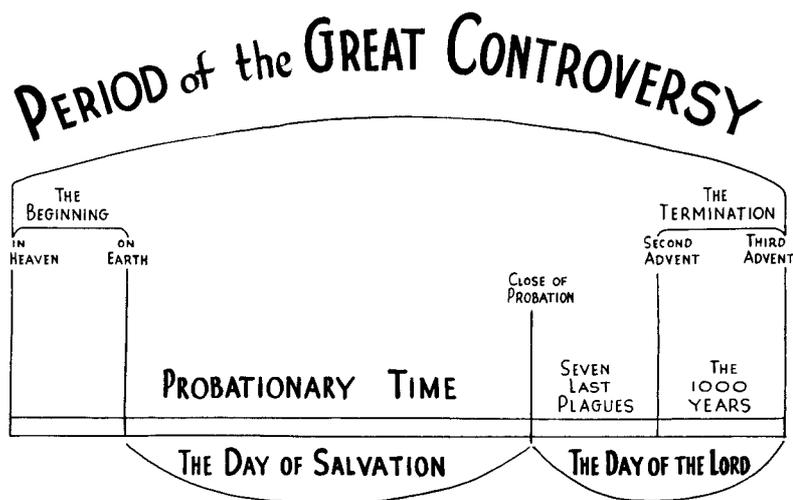
<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 148.

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iniquity was conceived in the heart of Lucifer. He was perfect in all his ways until iniquity was found in him. (Eze. 28:15.) He is the father of lies. (John 8:44.) He was a murderer from the beginning. (John 8:44.) With him began the great controversy, and "the warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time."<sup>4</sup>



At the opening of this period many things were not clear to the heavenly hosts or to the inhabitants of other worlds. On this the Spirit of prophecy remarks:

"At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this [the issues of the controversy]. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 764.

## 2. *Its Duration*

This titanic struggle begun in heaven and continued on earth will last through the centuries until, in the plan of God, Satan and the hosts of evil will be completely destroyed in the fires of the last days.

Ever since sin contaminated the hearts of men, we see the same struggle, the same conflicts, the same malignant obsession of the enemy to disrupt the work of Jehovah, the same grim determination to destroy God's people, the same bitter purpose to make void the law of the Eternal. This has obtained, whichever period we study, whether the ante-diluvian, the patriarchal, or the Levitical age. It was true in the days of Jesus our Lord, also in the apostolic age, and again during the medieval centuries. It is just as true today, and will be increasingly so during the closing scenes of the great controversy.

All through the years, however, God has had faithful witnesses calling the attention of the people to the issues involved, and also encouraging them with the thought that soon the warfare will be over and sin and its author destroyed forever.

This concept was strikingly foreshadowed in the sanctuary service of ancient days. In reference to the ritual of the Day of Atonement we read:

"Once each year [in the sanctuary] their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners."<sup>6</sup>

## 3. *Its Termination*

Thank God, the time is coming when evil will have an end; it will not rise up a second time. The messenger of the Lord has well expressed this:

"A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their [angels'] minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all

<sup>6</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 684, 685.

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created intelligences. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.

"Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the 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>7</sup>

Then, concerning the time when all is peace and harmony throughout God's great creation, we read:

"The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love."<sup>8</sup>

## Section II. The Location

The opening stages of the great controversy were enacted in heaven, but the time came when Satan and his hosts were cast out from that abode of bliss. They then found entrance into this little world of ours. We read:

"Though he [Satan] was cast out of heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth."<sup>9</sup>

"The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his."<sup>10</sup>

"Soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed."<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, this world, in the purpose of God, is to be the theme of study by the intelligences of heaven. It is here

<sup>7</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 764.

<sup>8</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 582.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

that the principles of the great usurper are worked out: it is here that the wonderful lessons of redeeming grace are to be seen. The dwellers in the great universe of God are deeply interested in the outworking of the great contest between the forces of light and the legions of darkness.

"The universe is looking upon the controversy that is going on upon the earth."<sup>12</sup>

"The holy inhabitants of other worlds were watching with the deepest interest the events taking place on the earth."<sup>13</sup>

The intelligences of heaven, whether the angelic hosts or the inhabitants of unfallen worlds, will know not only of the progress but also of the climactic termination of the great controversy. The apostle Paul wrote of God's revelation in Christ Jesus, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 3:10, 11.

Commenting on Deuteronomy 4:5-8, Ellen G. White says:

"Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God's purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom."<sup>14</sup>

Mrs. White has further assured us:

"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."<sup>15</sup>

"By the facts unfolded in the progress of the great controversy, God will demonstrate the principles of His rules of government, which have been falsified by Satan and by all whom he has deceived. His justice will finally be acknowledged by the whole world, though the acknowledgment will be made too late to save the rebellious. God carries with Him the sympathy and the approval of the whole universe as step by step His great plan advances to its complete fulfillment. He will carry it with Him in the final eradication of rebellion. It will be seen that all who have forsaken the divine precepts have placed themselves on the side

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 119.

<sup>13</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 78.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 154.

of Satan, in warfare against Christ. When the prince of this world shall be judged, and all who have united with him shall share his fate, the whole universe as witnesses to the sentence will declare, 'Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.'"<sup>16</sup>

### Section III. The Basis

The basis of the great controversy between Christ and Satan might be considered twofold: first, the enmity of the evil one against the law of God; and second, his hatred of the Son of God. These considerations are vital, for they reveal the main issues involved in the agelong contest.

The great controversy in heaven began over the law of Jehovah and the jealousy conceived in the heart of Lucifer against the Son of the Highest. Let us observe these two phases of study:

#### 1. *Satan's Enmity Against the Law of God.*

"From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator."<sup>17</sup>

"From the first, the great controversy had been upon the law of God. . . . In the controversy it was to be shown whether the divine statutes were defective and subject to change, or perfect and immutable."<sup>18</sup>

"From Adam's day to the present time the great controversy has been concerning obedience to God's law."<sup>19</sup>

"The very means by which Christ established the law, Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. . . . The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time."<sup>20</sup>

#### 2. *Satan's Enmity Against the Son of God*

"His accusations [against God's people] arise solely from his enmity to Christ."<sup>21</sup>

"Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>17</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.

<sup>18</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 69.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>20</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

<sup>21</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 470.

God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners."<sup>22</sup>

"The antagonism that exists between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Satan was most strikingly displayed in the world's reception of Jesus. . . . His life of self-denial and sinless devotion was a perpetual reproof to a proud, sensual people. It was this that evoked enmity against the Son of God."<sup>23</sup>

"Satan's hatred against God leads him to hate every object of the Saviour's care."<sup>24</sup>

"The name of Jesus, our Advocate, he [Satan] detests."<sup>25</sup>

"All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ's supremacy."<sup>26</sup>

#### Section IV. The Nature

We shall now consider the nature of the great controversy. This naturally grows out of the basis of this mighty conflict. As a natural development of Satan's open opposition and hostility, both to the law of God and to the divine Son of the Most High, comes his abhorrence, his grim malignity, and his intense hatred of all that is good, all that is noble, all that is true. Hence he has made war against the truth of God; he has ever sought to hinder the advancement of the message of salvation; always has he endeavored to exterminate the children of God. His has been a constant, vigilant, never-ceasing antagonism, culminating in his relentless warfare and supreme attempt to overthrow the government of heaven.

Through the ages there have been many phases to this warfare. Sometimes it has been a clash of principles, a verbal conflict between the champions of error and the witnesses for the truth. Sometimes it has been a moral or spiritual contest, in which forces have been brought to bear upon God's children to turn them from their allegiance to Jehovah. When the agents of unrighteousness have been unsuccessful in such unholy attempts, they have subjected God's children

<sup>22</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.

<sup>23</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 506.

<sup>24</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 356.

<sup>25</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 296.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 470.

to imprisonment, to torture, and to death. In such instances the conflict has veered from the moral or spiritual to the mental and physical. Again, on many occasions, nations have gone to war, as in the days of Israel, in defense of the principles of righteousness. Then the conflict became military in its nature. Many such instances are recorded in the Word of God. There were times, even though nations entered into military combat, when God stepped in and worked marvelously on behalf of His people. When it seemed that all was lost, Jehovah sent help from heaven and miraculously delivered His children. Such experiences as are recorded in the Divine Oracle are worthy of careful and thoughtful study, especially in view of the great and trying days that are before God's remnant people.

But let us meditate on this more fully. In view of what has just been mentioned, let us consider the following aspects of the great controversy:

### 1. *The Moral Aspect*

This has been well expressed by the messenger of the Lord as:

#### *a. The controversy between truth and error.*

"The great controversy between truth and error, between Christ and Satan, is to increase in intensity to the close of this world's history."<sup>27</sup>

"The great controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil."<sup>28</sup>

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God."<sup>29</sup>

#### *b. The controversy between good and evil.*

"The whole universe is watching with inexpressible interest the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil."<sup>30</sup>

#### *c. The controversy between righteousness and sin.*

We read that during the ministry of Jesus---

<sup>27</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 144.

<sup>28</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 571.

<sup>29</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.

<sup>30</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 148.

"Satan summoned all his forces, and at every step contested the work of Christ. So it will be in the great final conflict between righteousness and sin."<sup>31</sup>

*d. The controversy "between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition."*<sup>32</sup>

*e. The controversy between the law of God and the laws of men.*

"Upon this battle we are now entering,—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah."<sup>33</sup>

"By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world."<sup>34</sup>

"The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, 'both small and great, . . .' shall conform to the customs of the church."<sup>35</sup>

"Then will be opened before him the course of the great conflict that had its birth before time began, and that ends only when time shall cease. The history of the inception of sin; of fatal falsehood in its crooked working; of truth that, swerving not from its own straight lines, has met and conquered error,—all will be made manifest."<sup>36</sup>

## 2. *The Spiritual Aspect*

From the same writer we cull the following pertinent extracts concerning—

*a. The conflict in the heart of man.*

"Many look on this conflict between Christ and Satan as having no special bearing on their own life; and for them it has little interest. But within the domain of every human heart this controversy is repeated."<sup>37</sup>

"As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be the 'accuser of our brethren,' 'which accused them before our God day and night.' The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. Satan's accusations against those who seek the Lord

<sup>31</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 257.

<sup>32</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

<sup>35</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 604.

<sup>36</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 304.

<sup>37</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God's law can he obtain power over them."<sup>38</sup>

*b. The conflict between good and evil angels.*

"We should see angels flying quickly to the aid of these tempted ones, forcing back the hosts of evil that encompass them, and placing their feet on a sure foundation. The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend."<sup>39</sup>

*c. The conflict against the saints.*

Satan's hatred of the people of God has existed all through the centuries. He has worked through the nations of earth, he has worked through religious organizations, and this has been well expressed by Ellen G. White as follows:

"Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who serve God and those who serve Him not."<sup>40</sup>

"Every inroad made by the gospel upon the enemy's dominion is met by fierce opposition from his vast armies. The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed."<sup>41</sup>

It is in this connection that the mental and physical phases of the controversy are seen. The lot of God's faithful children throughout the centuries has certainly been one of persecution, imprisonment, and death. What anxiety of soul, what pain and agony, they have suffered for the truth's sake. This mental and physical suffering, however, has not been forgotten by the Lord of hosts.

Observe also that through the centuries Satan has used the nations of earth in a studied endeavor to obliterate God's children. We will notice the following considerations:

(1) Satan delights in war.

"Satan delights in war; for it excites the worst passions of the soul, and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood."<sup>42</sup>

"It suits his satanic majesty well to see slaughter and carnage upon the earth."<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 470.

<sup>39</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 176.

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 15.

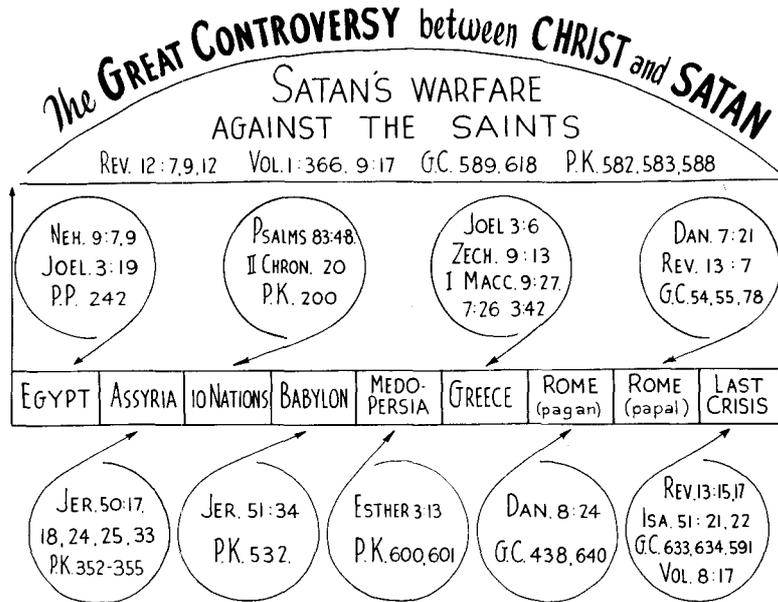
<sup>41</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 407.

<sup>42</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 589.

<sup>43</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 366.

(2) Satan has always warred against God's people.

"Because Israel had been chosen to preserve the knowledge of God in the earth, they had ever been the special objects of Satan's enmity; he was determined to cause their destruction. . . . Satan was determined to frustrate the carrying out of the divine purpose, and to this



end he was seeking to move upon the heathen nations to destroy them utterly." <sup>44</sup>

"As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God." <sup>45</sup>

"As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble." <sup>46</sup>

"The antitypical land of promise is just before us, and Satan is determined to destroy the people of God." <sup>47</sup>

(3) Satan has warred through many nations. <sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 582, 583.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 587, 588.

<sup>46</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 618.

<sup>47</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 689.

<sup>48</sup> See Appendix A, p. 320.

It has been his set policy through the ages to war against God's children. In seeking to accomplish his designs he has worked through the kings and rulers of earth. Divine revelation shows the manifestations of his diabolical obsession through such nations as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, the ten nations in the days of Jehoshaphat, also through Rome, both pagan and papal. He is seeking to do the same today.

"The same spirit that crucified Christ and slew the apostles, the same that moved the blood-thirsty Nero against the faithful in his day, was at work to rid the earth of those who were beloved of God."<sup>49</sup>

During the time of the plagues Satan will make his final and supreme attempt to crush forever the faithful people of God.

Satan manifests his hatred against the saints of the Most High at all times and in all places. In the coming contest he excites the religious leaders, the apostate system of religion, and the nations of earth in one supreme effort *to crush forever God's faithful people*. He leads them to pass a death decree, so that all who will not yield their allegiance to God will be put to death.

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Rev. 13:15.

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof."<sup>50</sup>

After quoting Isaiah 51:21-23, Ellen G. White comments:

"The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them."<sup>51</sup>

"Under the rule of Rome, those who suffered death for their fidelity to the gospel were denounced as evil-doers. . . . So it will be

<sup>49</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 78.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 634.

now. While Satan seeks to destroy those who honor God's law, he will cause them to be accused as lawbreakers."<sup>52</sup>

"A refusal to obey the commandments of God, and a determination to cherish hatred against those who proclaim these commandments, leads to the most determined war on the part of the dragon, whose whole energies are brought to bear against the commandment-keeping people of God. 'He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.' Revelation 13: 16, 17."<sup>53</sup>

(4) Satan has thus warred against Christ.<sup>54</sup>

In making war with the saints he makes "war with the Lamb." (Rev. 17:14.) Jesus so identifies Himself with His people that what is done to them is recognized by Him as done to Himself. We read, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25:40.

Referring to this verse, the messenger of the Lord remarks:

"If we do good to these, He will accept the deed as though done to Himself."<sup>55</sup>

"Inasmuch as ye have done this to one of Christ's disciples, ye have done it to Jesus in His person."<sup>56</sup>

King James of England, under whose auspices the Authorized Version of our Bible was published and who was quite a student of prophecy, referring to Revelation 17:14, has given us the following:

"For they shall fight with the Lambe, in his members, albeit all in vaine, for in the end the Lambe shall overcome them, because he is Lord of lords, and King of kings."<sup>57</sup>

### 3. *The Military Aspect*

Time and again God has worked through the armies of earth to hold back the forces of evil. The days of Israel present many instances of this, and also of divine interposition.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 591.

<sup>53</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 117.

<sup>54</sup> See Appendix B, p. 323.

<sup>55</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 225, 226.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 157.

<sup>57</sup> *The Workes of the Most High and Mightie Prince, James*, pp. 55, 56.

a. God worked through the military might of Israel, and sent special help from heaven to overcome the hosts of Sisera.

b. Think of the humanly inadequate forces of Asa against the hosts of the Ethiopians centuries ago, and how God wrought for His people.

c. Observe also Jehoshaphat going forth to battle against the enemy with a choir at the head of his army, and yet Jehovah wrought a wonderful deliverance for His cause.

History provides many other instances, and in the closing phases of the great controversy we shall again see the nations in deadly combat. They will be in "corrupt harmony" with the beast and his image in their final attack to overthrow the government of God. But this phase of the subject will be considered more in detail later.

#### 4. *The Miraculous Aspect*

This has just been referred to here, but it should be mentioned again in this connection. Many of the military conflicts in the days long ago were, in a sense, typical of the great final conflict between Christ and Satan. This means that battles which took place not only at Megiddo but in other places were typical of many of the events clustering around the final deliverance of the people of God.

In the days of Sisera, God interposed and wrought a marvelous victory. The same was true in the days of Asa, when he was besieged by the Ethiopian hosts. It was true also when the Lord brought confusion to the legions of the enemy as they sought to overwhelm Jehoshaphat and His people in the days of Judah.

So it will be in the last days. When all human agencies fail, when all earthly protection is withdrawn from the saints, God will be the hope of His people. He will protect them; He will deliver them; He will save them.

"The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:16.

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Ps. 91:7-11.

#### 5. *The Retributive Aspect*

This brings us to the last aspect of the great controversy. When the nations, urged on by evil angels, have filled up the cup of their iniquity, they actually make war on the Son of God. We read, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Rev. 19:19.

But their attempt is futile, and the nations of earth, with all who have joined with them, go down in utter, inglorious defeat. They will make war with the Lamb, but "the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings." Rev. 17:14.

Hence, throughout the centuries the great controversy has presented many and various aspects. It has taken various forms, according to the issues involved, and according to those who participated, whether as aggressors or as victims of aggression. Whatever turn it took, however, there was manifested the force of aggressive warfare. It has been so since the controversy began; intensity will continue to increase unto the very end.

### Section V. The Outcome of the Great Controversy

The great controversy between Christ and Satan is to continue to the very end. This has been clearly outlined by the messenger of the Lord:

The controversy "against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time."<sup>68</sup>

The great controversy, however, is to end, and the Spirit

<sup>68</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

of prophecy foreshadows the fact that there will be a "last" conflict in this great controversy. Note the following: "The very means by which Christ established the law, Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan."<sup>59</sup>

This last conflict is undoubtedly the final contest known as Armageddon.

"Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. . . . All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon."<sup>60</sup>

"Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. . . . Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of Spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: 'I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.' Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion."<sup>61</sup>

Thank God, the great struggle that has lasted so long will ultimately end. Nevermore will sin raise its ugly head to contaminate and defile the universe of God.

"The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love."<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> E. G. White letter 79, 1900.

<sup>61</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 561, 562.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 678.

# The Closing Events in the Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

## The Outline

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1. The warning
2. The experience
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VII. THE GRAND FINALE

In this section of the study we shall consider the closing events of the great conflict. For our purpose the term "closing events," in the main at least, will be understood to apply to what we know as "the great day of the Lord."

**Section I. The Importance of the Subject**

**1. *The Vital Importance of Our Knowing the Things That Belong to Our Peace***

Not only has the Spirit of prophecy counseled us to study these closing events, not only are we assured that we may know what is to take place, but the Lord in His mercy has emphasized the solemn and serious responsibility of meditating on these things. We need not be deceived by the specious devices of the enemy. God would have us alert, wholly consecrated to Him, and ready when the great time of testing comes to the children of God. Much counsel of this nature has been given to the church.

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed."<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

"It was needful that men should be awakened to their danger; that they should be roused to prepare for the solemn events connected with the close of probation."<sup>64</sup>

"Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience."<sup>65</sup>

"In view of that great day the word of God, in the most solemn and impressive language, calls upon His people to arouse from this spiritual lethargy, and to seek His face with repentance and humiliation."<sup>66</sup>

"Unless we understand the importance of the moments that are swiftly passing into eternity and make ready to stand in the great day of God, we shall be unfaithful stewards. The watchman is to know the time of night. Everything is now clothed with a solemnity that all who believe the truth for this time should realize. They should act in reference to the day of God. The judgments of God are about to fall upon the world, and we need to be preparing for that great day."<sup>67</sup>

## ***2. The Last Crisis Will Be the Most Terrible in the World's History***

That the crisis which is before the people of God will be the most terrible the world has ever known is emphasized over and over again in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. Observe the following:

"The 'time of trouble such as never was,' is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess, and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. 'Though Noah, Daniel, and Job' were in the land, 'as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.'"<sup>68</sup>

"The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed."<sup>69</sup>

The great test in this conflict will come concerning loyalty to the commandments of God.

"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God,

<sup>64</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 310.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 622.      <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

<sup>67</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 407.

<sup>68</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 622, 623.

<sup>69</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 407.

will decree that all, 'both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death. On the other hand, the law of God enjoining the Creator's rest-day demands obedience, and threatens wrath against all who transgress its precepts. . . .

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God."<sup>70</sup>

In this crisis hour God will be the hope and comfort of His people.

"This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!"<sup>71</sup>

"In the hour of the church's greatest danger, most fervent prayer will be offered in her behalf by the faithful remnant, and God will hear and answer at the very time when the guilt of the transgressor has reached its height. He will 'avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them.'"<sup>72</sup>

Divine help will be forthcoming in the darkest hour.

"Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action. The two opposing parties will continue to exist till the closing up of the last great chapter in this world's history."<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 604, 605.

<sup>71</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 213.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 524.

<sup>73</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 5, 1909, p. 9.

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.

"The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for 'when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,' God will be to His church 'a refuge from the storm.' In that day, only the righteous are promised deliverance."<sup>74</sup>

### 3. *The Final Events Are Made Plain*

God has made plain in His Holy Word the events that are to take place in the closing scenes of earth's history. The messenger of the Lord wrote years ago:

"God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath."<sup>75</sup>

"We are to . . . understand the progress of events in the marshaling of the nations for the final conflict of the great controversy."<sup>76</sup>

We feel encouraged to enter into this study, especially in view of the following paragraphs from the Spirit of prophecy:

"In the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented."<sup>77</sup>

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field."<sup>78</sup>

It is not possible to explain everything in the prophetic word, but—

"let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol in the Revelation, that it is useless for them to search this

<sup>74</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

<sup>75</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 452.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 307.

<sup>77</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 594.

<sup>78</sup> E. G. White manuscript 175, 1899.

book in an effort to know the meaning of the truth it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John will give to the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things. . . .

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days. The angel commanded, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.’ ”<sup>79</sup>

Even with this encouraging assurance it is still true that many things in the Word of God will not be revealed until we enter the kingdom of God.

“Some passages of Scripture will never be perfectly comprehended until in the future life Christ shall explain them. There are mysteries to be unraveled, statements that human minds cannot harmonize. And the enemy will seek to arouse argument upon these points, which might better remain undiscussed.”<sup>80</sup>

What a wonderful experience it will be in the home of the saved to enter into the mysteries of the purpose and plan of God. We are told:

“Then will be opened before him [man] the course of the great conflict that had its birth before time began, and that ends only when time shall cease. The history of the inception of sin; of fatal falsehood in its crooked working; of truth that, swerving not from its own straight lines, has met and conquered error,—all will be made manifest. The veil that interposes between the visible and the invisible world will be drawn aside, and wonderful things will be revealed.”<sup>81</sup>

#### 4. *The Issues in the Final Conflict*

It is evident that when the time comes for the final conflict there will be an agreement of some kind among the spirits of devils, the kings of the earth, and the leaders of men in various phases of endeavor. Satan ultimately succeeds in bringing about a confederation of all earth's interests, the great purpose of which is that he be exalted as divine.

“Fallen angels upon earth form confederations with evil men. In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law

<sup>79</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 584, 585.

<sup>80</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 312.

<sup>81</sup> *Education*, p. 304.



In addition to Sunday sacredness another great error will be widely accepted.

“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of Spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.”<sup>89</sup>

“By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.”<sup>90</sup>

Through these two great deceptive, erroneous, and misleading teachings, there will be brought about an accord, a *rapprochement*, a harmony, between the church and the world. As to the kind of unity that will obtain, note the following:

“The word of God plainly declares that His law is to be scorned, trampled upon, by the world; there will be an extraordinary prevalence of iniquity. The professed Protestant world will form a confederacy with the man of sin, and the church and the world will be in corrupt harmony. Here the great crisis is coming upon the world.”<sup>91</sup>

Although this test is inevitable, we should remember that—

“the Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the conflict in which they must engage. How often when Satan has brought all his forces to bear against the followers of Christ, and death stares them in the face, have earnest prayers put up in faith brought the Captain of the Lord’s host upon the field of action and turned the tide of battle and delivered the oppressed. Now is the time when we should closely connect with God, that we may be hid when the fierceness of His wrath is poured upon the sons of men.”<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 588.

<sup>90</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 451.

<sup>91</sup> Ellen G. White in *General Conference Bulletin*, April 13, 1891, p. 257.

<sup>92</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 137.

## Section II. The Day of the Lord

As already mentioned, we shall consider the closing events of the great controversy as synchronous with the period known as the "great day of the Lord." Let us then give consideration to this particular period, called by one of the Biblical writers the "day of God Almighty."

### 1. *The References to the Day of the Lord*

There are many scriptures in both the Old and the New Testament that refer to the day of God. They present a graphic picture of the events of that great day. Note the following:

Isa. 2:12-21; 13:6, 9, 13; 34:8-10.	Zech. 14:1.
Jer. 30:7; 46:10.	Mal. 4:5, 6.
Eze. 13:5; 30:3.	1 Cor. 5:5.
Joel 1:15; 2:1-11; 3:14-16.	2 Cor. 1:14.
Amos 5:18-20.	1 Thess. 5:1-5.
Obadiah 15.	2 Peter 3:10-12.
Lam. 2:22.	Jude 6.
Zeph. 1:7-18; 2:1-3.	Rev. 6:17; 16:14.

It is evident that these Old Testament scriptures refer to the closing scenes of earth's history; a number of them are referred to in the New Testament, and in direct connection with eschatological events. They portray happenings that come within the period known as "the day of the Lord." The following might be studied in this connection:<sup>98</sup>

Isa. 2:19 with Rev. 6:16.
Isa. 13:8 with 1 Thess. 5:3.
Isa. 13:10 with Rev. 6:12, 13.
Eze. 13:15 with Revelation 16.
Joel 2:11 with Rev. 6:17.
Joel 3:15; 2:10 with Rev. 16:8, 10.

### 2. *The Terms Used for the Day of the Lord*

#### *a. It is called:*

- "The day of the Lord." 2 Peter 3:10.
- "The day of the Lord God of hosts." Jer. 46:10.
- "The day of God." 2 Peter 3:12.

<sup>98</sup> See also Appendix C, p. 325.

"The day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2:2.  
 "The day of the Lord's vengeance." Isa. 34:8.

*b. It is called:*

"The great day of the Lord." Zeph. 1:14.  
 "The great day of his wrath." Rev. 6:17.  
 "The great and the terrible day of the Lord." Joel 2:31.  
 "The great and dreadful day of the Lord." Mal. 4:5.  
 "That great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:14.

**3. The Beginning of the Day of the Lord**

The beginning of the day of God is marked by several important features:

*a. The close of probation.*

"It was needful that men . . . should be roused to prepare for the solemn events connected with the close of probation. The prophet of God declares: 'The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?' " <sup>94</sup>

*b. The close of Christ's priestly ministry.*

"When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin." <sup>95</sup>

*c. The standing up of Michael.*

"When our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He [Michael] will stand up." <sup>96</sup>

*d. The issuance of the divine decree closing probation's hour.*

"When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. . . . When Jesus leaves His position as man's intercessor before God, the solemn announcement is made, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; . . . he that is holy, let him be holy still.' " <sup>97</sup>

*e. The pouring out of the seven last plagues.*

"When our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out." <sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 310.

<sup>95</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201.

<sup>96</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 36.

<sup>97</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201.

<sup>98</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 36.

"When the seven last plagues shall be poured out . . . , then it will be forever too late to repent. . . . 'At that time shall Michael stand up.'" <sup>99</sup>

"The seven last plagues will be poured out after Jesus leaves the sanctuary." <sup>100</sup>

*f. The closing of the door of mercy.*

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of earth. . . . Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above." <sup>101</sup>

**4. The Duration of the Day of the Lord**

Many are the events that take place during this great day. In view of the particular importance of some of them, we shall consider them as separate items of study. It will involve meditating on such questions as the time of trouble, the seven last plagues, the war of Armageddon, the deliverance of the saints, the coming of the Lord, and brief mention of the utter destruction of the hosts of evil and the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord.

The apostle Peter describes in graphic language the closing events of this great period of time:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . . Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:10-13.

Reference is here made to the destruction not only of sin and sinners but also of the earth itself, and to the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. We feel warranted in concluding, therefore, that "the day of the Lord" ends when every trace of sin has vanished from the fair universe of God.

"The day of the Lord," then, we believe, begins at the close of probation and ends when the reign of sin is over and the reign of everlasting righteousness is established.

<sup>99</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 212.

<sup>100</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 52.

<sup>101</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 613.

We shall now give closer study to some of the important events that take place during this period of "the day of the Lord."

### Section III. The Time of Trouble

We are all well acquainted with the expression "the time of trouble." It is referred to several times in the Scriptures. There, however, it is mentioned in a general way as a period applying to the last days—something that occurs just before the second Advent of our Lord.

The Spirit of prophecy writings have amplified the thought, and make reference to three aspects of this period. These might be listed as follows:

1. The general time of trouble.
2. The time of Jacob's trouble.
3. The little time of trouble.

The first and second of these take place after probation closes; the third occurs a little time before the door of mercy is forever shut.

#### 1. *The General Time of Trouble*

The general time of trouble is referred to particularly in the writings of the patriarch Job and in the prophecy of Daniel. In Daniel we read:

"At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 12:1.

In Job we read:

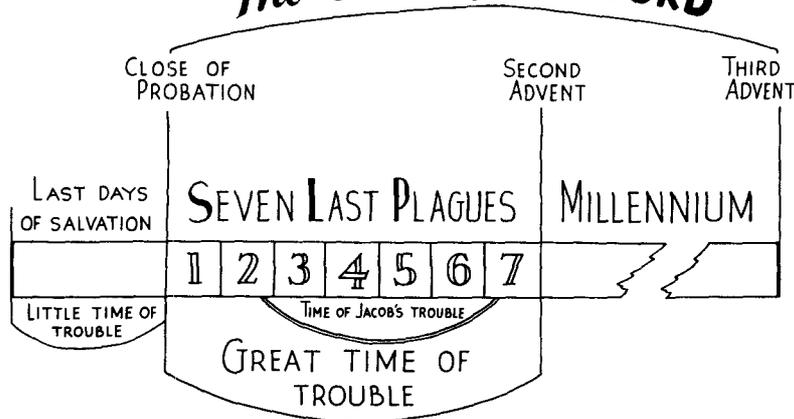
"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" Job 38:22, 23.

From Daniel's reference it is evident that the time of trouble immediately follows the standing up of Michael. This, we have already seen, is synchronous with the close of probation and the beginning of the seven last plagues.

From Job it seems clear that the time of trouble continues until the seventh plague; the reference to the "hail" tells us that the time of the last plague is included. This, he says, has been reserved for "the day of battle and war."

# The TIME OF TROUBLE

## The DAY of the LORD



It should be noted also that the following four scriptures have their application to the general time of trouble:

a. *Revelation 22:11—The decree goes forth:*

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still.'"<sup>102</sup>

b. *Amos 8:11, 12—The Word of God is sought:*

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490.

of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

Referring to this passage, the Spirit of prophecy tells us:

"All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God's mercy which they have so long despised."<sup>103</sup>

*c. Revelation 14:9, 10—The unmixed wrath of God is poured out:*

"If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

*d. Isaiah 28:21—The strange act of God is seen:*

"God's judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is none the less certain and terrible because it is long delayed. "The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act."<sup>104</sup>

## 2. *The Time of Jacob's Trouble*

The Divine Record, however, mentions another period, known as "the time of Jacob's trouble." This is mentioned by Jeremiah: "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jer. 30:7.

This is the only place in Scripture where this particular period is referred to, at least under this name; it is a shorter period of time, and immediately precedes the coming of Christ.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 629.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 627.

This time of trouble is associated with Satan's war against the church of God, and is referred to by the messenger of the Lord on several occasions.<sup>105</sup>

Observe also the following:

"Jacob's experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ's second coming. The prophet Jeremiah, in holy vision looking down to this time, said: . . . 'Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble.'" <sup>106</sup>

The time of Jacob's trouble begins, it seems, at the moment the international death decree goes forth that the saints are to be slain.

"A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God."<sup>107</sup>

This will be a worldwide decree.

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof."<sup>108</sup>

As to the time when the decree is issued, we might notice the following excerpt:

"I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints."<sup>109</sup>

Hence it would seem that the time of Jacob's trouble would begin after the general time of trouble had begun. According to this extract from *Early Writings*, the death decree is issued after the "plagues" (plural) begin to fall.

<sup>105</sup> See particularly *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 538, 727.

<sup>106</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201.

<sup>107</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 117.

<sup>108</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 635.

<sup>109</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 36.

This, it seems, would mean at least two. The plagues would then continue until the deliverance of God's people. There is further reference, however, as to the time. We read:

"The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: 'There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.' The sea 'became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.' And 'the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.' Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.'" <sup>110</sup>

Now notice the comment on the last words of this text: "By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands." <sup>111</sup>

If we understand this aright, it would locate the issuance of the death decree about the close of the second plague. Before the wicked are given blood to drink under the third plague, they will have manifested their hatred of the saints by condemning them to death. Therefore, it seems that the issuance of the decree marks the beginning of the time of Jacob's trouble, and that this would be promulgated about the time of the close of the second and before the pouring out of the third vial.

As the wicked suffer from the sores of the first plague, they will lay the blame for these judgments on the saints of God.

"Many of the wicked were greatly enraged, as they suffered the effects of the plagues. It was a scene of fearful agony. Parents were bitterly reproaching their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers." <sup>112</sup>

"Those who honor the law of God have been accused of bringing judgments upon the world, and they will be regarded as the cause of

<sup>110</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 627, 628.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 628.

<sup>112</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 282.

the fearful convulsions of nature and the strife and bloodshed among men that are filling the earth with woe."<sup>113</sup>

"The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that all, 'both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath."<sup>114</sup>

"The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble."<sup>115</sup>

The decree that condemns the saints to death is referred to as follows:

"Then I saw the leading men of earth consulting together, and Satan and his angels busy around them. I saw a writing, copies of which were scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people were at liberty after a certain time, to put them to death."<sup>116</sup>

"It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state, ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. . . . This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death."<sup>117</sup>

"The angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?'"<sup>118</sup>

"As the saints left the cities and villages, they were pursued by the wicked, who sought to slay them. But the swords that were raised to kill God's people broke and fell as powerless as a straw. Angels of God shielded the saints. As they cried day and night for deliverance, their cry came up before the Lord."<sup>119</sup>

<sup>113</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 604.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 616.

<sup>116</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 282, 283.

<sup>117</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 615.

<sup>118</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 451.

<sup>119</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 284, 285.

At the close of this time of crisis, in this fearful hour of soul agony, God will gloriously deliver His people.

“With earnest longing, God’s people await the tokens of their coming King. As the watchmen are accosted, ‘What of the night?’ the answer is given unfalteringly, ‘“The morning cometh, and also the night.” Light is gleaming upon the clouds above the mountain tops. Soon there will be a revealing of His glory. The Sun of Righteousness is about to shine forth. The morning and the night are both at hand,—the opening of endless day to the righteous, the settling down of eternal night to the wicked.’ ”<sup>120</sup>

### 3. *The Little Time of Trouble*

There is reference also to another aspect of the time of trouble. This, however, is just before our great High Priest finishes His work in the sanctuary above. Mention of this is found in *Early Writings*, as follows: “And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully.”<sup>121</sup>

This pronouncement of the Spirit of prophecy, which came in 1847, is amplified in a further pronouncement made at a later date. We quote from *Early Writings*:

“‘The commencement of the time of trouble,’ here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.”<sup>122</sup>

It seems clear from this excerpt that during this little time of trouble there will be bloodshed and slaughter among the nations; yet with all this, the powers of earth are held in check, and the final contest will not come until the plagues

<sup>120</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 632.

<sup>121</sup> Page 33.

<sup>122</sup> Pages 85, 86.

are poured out. These engagements are but preliminaries to the last great battle.

Thus there are three aspects to the time of trouble: (1) that before the close of probation, (2) the general time of

## The SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

THE FIVE VIALS	THE SIXTH VIAL	THE SEVENTH VIAL
ON THE EARTH THE SEA THE RIVERS THE SUN THE BEAST	ON THE EUPHRATES	IN THE AIR
SORE - BLOOD HEAT - DARKNESS	WATERS DRIED UP	GREAT HAIL

- SATAN PLUNGES WORLD INTO STRIFE
- EVIL SPIRITS DECEIVE
- SPECIAL RESURRECTION
- SUNDAY OBSERVANCE ENFORCED
- SATAN ACCEPTED AS CHRIST
- DELIVERANCE OF SAINTS
- SABBATHKEEPERS NOT TOLERATED
- SAINTS FLEE TO MOUNTAINS
- FINAL CLASH OF NATIONS
- DEATH DECREE PASSED
- DEATH DECREE ENFORCED
- LAW OF GOD REVEALED
- SAINTS GIVEN TIME TO SUBMIT
- KINGS OF EARTH GATHERED
- DATE OF ADVENT ANNOUNCED

## The GRAND CLIMAX The SECOND COMING of CHRIST

trouble from the close of Christ's ministry in heaven to the coming of the Lord, and (3) the one known as Jacob's trouble, from the time the death decree goes forth, right up to the time of the deliverance of the saints of God.

### Section IV. The Seven Last Plagues

Much counsel has been given by the Lord regarding the importance of the seven last plagues and the vital need of the preparation necessary to stand in that evil day. One of these plagues has been singled out and given special mention, and that is the last of the series.

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field."<sup>123</sup>

### 1. *The Nature*

These plagues are the judgments of God that will fall upon the shelterless heads of the wicked. The term "judgment" is used of the plagues in Revelation 16:7 and 18:10, and we find also the following: "When God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture."<sup>124</sup>

In these plagues will be poured out the wrath of God (Rev. 15:1); it will be the wrath of God unmixed with divine mercy (Rev. 14:10).

The list of the plagues, their nature, and their recipients are as follows:

<i>Vial</i>	<i>Nature</i>	<i>Poured Out On</i>
No. 1	Grievous sore	Earth
No. 2	Blood	Sea
No. 3	Blood	Rivers
No. 4	Intensified heat	Sun
No. 5	Darkness	Beast
No. 6	Euphrates dried up	Euphrates
No. 7	Great hail	Air

### 2. *The Duration*

The time during which the seven last plagues are poured out is a relatively short period, compared with the over-all period of "the day of the Lord." We have considered the time of the plagues to be about one year. This is based particularly on the statement in the Apocalypse, which reads, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day." Rev. 18:8.

Referring to this time, Ellen G. White remarks:

"Fallen angels upon earth form confederations with evil men. In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law of

<sup>123</sup> E. G. White manuscript 175, 1899.

<sup>124</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 408.

God will be fully made void in the nations of our world. Rebellion against God's holy law will be fully ripe. But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived, and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But Omnipotence will interpose, and to the apostate churches that unite in the exaltation of Satan, the sentence will go forth, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." " " <sup>125</sup>

The prophetic forecast of the particular period of one day is seen in the book of Isaiah:

"Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day." Isa. 9:14.

"But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments." Isa. 47:9.

This passage from Isaiah 47:9 is quoted by the messenger of the Lord in connection with the destruction of Babylon in *Prophets and Kings*, page 534.

To the period of the seven last plagues applies also that well-known passage from the Psalms:

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Ps. 91:7-11.

These plagues doubtless come within one symbolic day, or literal year. A paragraph in *The Great Controversy*, however, seems to indicate that in so far as it affects the saints, the period may be shortened:

"The people of God must drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work, they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect's

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<sup>125</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 62.

sake, the time of trouble will be shortened. 'Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? . . . I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.' The end will come more quickly than men expect."<sup>126</sup>

### 3. *The Recipients*

Those who are the recipients of the plagues are clearly mentioned in both the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy. In the main these final judgments seem to fall on Babylon, but the wicked generally in all the world are affected by them.

Notice the mention made—

#### *a. In the Scriptures.*

Those who have the mark of the beast and worship the image. Rev. 16:2.

Those who have shed the blood of the saints and prophets. Verses 6, 3, 7.

Those at the headquarters of the beast. Verse 10.

Those who constitute Babylon. Rev. 18:10-17.

#### *b. In the Spirit of prophecy.*

On all the wicked. *Early Writings*, pp. 120, 282.

On all false shepherds. *Ibid.*, pp. 124, 282, 289.

On earth's inhabitants. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

On kings and nobles, rich and poor. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 140.

### 4. *The Scope*

This has been well expressed in *The Great Controversy*. We quote as follows:

"These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals."<sup>127</sup>

### 5. *The First Five Plagues*

#### *a. The first, second, and third.*

Under the first plague a malignant sore falls upon those who have the mark of the beast and who worship his image.

<sup>126</sup> Pages 630, 631.

<sup>127</sup> Pages 628, 629.

Those who had received the mark themselves and those who had marked others are now marked with a grievous, festering sore.

Under the second and third plagues the seas and rivers are turned into blood. Again we see the retributive aspect of these divine judgments. Men have shed the blood of saints and prophets; now they themselves are given blood to drink.

"The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel, were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the revelator, in describing these terrific scourges: 'There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.' The sea 'became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.' And 'the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.'" <sup>128</sup>

*b. The fourth and fifth.*

Under the fourth plague the sun's heat is intensified, and to such an extent that men are scorched and burned. With many, the sun, through the years, has been, either directly or indirectly, an object of worship. Now the very object of their veneration turns and rends them. The terrible condition obtaining in the earth at this time is described in Joel 1:10-20 and Amos 8:3.

"Power is given to the sun 'to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.' The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: 'The land mourneth; . . . because the harvest of the field is perished.' 'All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.' 'The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate.' 'How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture. . . . The rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.' 'The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.'" <sup>129</sup>

The darkness that falls under the fifth plague is a darkness deep and intense. It is evidently more than physical darkness,

<sup>128</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 627, 628.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 628.

and is similar to that which afflicted the land of Egypt centuries ago.

“Suddenly a darkness settled upon the land, so thick and black that it seemed a ‘darkness which might be felt.’ Not only were the people deprived of light, but the atmosphere was very oppressive, so that breathing was difficult. ‘They saw not one another . . . ; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.’ ”<sup>130</sup>

Chapter 39 in *The Great Controversy* gives detailed information on the events that will take place during the period of the plagues. As to what occurs<sup>131</sup> under the first five of these judgments we might note:

- (1) God’s restraining influence is withdrawn.
- (2) Satan has full control of the wicked.
- (3) Satan plunges the world into final trouble; all the elements of strife are let loose.

“As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.”<sup>132</sup>

(4) Nations invent deadly instruments of warfare. “Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels, with their living cargo, will be entombed in the great deep.”<sup>133</sup>

- (5) Saints now live without an intercessor.
- (6) Satan has full control of apostate churches.
- (7) The wicked are incensed against the saints.
- (8) Satan incites the wicked to greater hatred against the saints.

(9) The decree to annihilate God’s people is issued.  
 (10) Anarchy, lawlessness, bloodshed, and woe are everywhere.

- (11) Satan controls destructive powers of nature.
- (12) There is a famine for the Word of God.
- (13) Spiritual darkness is followed by physical darkness.

<sup>130</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 272.

<sup>131</sup> Concerning these items note the following references: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 269, 560, 561, 584, 585, 593, 614-616, 619, 623-625, 627, 688, 689; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 62, 411; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 208, 473, 698; vol. 9, pp. 93, 231; *Early Writings*, pp. 34, 36, 280, 282.

<sup>132</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>133</sup> E. G. White letter 79, 1900.

(14) Under a strong delusion men believe Satan is supreme.

(15) Satan appears impersonating Christ.

#### 6. *The Sixth Plague*

This is one of the most important, if not the most important, plague of the series. So much takes place under the pouring out of this vial that we do well to give it careful study. This plague, together with the seventh, sees the concentration of Satan's efforts and the fullest manifestation of his evil cunning in all his rebellious attempts to overthrow the government of God.

First of all, let us look at a suggested outline of what occurs at this time. Then we will meditate on a few of the important features.

1. Concerning the kings of the east.
    - a. The vial on Euphrates.
    - b. The waters dried up.
    - c. The way of the kings of the east prepared.
  2. Concerning the kings of the earth.
    - a. Promoters of the gathering.
      - (1) Primary factors.
        - (a) By Satan.
        - (b) By spirits of demons.
        - (c) By unclean spirits.
      - (2) Secondary factors.
        - (a) By the dragon.
        - (b) By the beast.
        - (c) By the false prophet.
    - b. Process of the gathering.
      - (1) The approach—To "go forth unto the kings."
      - (2) The deception—"Working miracles."
      - (3) The gathering—"To gather them together."
    - c. Purpose of the gathering.
      - (1) To the battle of the great day of God.
      - (2) To the place Armageddon.
      - (3) To the battle against Christ.
  3. Concerning the people of God.
    - a. The assurance—"Behold, I come."
    - b. The warning—"Lest he walk naked."
    - c. The blessing—On him "that watcheth."
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Before referring further to any of these items, however, let us remember that we are now in the realm of unfulfilled prophecy, and that upon several of these matters we have been given very little counsel and enlightenment. Here we do well to move cautiously, and not seek to be more definite in our conclusions than the Word of God and the Spirit of prophecy would warrant.

Francis D. Nichol, in his book *Reasons for Our Faith*, has made some pertinent and helpful observations on this question:

“There are ardent souls who violate the principle that some things are secret and belong alone to God, by seeking to fill in the details of an unfulfilled prophecy. It is remarkable how brief most prophetic statements in the Scriptures are. Evidently God did not see fit to tell us all the details. He has given us enough prophetic information to provide us with great waymarks that leave us in no doubt as to the direction in which the world is going, and the direction in which our feet should go in order to reach the kingdom of God. But how tempting it is to paint in detail where God has given only a few simple, bold strokes to the outline. And how plausible the painting looks when it has been completed with the aid of a vivid imagination. . . .

“Where the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy are both silent as to the details of future events, reverence and a realization of the blunders of former speculators prompt us to be silent also.”<sup>134</sup>

The Spirit of prophecy also gives counsel:

“Many feel that a responsibility rests upon them to explain every seeming difficulty in the Bible in order to meet the cavils of skeptics and infidels. But in trying to explain that which they but imperfectly understand, they are in danger of confusing the minds of others in reference to points that are clear and easy to be understood. This is not our work. Nor should we lament that these difficulties exist, but accept them as permitted by the wisdom of God.”<sup>135</sup>

We shall endeavor to follow this advice in our approach to some of the questions in this section of the study. This will apply to such items as the Euphrates, the kings of the east, and in a specific sense to certain phases of the war of Armageddon.

<sup>134</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *Reasons for Our Faith*, pp. 23-27. (See also Appendix D, p. 326.)

<sup>135</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 705, 706.

*a. The Euphrates.*

Evidently both the name Euphrates and its drying up are to be considered symbolically, for the drying up of the literal river could have little or no significance in the worldwide events of the last days.

The river Euphrates naturally means waters, and these, we are told, represent "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17:1, 15.) But these waters are dried up, and when this historic moment arrives, the way is prepared for the final gathering of the nations of the whole world, even those from the east, to the battle of the great day of God.

*b. The Kings of the East.*

When seeking to ascertain what is meant by the expression "kings of the east," it will be well to keep in mind the fact that it is the kings of the earth and of the whole world that are to be gathered to this final conflict. None are to be left out; they will come from all parts of the globe, irrespective of religious or political affiliations; they are gathered by the powers of evil to the last great contest—the contest in which the God of heaven eventually takes a hand. That this great conflict is worldwide is further seen in the prophecy of Jeremiah. He makes reference in no uncertain language to the final conflict.

"The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation. . . . For the Lord hath a controversy with the nations. . . . Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth." Jer. 25:30-32.

Here we have the prophetic picture of the battle of the "great day of God Almighty." Note that *all* the nations are assembled. But from where do they come? The previous verses in this chapter give the answer: they come from the south (verses 19, 21, 23, 24), they come from the west (verses 20, 22), they come also from the east (verses 21, 25), and from the north ("And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth." Verse 26).

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One fact is clear, however, and that is that all the nations will come; they will come from the four corners of the earth, from the north and from the south, emphasized particularly by the prophet Daniel (Jeremiah 25 and Daniel 11); and from the west and from the east, stressed particularly by the seer of Patmos (Rev. 16:12), and they will all be gathered to "the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

### 7. *The Seventh Plague*

In order to obtain a general view of what takes place under the pouring out of the seventh plague, let us notice particularly an outline of events.

The great voice from heaven announces, "It is done."

1. Happenings from heaven.
  - a. The voices.
  - b. The thunderings.
  - c. The lightnings.
  - d. The great hail.
2. Happenings on Babylon.
  - a. It is remembered before God.
  - b. It falls into three parts.
  - c. It blasphemes God.
  - d. It receives wrath of God.
3. Happenings on earth.
  - a. The earthquake.
  - b. The cities fall.
  - c. The islands flee.
  - d. The mountains disappear.

Revelation 16, however, gives us but the bare outline of the nature of the plagues and on whom they fall. Revelation 18 goes more into detail and shows especially how the vials of wrath affect great Babylon, the particular object of the unmingled wrath of God.

Note that the following seven features which occur under the seventh plague are features which take place before or in connection with the second Advent of the Saviour:

Great voice from heaven. Isa. 30:30; Jer. 25:30; Joel 3:16; Zeph. 1:14; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 340.

Thunder and lightnings. Isa. 30:30; *Early Writings*, p. 15.

Earthquake. Isa. 2:21; 13:13; 24:1; Jer. 4:24, 26; Joel 3:16; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 110; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 637, 638.

Islands flee. Rev. 6:14 (Isa. 13:13; Joel 3:16); *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 340.

Mountains disappear. Rev. 6:14; Jer. 4:24; Rev. 16:20.

Great hail fell. Isa. 30:30; Eze. 13:13; 38:22; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 740; *The Great Controversy*, p. 637.

His wrath. Rev. 6:16, 17; Zeph. 1:15.

(*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 739, 740, and *The Great Controversy*, pp. 641, 642, show that Revelation 6:16, 17 and Revelation 19:16 portray the same events.)

We naturally think of the actual coming of the Lord in connection with the seventh plague, but it must be remembered that the second Advent in itself is not a plague. There will be, under the seventh plague, the mighty earthquake, the great hail; there will be the removal of islands and the dislocation of mountains. But all these things precede the punctiliar coming of our blessed Lord. Hence, we might think of the glorious return of the Saviour as coming immediately at the close of the seventh plague. This will be the grand climax. Then the wicked hosts that were not destroyed by the plagues and by one another will be overthrown. We read, "He will come in flames of fire to take vengeance on those who have no knowledge of God." 2 Thess. 1:8, Weymouth. And this will be at the same time that Christ will come "to be glorified in his saints." 2 Thess. 1:10.

Concerning a suggested detailed sequence of events under the sixth and seventh plagues, see Appendix E, p. 328.

#### Section V. The War of Armageddon

In considering this phase of our study, we need to remember that we are again dealing with unfulfilled prophecy, and we shall endeavor to go no further in interpretation than the data given us in the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy, plus, of course, what may be gleaned from geographical and language sources.

We all know that there have been, and still are, many

divergent views on the question of the great day of the Lord, and particularly concerning the nature, time, and place of the great conflict bearing the name Armageddon. The following positions are those that are most frequently urged:

1. That the battle is a spiritual conflict—one between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness.

2. That the battle is particularly of a military character, which takes place between the nations of earth, divided undoubtedly into two camps, warring against each other.

3. That the battle is between Christ and the armies of heaven on one hand and Satan and the kings of the earth on the other.

4. That the battle partakes of the features of numbers 2 and 3, and while the nations are locked in deadly combat, the Lord rides forth with the armies of heaven to have His controversy with the nations of earth.

It is not our purpose to examine these views in detail, certainly not to deal with the negative aspects of the problem, but to suggest more or less in point form what we believe to be the truth on this question. We hope to do this with due regard to the excellent counsel to which we referred just now, and shall seek to hold to the aspects of the question that we feel have been clearly revealed in either the Scriptures or the Spirit of prophecy.

The suggestion we shall make is that the battle of the great day of God, otherwise known as Armageddon, takes place during the last plagues; that this conflict is really a war—an over-all controversy in which there are several engagements—against the truth of God, against the saints of God, of the nations among themselves. The final phase is reached when Christ and His angels ride forth and He has His controversy with the nations.

#### 1. *The Mention*

*a.* Mention is made of Armageddon but once in the Bible, and that in Revelation 16:16. It is true, however, that there are references to the great and final contest in

many places in the Holy Scriptures. We need only to recall such passages as:

(1) The reference in Job in which, after calling attention to the treasures of the hail, he remarks, "Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war." Job 38:23.

(2) Also the statement in Ezekiel that tells of the preparation necessary "to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." Eze. 13:5.

*b.* There are also certain references in the Spirit of prophecy, as follows:

(1) In the published writings:

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven."<sup>136</sup>

This is the only reference we have found in the published volumes.

(2) In the manuscripts:

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white."<sup>137</sup>

"Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The nations of the world are eager for conflict; but they are held in check by the angels. When this restraining power is removed, there will come a time of trouble and anguish. Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels, with their living cargo, will be entombed in the great deep. [This certainly forecasts a physical conflict.] All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon."<sup>138</sup>

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. *The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber and the armies of the living God will take the field.*"<sup>139</sup> (Italics supplied.)

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 406.

<sup>137</sup> E. G. White manuscript 172, 1899.

<sup>138</sup> E. G. White letter 79, 1900.

<sup>139</sup> E. G. White manuscript 175, 1899.

c. The Spirit of prophecy writings refer to this great conflict also under different terms or phrases:

(1) It is called the battle of the "great day of God Almighty."

"A terrible conflict is before us. *We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty.* That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. *The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven.* They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. *The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory.* Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed."<sup>140</sup> (Italics supplied.)

(2) It is called the "last struggle against the government of heaven."

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. *The spirits of devils* will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and *urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven.* By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing, and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scripture."<sup>141</sup>

(3) It is called a "greater battle" in the closing scenes of earth's history.

"*We are told of a greater battle to take place in the closing scenes of earth's history, when 'Jehovah hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation.'* 'Hast thou,' He inquires, 'entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?' The Revelator describes the destruction that is to take place when the 'great voice out of the temple of heaven' announces, 'It is done.' He says, 'There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent.'"<sup>142</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

<sup>141</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

<sup>142</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509.

The emphases in the foregoing quotations have been supplied. They should be carefully studied, for they indicate quite clearly the nature of the great final contest.

(4) Many other expressions are used in these writings to designate the final attempt of Satan to overthrow the government of God. Such expressions as the following are used frequently:

*The word "conflict."*

- The great conflict. *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 141.
- The coming conflict. *The Great Controversy*, p. 592.
- The future conflict. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 449.
- The last great conflict. *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.
- The final conflict. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 352.
- The spiritual conflict. *Prophets and Kings*, p. 176.
- The last mighty conflict. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 14.

*The word "crisis."*

- The approaching crisis. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 717.
- The last great crisis. *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 178.
- A great crisis. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 718.
- A terrible crisis. *Ibid.*, p. 463.
- A stupendous crisis. *Prophets and Kings*, p. 537.
- The crisis of the ages. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
- The crisis is fast approaching. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 209.

How we need to heed the counsel that—

"we are to . . . understand the program of events in the marshaling of the nations for the final conflict in the great controversy."<sup>143</sup>

## 2. *The Word a Symbol*

Various place names are used in the book of Revelation, such as—

Babylon—14:8	Holy City—11:2	Sardis—1:11
Egypt—11:8	Laodicea—1:11	Sodom—11:8
Ephesus—1:11	Pergamos—1:11	Smyrna—1:11
Euphrates—9:14	Philadelphia—1:11	Thyatira—1:11

It will, I feel sure, be readily conceded that these names are used as symbols, and although they are all actual locations, some of them at least, in their prophetic application, refer to

<sup>143</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 307.

altogether different geographical centers. A case in point is that of "Sodom and Egypt, where . . . our Lord was crucified." Rev. 11:8.

Even though Armageddon seems to be a made name and has no actual geographical location, as do the names just mentioned, would it not be consistent to regard this name also as symbolic? Many, in their study of this question, have so regarded it. Note the following excerpts:

"The use of proper names and designations calls for special notice here. . . . Even the names of the churches addressed in the epistles are not altogether an exception, for these are really intended to be typical of the whole Church. Abaddon, Harmageddon, Gog and Magog belong solely to apocalyptic language; and in our book Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, Jezebel, Sion, and Sodom have a typical sense only."<sup>144</sup>

"By the employment of the Hebrew term, attention is called to the symbolic nature of the name."<sup>145</sup>

"The battle-field of Deborah, the heroine, judge, and prophetess, and of Barak, whose name means 'lightning,' on the one side, and the vanquished Canaanites on the other, is an appropriate symbol for the theatre of the final conflict between Messiah and the armies of the demon spirits."<sup>146</sup>

The following are further extracts concerning the name *Armageddon's* being a symbol:

"*Harmageddon* is one of the notorious difficulties in REVELATION, though it must be said that many commentators have seen only the more obvious literal difficulty involved in it. John has pointed out to his readers that the word is a transliteration into Greek of a Hebrew word, and it is widely accepted that the original must have meant 'Mount Megiddo.' Commentators have noted, first, that there is no such mountain—for Megiddo, the scene of the battle celebrated in the Song of Deborah (Judges v.19), is a plain; secondly, that there was a tradition, exemplified in such passages as Ezek. xxxix.1 ff. and Dan. xi.45 that the final conflict was to be among the mountains of Israel. Some have assumed therefore that mount Megiddo means the range of hills skirting the plain. We must cast aside such prosaic and literal notions. There is really no excuse for holding them, for John has told us as plainly as may be that the name is symbolical."<sup>147</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Isbon T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John*, p. 250.

<sup>145</sup> *Pulpit Commentary*, Revelation, p. 396.

<sup>146</sup> James Glasgow, *The Apocalypse, Translated and Expounded*, p. 418.

<sup>147</sup> Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, in *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary*, pp. 329, 330.

"The word, like *Euphrates*, is the expression of an idea; the idea that swift and overwhelming destruction shall overtake all who gather themselves together against the Lord' (Milligan)." <sup>148</sup>

"No hill of Megiddo has transmitted its name to later times." <sup>149</sup>

"Why Har-Magedon? There was, we have every reason to believe, no such place. The name is symbolical." <sup>150</sup>

"Although it is *without a geographical* location or even a satisfactory etymology, the name 'Armageddon' has impressed itself upon the imagination as being the final battlefield against all evil powers to their utter defeat. This is about enough; we need to add only [Rev.] 19:11-21." <sup>151</sup> (Italics supplied.)

"*Harmagedon*. . . . The name here given to the place where Satan's hosts are gathered and where doubtless the battle of [Revelation] 19:11 ff. is conceived to occur is *unquestionably purely mystical*. . . . It is *unknown to Heb. literature*, and it would be *contrary to the apocalypticist's use of proper names* to identify it, in its eschatological application, with any place so called. . . . It is then an imaginary name for designating the scene of the *great battle between Antichrist and the Messiah*." <sup>152</sup> (Italics supplied.)

### 3. The Meaning

The word "Armageddon" is found but once in the entire Bible. (Rev. 16:16.) It has generally been considered as connected with Megiddo, which is mentioned twelve times in the Old Testament. (Joshua 12:21; 17:11; Judges 1:27; 5:19; 1 Kings 4:12; 9:15; 2 Kings 9:27; 23:29, 30; 1 Chron. 7:29; 2 Chron. 35:22.)

It is found with the spelling "Megiddon" once, in Zechariah 12:11.

The *Ar* at the beginning of the word translated "Armageddon" in the Authorized Version should be *Har*, and is so found in a number of English versions, as the Revised Version, Rotherham, Moffatt, Weymouth, Twentieth Century, et cetera. *Har* is the Hebrew word for "mountain," and it is so rendered nearly five hundred times in the Old Testament.

If we consider *Har* as "mountain," and the remainder of

<sup>148</sup> Quoted in Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 2, p. 543.

<sup>149</sup> Glasgow, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

<sup>150</sup> William Alexander, *The Epistle of St. John*, in *The Expositor's Bible*, p. 272.

<sup>151</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of John's Revelation*, p. 480.

<sup>152</sup> Beckwith, *op. cit.*, p. 685.

the word, *mageddou*, the same as the "Megiddo" of the Old Testament, we have the meaning—"mountain of Megiddo." But was there such a mountain? We do find in the Old Testament writings references to:

- The city of Megiddo. 1 Kings 9:15.
- The plain of Megiddo. Zech. 12:11 (LXX).
- The waters of Megiddo. Judges 5:19.
- The king of Megiddo. Joshua 12:21.
- The inhabitants of Megiddo. Joshua 17:11.
- The valley of Megiddo. 2 Chron. 35:22.
- The field of Megiddo. 2 Chron. 35:22, Douay.

But there was no hill or mountain bearing that name. This is recognized by many students of prophecy, as the previous excerpts show.

This being the case, we are forced to think of this word in a symbolic sense, and to consider it as a name given by the Lord to express not so much a limited geographical area as the worldwide nature of the last great battle of the day of the Lord.

Those who hold to the idea that Megiddo is a valley do so in spite of the fact that a mountain is indicated in the word "Har-magedon." They apply it to the valley or plain of Megiddo, and this, one can readily see, is the opposite of a mountain. Those who advocate this refer to the fact that four great battles were fought there in ancient days, battles in which the children of Israel participated. These are:

Great victory which Barak won over the Canaanites. Judges 4, 5.

Victory of Gideon over the Midianites. Judges 7.

Battle in which Saul met his death at the hands of the Philistines. 1 Sam. 31:8.

Battle in which Josiah was killed by the Egyptians. 2 Kings 23:29, 30.

Here are recorded two great victories for the children of God and two great disasters. Doubtless the victorious experiences were typical of the battle of the great day of God. At that time there will certainly be disaster for the hosts of evil

and glorious victory for the cause of righteousness and truth. Not only were these engagements in the valley of Megiddo typical of the final struggle, but there were other military combats that convey their lessons and foreview of what God will do in delivering His people from the hosts of evil in the last days.

Under God Asa defeated the Ethiopians at Mareshah, west of the Dead Sea; Jehoshaphat defeated the hordes of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites southwest of Jerusalem; and Hezekiah routed the armies of Sennacherib at the siege of Jerusalem. There were other instances also, several of them being wonderful examples of divine intervention in saving God's cause from disaster and reproach.

"The pride of Assyria and its fall are to serve as an object lesson to the end of time. . . . 'The pride of Assyria shall be brought down.' . . . This is true not only of the nations that arrayed themselves against God in ancient times, but also of nations to-day who fail of fulfilling the divine purpose."<sup>153</sup>

Hence, we believe that these incidents of the days of long ago, irrespective of whether the contest took place at the valley of Megiddo or in any other place, were typical of the final conflict.

Those who advocate the Megiddo of the Old Testament as the Mageddon of the war of Armageddon, do so because they consider that it comes from the Hebrew word *Gadad*, meaning "to press, to cut, to penetrate." One authority gives as the meaning of Megiddo, "A place of troops"; another authority gives, "A place of troops or squadrons"; still others, "A place of slaughter."

There are others, however, who think that the Hebrew basis is the word *Mogad* or *Mogath*, rather than *Gadad*. This gives an entirely different concept. This means to be glorious, to excel in glory. The meaning of Armageddon would then be "the glorious mountain." This is significant, for the habitation of the Most High is designated by similar language. Jeremiah speaks of His "glorious high throne"

<sup>153</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 366.

(Jer. 17:12); David refers to the tabernacle on high as "the glorious sanctuary" (Ps. 96:9, margin). This is a picture of Mount Zion, the dwelling place of our God. It is significant also that when the Lord rides forth for the salvation of the saints, His voice sounds forth from Mount Zion.

"The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:16.

"And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." Isa. 30:30.

"And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem." Amos 1:2.

Fuerst, in his Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, gives one meaning of Megiddo as "a place of God"; and this is in full harmony with what has just been mentioned.

Hence we might think of both meanings in our understanding of what takes place in the final crisis. It is certainly indicative of slaughter for the wicked hosts; it is also the mountain of God—the glorious holy mountain to the redeemed of the Lord.

#### 4. *The Location*

If we accept the principle that the names of cities mentioned in the book of Revelation are symbols, then we need to look for a location for Armageddon undoubtedly of wider and larger scope than the geographical valley of Megiddo, or of any other specific area on the earth. The following considerations should be borne in mind in our study of this phase of the subject:

*a. All the nations of earth are involved.*

"The kings of the earth and of the *whole world*." Rev. 16:14.

I "will plead with *all* flesh." Jer. 25:31.

"Indignation of the Lord is upon *all* nations." Isa. 34:2.

Even *all the nations* of the earth. Jer. 25:31.

"From one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth." Jer. 25:33.

"The indignation of the Lord is upon *all* nations." Isa. 34:2.

*b.* The *whole earth* is involved.

"Gather the nations, . . . assemble the kingdoms, . . . *all* the earth." Zeph. 3:8.

"Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen." Joel 3:11.

"To destroy the whole land." Isa. 13:5.

"Even . . . upon the whole earth." Isa. 28:22.

We might rightly conclude that the *entire earth* is to be the battlefield. This conclusion we feel is sustained by the Spirit of prophecy.

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. *The earth is to be the battlefield*—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed."<sup>154</sup> (Italics supplied.)

Of the time when Christ rides forth with the armies of heaven we read:

"The whole earth heaves and swells."<sup>155</sup>

"He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa. 2:21.

"All the inhabitants of the earth."<sup>156</sup>

"Every eye beholds the Prince of life."<sup>157</sup>

"All faces are turned into paleness." Jer. 30:6.

"At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth."<sup>158</sup>

Furthermore, the persecution of the saints will not be in one locality only; it will be simultaneous efforts all over the world:

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction."<sup>159</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

<sup>155</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 637.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 639.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 641.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 657.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example."<sup>160</sup>

"Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world."<sup>161</sup>

"The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday. . . . It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth."<sup>162</sup>

It will surely not be necessary for the nations of earth to be gathered together in any one specific locality for this battle. The conflict will be worldwide, whether against the truth, against the saints, or even among the nations themselves. Then in that phase of Armageddon in which Christ and His armies ride forth, they will bring the contest to the nations just where they are, anywhere on the face of the earth.

### 5. *The Time*

Much of the difficulty in understanding what the conflict of Armageddon really means is due to the failure to note carefully when this great contest takes place. In connection with this particular aspect of the question, note:

*a. It will take place "soon."*

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven. It cannot now be said by the Lord's servants, as it was by the prophet Daniel, 'The time appointed was long.' Daniel 10:1. It is now but a short time till the witnesses for God will have done their work in preparing the way of the Lord."<sup>163</sup>

"We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty."<sup>164</sup>  
 "To take place in the closing scenes of earth's history."<sup>165</sup>

*b. It will take place during the day of the Lord.*

Rev. 16:14: "of that great day of God Almighty."

<sup>160</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 18.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 395.

<sup>162</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 37.

<sup>163</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 406.

<sup>164</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

<sup>165</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509.

Eze. 13:5: "in the day of the Lord."

Rev. 16:14, R.S.V.: "on the great day of God." Weymouth: "To assemble them for the battle which is to take place on the great day of God."

The battle of Armageddon is linked intimately with the "great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16:14.)

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne, and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory. Here, where for so long Satan has led men against God, rebellion is to be forever suppressed."<sup>100</sup>

Armageddon, then, cannot come before the close of probation; it is actually *in* the day of the Lord.

Furthermore, it is not mentioned until the sixth plague. During that time the nations are gathered for it, and the actual contest begins during the sixth plague.

The duration of the war of Armageddon, it seems, is from some time during the sixth plague to the second Advent of Jesus, which occurs at the end of the seventh plague.

#### **6. *The Battle of the Nations***

For many years, in fact, ever since the beginning of our work, we have taught that the battle of Armageddon, in some way or other, would involve the nations of earth in a last and final clash of arms. This position, we believe, is well sustained by the Word of God.

It will be well, however, to make a careful survey of some of the Scripture passages we have used in this connection, to see their application in the light of the illumination shed on them by the Spirit of prophecy. Let us think of such scriptures as Isaiah 9:5; Jeremiah 4:19, 20; Jeremiah 25; Joel 1:12, 18;

<sup>100</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, May 13, 1902, p. 9.

3:8-16; Zephaniah 1 and 2; Zechariah 14; Matthew 24:6, 7; Luke 21:25.

Most of these references are used in the writings of Ellen G. White, and we shall seek to place some of these texts and comments in a classification as follows:

*a. As applying to war among the nations before the close of probation.*

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matt. 24:6, 7.

"Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Luke 21:10.

"And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity." Luke 21:25.

*b. As applying to the last days, and to the days prior to the close of probation.*

(1) Concerning Matthew 24:6, 7:

"Everything in our world is in agitation. Before our eyes is fulfilling the Saviour's prophecy of the events to precede His coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. . . .' The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of great trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis. Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth; and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture."<sup>197</sup>

"Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that are to precede His second coming: 'Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. . . .' While these prophecies received a partial ful-

<sup>197</sup> *Education*, pp. 179, 180.

fillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application to the last days."<sup>168</sup>

"There are wars and rumors of wars. The nations are angry. . . . But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle."<sup>169</sup>

(2) Concerning Luke 21:25:

"He has warned the world of the day of final destruction, and has given them tokens of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come. Jesus declares, 'There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations.' Those who behold these harbingers of His coming are to 'know that it is near, even at the doors.'"<sup>170</sup>

"I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land. . . . Once more the inhabitants of the earth were presented before me; and again everything was in the utmost confusion. Strife, war, and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this war and confusion. War caused famine, want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men's hearts failed them for fear, 'and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.'"<sup>171</sup>

(3) General Spirit of prophecy extracts:

"The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other."<sup>172</sup>

"The world is stirred with the spirit of war."<sup>173</sup>

"The nations are angry with one another. Widespread preparations are being made for war."<sup>174</sup>

"The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out."<sup>175</sup>

The Scriptures tell about the nations in conflict all through the centuries of history, but we would hardly think

<sup>168</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 753.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 14.

<sup>170</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 37, 38.

<sup>171</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 268.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 17.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>175</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 36.

of such wars and contests as Armageddon. Some of the texts we have reviewed, and even others might be mentioned, but many of them refer to warlike conditions in the last days, and particularly to those days just *prior to the close of probation*.

*c. As applying to the time when the angels loose the winds of strife.*

Inasmuch as the war of Armageddon begins under the sixth plague, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the wars mentioned above are the preliminaries to the great, final struggle in which all the nations will be involved. During these preliminary hostile engagements the nations experiment with their newly invented and diabolical engines of destruction. They build up mighty and powerful armies; they develop gigantic plants for the manufacture of more and more terrible means of extermination; they delve into the secrets of God in splitting the atom and using this hitherto latent force of nature for wholesale and widespread annihilation. In these developments the prophecy of Joel is fulfilled. This constitutes a sure sign that the day of final decision (concision, margin) is at hand. It waits only the loosing of the four winds by the angelic beings who, to a large degree, are holding them in check until the sealing work is fully completed.

It is after the saints are all sealed, and the mighty fiat goes forth from the throne of God, that the actual war of the day of God is to take place. This will be, in part at least, while the judgments of God are falling without mercy upon the shelterless heads of the ungodly, and will reach its climax when the Lord from heaven rides forth to have His controversy with the nations. This is indicated in Revelation 7:2, 3, where we read:

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

"As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. *Then* the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle."<sup>176</sup>

"When God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture."<sup>177</sup>

"There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere."<sup>178</sup>

"Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old."<sup>179</sup>

"John sees the elements of nature—earthquakes, tempest, and political strife—represented as being held by four angels. These winds are under control until God gives the word to let them go."<sup>180</sup>

"Strife and bloodshed among men . . . are filling the earth with woe."<sup>181</sup>

"Angels are holding the four winds, which are represented as an angry horse seeking to break loose, and rush over the face of the whole earth, bearing destruction and death in its path."<sup>182</sup>

*d. As applying to the closing scenes of the great day of the Lord.*

The following scriptures have their application to this time, and, it seems, during the time of the sixth plague particularly:

Joel 1:12-18. *Prophets and Kings*, p. 726.

Jer. 4:19. *Ibid.*, pp. 538, 727.

Joel 2:11. *The Great Controversy*, p. 310.

Amos 5:18, 20. *Ibid.*

"The earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption."<sup>183</sup>

"For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." Isa. 9:5.

This is applied to the time of the sixth plague, immediately preceding the second Advent. We read:

"The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, 'with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,' is stilled. . . . The cry bursts forth from lips

<sup>176</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 14.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 408.

<sup>178</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 444.

<sup>181</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>182</sup> E. G. White letter 138, 1897.

<sup>183</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 655.

so lately scoffing, "The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"<sup>184</sup>

See also the prophetic forecast of Jeremiah: "Thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried, for the whole land is spoiled." Jer. 4:19, 20.

On this passage, note the following from the Spirit of prophecy: "The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance."<sup>185</sup> Then follow quotations from Jeremiah 4:19, 20.

Note also the following:

"I saw the sword, famine, pestilence, and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments upon them, and they rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that then the evil would be stayed."<sup>186</sup>

Under date of February 15, 1846, Miss Harmon (later Mrs. E. G. White) wrote to a little paper that had printed her first vision:

"About four months since [which would be October, 1845], I had a vision of events, all in the future. And I saw the time of trouble such as never was,—Jesus told me it was the time of Jacob's trouble, and that we should be delivered out of it by the voice of God. Just before we entered it, we all received the seal of the living God. . . . And I saw famine, pestilence and sword, nation rose against nation, and the whole world was in confusion."<sup>187</sup>

Not only will war and bloodshed exist among the nations of earth, but it seems that, because of the resultant confusion, men will turn on one another. We see this mentioned—

In the Scriptures:

"They shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour." Zech. 14:13.

"Every one by the sword of his brother." Haggai 2:22.

"Every man's sword shall be against his brother." Eze. 38:21.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 642.

<sup>185</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

<sup>186</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 33, 34.

<sup>187</sup> *Day-Star* (Cincinnati, Ohio), March 14, 1846, p. 7.

## In the Testimonies:

"The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption."<sup>188</sup>

"In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low."<sup>189</sup>

"The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed."<sup>190</sup>

"After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other."<sup>191</sup>

This reign of carnage, of decimation, of slaughter, takes place after the voice of God is heard delivering His people from the hands of the wicked, and *before* the actual Advent of Christ, and is, we believe, part of the war of Armageddon, the grand climax of which is reached, however, in the next episode, when Christ the Lord rides forth to have His controversy with the nations, and when the noise of physical combat among the nations will be stilled.

*e. As applying to the second coming of our Lord.*

There can be little doubt that the following scriptures apply in a definite way to the actual coming of our Lord in glory:

Joel 3:12-16; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 184; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.

Jer. 25:32, 33; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 340; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 656, 657.

Zeph. 1:14, 18; 2:1-3; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 390; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 95, 96.

Here reference is made to the voice of the Lord sounding from His holy habitation, and His riding forth for the salvation of His people. Here we see Jehovah also in His controversy with the nations of earth, and the wicked, high and low, rich and poor, being destroyed by the presence of the

<sup>188</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 655.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 657.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 656.

<sup>191</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 290.

Lord. These scriptures are clear in the picture they portray, and evidently apply to that climactic event.

Concerning the cessation of the contest among the nations we read that at the coming of the Lord "the derisive jests have ceased. Lying lips are hushed into silence. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, 'with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,' is stilled."<sup>192</sup>

From this review of the texts relating to the clash of nations, together with the comments from the Spirit of prophecy, one might conclude that whatever conflict there might be between the nations—which could be part of the great war of Armageddon—comes after the voice of God has delivered the saints. Then the nations, together with religious leaders, are so chagrined and frustrated at seeing the children of God—those whom they had determined to obliterate from the face of the earth—now beyond their reach that they turn and fight among themselves until the earth itself literally rolls "in blood."

"When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. . . .

"The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion. . . .

"Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. . . .

"The multitudes are filled with fury. . . . The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed."<sup>193</sup>

Such is the picture presented to our gaze at the moment following the deliverance of the people of God by Christ Jesus. At that time He most surely delivers over "them that are wicked to the sword." Jer. 25:31.

<sup>192</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 642.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 654-656.

## 7. The War

### a. The war of Armageddon.

The word used to designate this conflict in our Bible is "battle," whereas the more correct translation of the original word is "war." This will be seen in the following considerations:

(1) The word rendered "battle" in Revelation 16:14 is from the Greek word *polemos*. This and its verbal form *polemeō* are rendered as follows:

- Battle—5 times.
- War, or make war—15 times.
- Fight—4 times.

An analysis of the Scriptural passages reveals their application:

- To the war in heaven—3 times.
- The Papacy against the saints—5 times.
- To the judgments of God—1 time.
- To Armageddon—4 times.
- To the end of the millennium—1 time.

It will be noted that "war" rather than "battle" is the thought of these words. They are rendered "battle" 5 times, but "war" 15 times.

The Revised Version uniformly renders *polemos* and *polemeō* by the word "war."

(2) The Greeks, it seems, used at least two words to indicate hostilities: *polemos*, meaning war, and *mache*, meaning battle. Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, remarks:

"'Polemos' and 'Mache' occur often together. . . . There is the same difference between them as between our own 'war' and 'battle.' . . . The Peloponnesian War; . . . the Battle of Marathon. Dealing with the words in this antithesis . . . 'polemos' embraces the whole course of hostilities; 'mache' the actual shock in arms of hostile armies."<sup>104</sup>

Another student of the Word of God writes:

"'To collect them to the war of the great day of God Almighty.' The English version, and some private versions, puzzle or mislead readers

<sup>104</sup> Archbishop Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 322.

by using the phrase 'the battle'; while the word 'polemos' is not 'a battle,' but *battle* in the abstract, or war. A battle is expressed by *mache*. So in Latin a battle is *proclium*, and a war is *bellum*. John speaks of 'the war of the great day of God the Almighty.'"<sup>195</sup>

W. E. Vine assures us:

"*Polemos*, a war, is incorrectly rendered 'battle' in the A.V. of 1 Cor. 14:8; Rev. 9:7, 9; 16:14; 20:8."<sup>196</sup>

(3) The words *battle* and *war* in the original tongues, as well as in the English translations, are both used in connection with this final series of hostilities. Note the following scriptures:

Jer. 4:19: "Thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of *war*."

The word for *war* is *polemos* in the LXX.

Joel 3:9: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare *war*, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of *war* draw near; let them come up."

The word *war* is used twice in this text, and in each case is *polemos* in the LXX.

Job 38:23: "Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of *battle* and *war*."

The one word is from *mache* and the other from *polemos* in the LXX.

Eze. 13:5: "Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the *battle* in the day of the Lord."

The word *battle* in this text is the same as that rendered "war" in Joel 3:9 and Jeremiah 4:19, and is from *polemos* in the LXX.

The conflict of Armageddon, then, is the "war" (*polemos*) "of that great day of God Almighty." Hence, if we recognize Armageddon as a "war" rather than a "battle," we shall be prepared to recognize a *series* of engagements rather than *one* conflict in this closing struggle.

<sup>195</sup> Glasgow, *op. cit.*, p. 415.

<sup>196</sup> *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, vol. 1, p. 100. (See also Appendix F, p. 333.)

### 8. *Certain Suggested Engagements*

All through the ages Satan has warred against heaven. Now comes his final effort—his attempt to vanquish the government of the Most High. Into this blind obsession he pours all his hellish craftiness, his diabolical cunning, his malignant hatred; it is his supreme essay, his last desperate venture, to gain universal sway.

There have been crises in the work of God before, but nothing like this crisis; there have been times of acute trouble through the centuries, but never a time of trouble like this one; there have been times of devastating, destructive war, but never such a time of utter abandonment, of universal carnage, of vindictive malignity, as now. To the evil one Armageddon is the grand culmination of all the pent-up passions of devilish spite and satanic bitterness. Now is seen the fullest fruition of his hellish design; now it is seen in all its naked enormity. It is stripped of its glamour and veneer; the principles of the archrebel are now unmasked, and can be seen by all the inhabitants in the great universe of God in their true perspective.

The war of Armageddon is the summing up of all this remorseless opposition and violent hatred. Wars there have been throughout the centuries; nation has fought against nation all through earth's history. The kings of the earth have engaged in titanic struggles right up to the close of probation, but nothing up to that time could be called Armageddon.

The same applies to every other kind of conflict—the contest between good and evil, or the war against the saints. Nothing before this could be denominated Armageddon. But this last, mighty struggle is called by this name.

We might suggest at least four great battles in this last mighty war:

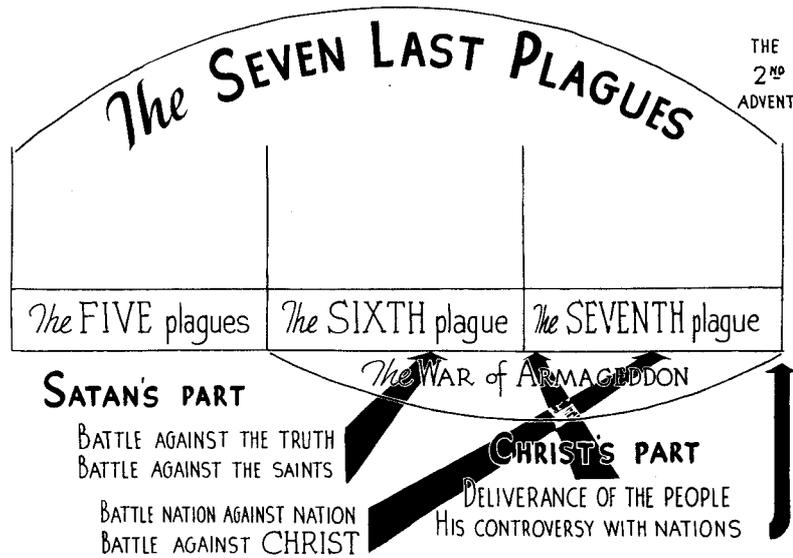
*a. There will be the battle between truth and error.*

This involves the conflict between good and evil, between the law of God and the laws of men.

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"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God."<sup>197</sup>

"The whole universe is watching . . . the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil."<sup>198</sup>



*b. There will be the battle against the saints.*

Satan still continues his set purpose to obliterate the people of God.

"God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction."<sup>199</sup>

"There will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction."<sup>200</sup>

*c. There will be the battle of nation against nation.*

This seems to take place after the voice of God is heard bringing deliverance to the saints. Then the leaders of men, together with the nations of earth, become so enraged, so

<sup>197</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.

<sup>198</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 148.

<sup>199</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 619.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

infuriated, that their prey has been snatched from their grasp, that they turn and fight one another.

"When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. . . . The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow-men, but because God has conquered. . . . The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion. . . .

"The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. . . .

"In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth,—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low."<sup>201</sup>

"The very hands that once crowned them with laurels, will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people, are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed."<sup>202</sup>

*d. Then there will be the battle when the Lord from heaven rides forth and has His controversy with the nations.*

Then the kings of the earth, together with the beast and his armies, are arrayed against Christ the Lord.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev. 17:14.

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Rev. 19:19.

Now the sword of divine justice is unsheathed; now the artillery of heaven is brought into action. We read in Jeremiah:

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 655-657.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 656.

earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth." Jer. 25:31-33.

The Lord speaks of this phase of the war in language we can understand. In connection with Armageddon and His second coming, we read of—

His controversy. Jer. 25:31.

His battle. Rev. 16:14.

His vengeance. Isa. 34:8.

His indignation. Verse 2.

His slaughter. Verse 6.

His destruction. Isa. 13:6.

His strange act. Isa. 28:21.

His year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. Isa. 34:8.

Of *this grand climax*, when the nations make war against Christ and are destroyed, we read:

"Jesus rides forth a mighty conqueror . . . 'faithful and true,' 'in righteousness he doth judge and make war.' And 'the armies which were in heaven follow him.'" <sup>203</sup>

"At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth,—consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His glory." <sup>204</sup>

Hence, the last act in the great controversy covers not only the contest between righteousness and unrighteousness but also Satan's final effort to annihilate God's people; the last clash of nations, as well as the final, very real, literal, and physical agony and anguish of soul, will be experienced by the ungodly at the return of Christ the Lord.

However *spiritual* the conflict between good and evil may have been, it is nonetheless sure that the end of the conflict will mean *real* combat, *real* fire, *real* hailstones, and *real* destruction upon the nations.

"The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven." <sup>205</sup>

"The enmity of Satan against good, will be manifested more and more, as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion; and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 641.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 657.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe."<sup>206</sup>

"The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend."<sup>207</sup>

This is the last phase of Armageddon, the battle that is soon to be fought.

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white."<sup>208</sup>

## Section VI. The Deliverance of the Saints

This has already been referred to in part, but let us observe the details a little closer. We will notice the following:

### 1. *The Warning*

The Lord has through the years earnestly counseled His people concerning the trials to be experienced during the time of trouble. Besides the general counsel in such passages as Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, we have explicit direction—

#### *In Zephaniah:*

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2:1-3.

#### *In Revelation:*

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Rev. 16:15.

#### *In the Spirit of prophecy:*

"I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the

<sup>206</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 465.

<sup>207</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 176.

<sup>208</sup> E. G. White manuscript 172, 1899.

world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.”<sup>209</sup>

“He [Satan] is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

“Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His Word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?”<sup>210</sup>

## 2. *The Experience*

The experience of God’s people, as we have already seen, is called the time of Jacob’s trouble. It is a time of intense trial for the redeemed of the Lord.

“A refusal to obey the commandments of God, and a determination to cherish hatred against those who proclaim these commandments, leads to the most determined war on the part of the dragon, whose whole energies are brought to bear against the commandment-keeping people of God. ‘He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead: that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.’ Revelation 13: 16, 17.”<sup>211</sup>

“God’s people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction.”<sup>212</sup>

<sup>209</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 71.

<sup>210</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594.

<sup>211</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 117.

<sup>212</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 619.

The Scriptures forecast the time when the boycott will be imposed, and none without the mark of the beast will be able to buy or sell. (Rev. 13:17.) It tells also of the passing of the death decree for all who will not yield to the demands of apostasy. (Verse 15.)

"He [the prince of evil] is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight."<sup>213</sup>

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof."<sup>214</sup>

"The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble."<sup>215</sup>

"As Satan accuses the people of God . . . , the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. . . .

"Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold on the Angel; and the language of their souls is, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'"<sup>216</sup>

### 3. *The Assurance*

But God does not forsake His trusting children.

"I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Rev. 3:10.

"As the wrestling ones urge their petitions before God, the veil separating them from the unseen seems almost withdrawn. The heavens glow with the dawning of eternal day, and like the melody of angel songs, the words fall upon the ear, 'Stand fast to your allegiance. Help is coming.'

"Christ, the almighty victor, holds out to His weary soldiers a crown of immortal glory; and His voice comes from the gate ajar: 'Lo, I am with you. Be not afraid. I am acquainted with all your sorrows; I have borne your griefs. You are not warring against untried enemies:

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 593.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 616.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 618-620.

I have fought the battle in your behalf, and in My name you are more than conquerors.' . . .

"The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them."<sup>217</sup>

"Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress, and have heard their prayers. . . .

"Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment-keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall as powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war."<sup>218</sup>

"In the midst of the time of trouble that is coming . . . God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them."<sup>219</sup>

#### 4. *The Deliverance*

How the saints welcome the signs of deliverance! They have held on to the promises of God. They have remembered Daniel's assurance, "Thy people shall be delivered" (Dan. 12:1); they have called to mind Joel's comforting promise, "The Lord will be the hope of his people" (Joel 3:16); they have taken heart as they looked forward with expectation to the fulfillment of Habakkuk's prophecy that the Lord would go "forth for the salvation of thy people" (Hab. 3:13). Now the hour has come. "It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen."<sup>220</sup>

The voice of God, which they have so longed to hear, is heard. "By the people of God, a *voice*, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up.'"<sup>221</sup>

This is immediately followed by the expression: "It is

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 632-634.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 630, 631.

<sup>219</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 17.

<sup>220</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 635.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 636.

at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people.”<sup>222</sup>

We read:

“That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. . . .

“The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus’ coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. . . .

“Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying, ‘My grace is sufficient for you.’ . . .

“Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints.”<sup>223</sup>

It is interesting in this connection to note the three resurrections that occur during the closing scenes of the great controversy. The first of these is what we have called the special resurrection, which takes place during the seventh plague; the next is the general resurrection of the righteous at the Saviour’s second Advent; and the last comes at the close of the millennial period, when all the hosts of the wicked are called forth from the tomb.

The last named is merely mentioned here as part of the list, but with no further comment.

The special resurrection is intimately connected with the voice of God, which we have been considering. At this time those who died in the faith of the third angel’s message will come forth from their graves glorified; at the same time those who crucified Jesus and those who have been violent opposers of Christ and the truth of God through the ages will be raised to see the Son of man come in His glory.<sup>224</sup>

The picture is beautifully painted for us in *Early Writings*:

“It was at midnight that God chose to deliver His people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Signs and wonders followed in quick

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 637-644.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 637.

succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up, and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law.

"The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming, and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn. At the end of every sentence the saints shouted, 'Glory! Hallelujah!' Their countenances were lighted up with the glory of God, and they shone with glory as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked could not look upon them for the glory. And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image."<sup>225</sup>

The saints who come forth in this special resurrection hear the voice of God, for they hear "God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law."<sup>226</sup> Then just before the actual moment of the second Advent of Christ, the voice of God is again heard "declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming." At this time God delivers "the everlasting covenant to His people."<sup>227</sup>

In a little while Christ is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, and the living righteous are "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." I Cor. 15:51, 52. "At the voice of God," when raised from the dead, "they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air."<sup>228</sup> What a time of ecstasy and joy!

<sup>225</sup> Pages 285, 286.

<sup>226</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 637.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 640.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 645.

"Angels 'gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers' arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God."<sup>229</sup>

### Section VII. The Grand Finale

Space forbids our going into detail concerning the events of the millennial period and of the relatively short period that follows, also concerning many other aspects of the over-all question, but a full and illuminating description is given in *The Great Controversy*, in chapters 41 and 42.

But, thank God, the time is soon coming when the great controversy will be ended. Satan, together with sin and sinners, will be utterly destroyed. Then the universe will be clean, with no longer any taint of evil. To this the following paragraphs point:

"Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will 'grow up' to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear 'in the beauty of the Lord our God,' in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood. . . .

"Now is fulfilled the Saviour's prayer for His disciples, 'I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.' 'Faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,' Christ presents to the Father the purchase of His blood, declaring, 'Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me.' 'Those that thou gavest me I have kept.' Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! the rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin's discord banished, its blight removed, and the human once more in harmony with the divine!"<sup>230</sup>

Again we quote: "The great controversy is ended. Sin

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 645, 646.

and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean.”<sup>231</sup>

The early Advent believers looked forward to this grand consummation when they sang the following hymn:

“Hosannah! hark, the melody,  
 Strikes sweetly on my ravished ear!  
 The constellations make reply  
 In echoes from each distant sphere,  
 Till all the wide expansion rings  
 With ‘live for ever, King of kings!’

“He comes! he comes! the heavens rend!  
 Floods clap your hands! ye mountains joy!  
 Forests in glad obeisance bend!  
 Earth, raise your hallelujahs high,  
 Let Zion wake the lofty strain—  
 ‘Live King of kings! for ever reign!’

“Ripe is the vintage of the earth;  
 Its clustering grapes are round and full;  
 And vengeance, vengeance bursts to birth,  
 Sudden and irresistible!  
 Messiah comes to tread again,  
 The wine-press of the battle-plain.

“The cry is up, the strife begun,  
 The struggle of the mighty ones;  
 And Armageddon’s day comes on,  
 The carnival of Slaughter’s sons;  
 War lifts his helmet to his brow:  
 O God, protect thy people now!

“Assemble quickly, fowls of the air.  
 Come to the supper of the Lord:  
 The great ones of the earth prepare  
 To reap the harvest of the sword;  
 And captains’ flesh shall be your food,  
 And ye shall drink of heroes’ blood.

“Yea, come, O King, and take the spoil;  
 With thy confederates share the prey:

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<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 678.

Ha! Ha! Death 'grins a ghastly smile';  
The morning dawns—and where are they?  
The flames, the flames, great Autocrat,  
Spread o'er thee in Jehoshaphat.

“The graves are cleaved! the *saints* arise!  
The resurrection of the just!  
And now, unto their kindred skies,  
Up leap the tenants of the dust!  
They rise to meet their Lord in air,  
And tune their hallelujahs there.”<sup>232</sup>

“The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.

“I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’ . . .

“‘And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.’ ”<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> *Hymns for God's Peculiar People, That Keep the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus*, compiled by James White. Oswego: Printed by Richard Oliphant, 1849. Hymn No. 14, p. 16.

<sup>233</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 602.

## Appendix A

### Satan Works Through Nations to Exterminate God's People

Satan, in his determination to exterminate the people of God, has worked through such nations as the following:

#### 1. *Egypt*

Satan attempted this through Egypt. Concerning the oppression of Egypt in the great long ago, we read:

"Thou art the Lord . . . and didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt." Neh. 9:7-9.

"Egypt shall be a desolation . . . for the violence against the children of Judah." Joel 3:19.

"The king and his counselors had hoped to subdue the Israelites with hard labor, and thus decrease their numbers and crush out their independent spirit. . . . Orders were issued to the women whose employment gave them opportunity for executing the command, to destroy the Hebrew male children at their birth. Satan was the mover in this matter."<sup>1</sup>

#### 2. *Assyria*

Concerning the hardships Assyria and Babylon inflicted on Israel, we read:

"The Assyrian oppressed them [my people] without cause." Isa. 52:4.

"Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria." Jer. 50:17, 18.

#### 3. *Babylon*

But note what Inspiration says more particularly concerning Babylon:

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<sup>1</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 242.

"The king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, . . . he hath swallowed me up." Jer. 51:34.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together; and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go." Jer. 50:33.

#### 4. *Ten Nations*

In the days of Jehoshaphat no less than ten nations, led by Moab and Ammon, endeavored to destroy God's children. The list as given in Psalms 83:4-8 embraces:

Moabites	Gebalites	Amalekites
Ammonites	Tyrians	Philistines
Ishmaelites	Edomites	Assurites
Hagarenes		

The Spirit of prophecy applies this psalm to the experience of Jehoshaphat, as recorded in 2 Chronicles 20.<sup>2</sup>

C. H. Spurgeon comments on this episode as follows:

"All these had come to the aid of Moab and Ammon, which two nations were among the fiercest in the conspiracy. There were ten to one against Israel, and yet she overcame all her enemies."<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. *Persia*

Concerning Persia we read:

"Letters were sent by post into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day." Esther 3:13.

"Satan worked . . . to counterwork the purposes of God. . . . Haman plotted 'to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.' . . . A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed. . . . Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God."<sup>4</sup>

#### 6. *Greece*

Greece also persecuted and attempted to blot out the people of God.

"The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border." Joel 3:6.

On Zechariah 9:13 the *Pulpit Commentary* remarks:

"Not a vague term for the far west . . . but to be taken strictly

<sup>2</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* on Psalms 83, vol. 4, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 600, 601.

as the appellation of Greece . . . a power arrayed in conflict with the people of God.”<sup>5</sup>

Over and over we read in the first book of Maccabees of the determined efforts to destroy God's children. (See 1 Maccabees 1:24-30, 50; 3:35, 52, 58; 5:2, 10; 12:53.)

But note particularly:

“There was a great affliction in Israel.” 1 Macc. 9:27.

“One of his honourable princes, a man that bare deadly hate unto Israel, with commandment to destroy the people.” 1 Macc. 7:26.

“The king had given commandment to destroy the people, and utterly abolish them.” 1 Macc. 3:42.

### 7. *Pagan Rome*

Satan tried through pagan Rome to annihilate God's people.

“And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, . . . and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.” Dan. 8:24.

Concerning the persecution in the days of ancient Rome we read:

“The dragon is said to be Satan; he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era, was the Roman empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion.”<sup>6</sup>

### 8. *Papal Rome*

Satan worked mightily through papal Rome.

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” Dan. 7:21.

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.” Rev. 13:7.

“Now began the 1260 years of papal oppression. . . . Christians were forced to choose either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman's axe. . . . Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> “Exposition,” on Zechariah 9:13, p. 93.

<sup>6</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 438.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 55.

## Appendix B

### In Warring Against the Saints Satan Wars Against Christ

In his attempts to obliterate the children of God through the ages, Satan has used the nations to further his designs. In this war against the saints, however, he is really making war against Christ. This is a principle that is fully recognized in the Bible, in the Spirit of prophecy, and in other writings.

#### 1. *In the Bible*

"Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." Matt. 18:5.

"He that receiveth you receiveth me." Matt. 10:40.

"He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me." John 13:20.

"He that heareth you heareth me." Luke 10:16.

"He that despiseth you despiseth me." Verse 16.

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God." 1 Thess. 4:8.

The same thought is seen in the story of Saul the persecutor. When Saul was engaged in putting the early believers to death, the Lord said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts 9:4.

#### 2. *In the Spirit of Prophecy*

"Whoever by word or deed injures a believer thereby wounds Jesus. Whoever gives a cup of cold water to a disciple because he is a child of God will be regarded by Christ as giving to Him."<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the experience of the saints during the time of trouble, we read:

"They [the unfaithful leaders] learn now that Christ identifies His interest with that of His suffering people; and they feel the force of His own words, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 668.

"The Lord of hosts has said, 'He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.'"<sup>2</sup>

In the utmost extremity of God's people the Lord gives assurance:

"The words fall upon the ear. 'Stand fast to your allegiance. Help is coming.' Christ, the almighty victor, holds out to His weary soldiers a crown of immortal glory; and His voice comes from the gates ajar: 'Lo, I am with you. Be not afraid. I am acquainted with all your sorrows; I have borne your griefs. You are not warring against untried enemies. I have fought the battle in your behalf, and in My name you are more than conquerors.'"<sup>3</sup>

In persecuting the saints, men are fighting against God.

"Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear, He has borne before us."<sup>4</sup>

"The day of His vengeance hastens . . . when every act of cruelty or injustice toward God's faithful ones will be punished as though done to Christ Himself."<sup>5</sup>

### 3. In Other Writings

"Ye have done (*ye did*) it unto me. The Lord so perfectly identifies himself with the human family, whose nature he assumed, that he made their sorrows and sufferings his own (Isa. liii.4; lxiii.9; ch. viii.17), he suffered with the sufferers; his perfect sympathy placed him in their position; in all their afflictions he was afflicted. From this identification it follows that he regards that which is done to others as done to himself. Thus he could expostulate with the persecutor, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?'"<sup>6</sup>

"Jesus Christ takes what is done to his faithful ministers, whether in kindness or in unkindness, as done to himself, and reckons himself treated as they are treated: '*He that receiveth you, receiveth me.*'"<sup>7</sup>

"He will take the kindnesses done to them, as done to himself. '*Ye have done it unto me.*' . . . Note, Christ espouseth his people's cause, and interests himself in their interests."<sup>8</sup>

"The general rule which Christ would go by, as to those to whom he sent his ministers; he will reckon himself treated according as they treated his ministers."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 626.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 632, 633.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 633.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> *The Pulpit Commentary*, "Exposition," on Matthew 25:40, p. 484.

<sup>8</sup> *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Matthew to John, on Matthew 10:40.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, on Matthew 25:40.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, on Luke 10:16.

## Appendix C

### Some of the Texts in the Old Testament Referring to Events Connected With the Second Advent

#### Parallel References From Spirit of Prophecy Writings Are Given

- Isa. 2:10-12, 20, 21—*The Great Controversy*, p. 638; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 727.
- Isa. 13:4, 6, 9, 11—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 310, 311, 638.
- Isa. 24:1-8—*The Great Controversy*, p. 657; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 14; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 726.
- Isa. 26:21—*The Great Controversy*, p. 657; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 726.
- Isa. 28:21, 22—*The Great Controversy*, p. 627.
- Isa. 30:30—*The Great Controversy*, p. 635.
- Isa. 34:4, 6, 8, 2—*The Great Controversy*, p. 673; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.
- Jer. 4:19, 20—*The Great Controversy*, p. 310; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 538, 727.
- Jer. 25:31, 33—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 656, 657.
- Jer. 30:7—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 538, 727.
- Eze. 13:5—*Early Writings*, p. 71.
- Hosea 4:1, 2—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 297, 298.
- Joel 1:15-18—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 15; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 726.
- Joel 3:16, 12—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 341; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.
- Amos 5:18, 20—*The Great Controversy*, p. 310.
- Zeph. 1:7, 8, 14-16—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 390; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 95, 96.
- Zeph. 2:2, 3—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 390.
- Zeph. 3:19, 20—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 391.
- Zech. 14:12, 13—*The Great Controversy*, p. 657.

## Appendix D

### Unfulfilled Prophecy

The following paragraphs are from an excellent presentation by F. D. Nichol, which appears in his book *Reasons for Our Faith*. They are taken from chapter 2, bearing the title "Don't Read Into Scripture What Is Not There."

"In the book of Deuteronomy is found a text which some of us are likely to remember only in part. The text reads thus: 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.' Deut. 29:29. We obtain great spiritual satisfaction from the thought that God has revealed certain things to us, and that they are for our blessing and instruction. Accordingly, we study with constant enthusiasm the revelation of God as it is found in the writings of the prophets.

"But at times we ought to give attention to the first part of the text, which informs us that some things are secret; they belong to the Lord and not to us. If we always keep this portion of the text clearly in our mind, allowing it to have its proper place in our thinking whenever we are studying the Word of God, we shall be saved from many unfortunate blunders.

"There are certain types of mind that are much more tempted than others to forget the first portion of this text, persons who seek to explore areas that God has not seen fit to make clear to men. This is not a proper carrying out of the command to search the Scriptures. Oftentimes this seeking for the meaning of secret things proves quite harmless, and at other times it may have unfortunate results; but at all times it is alien to the true principles of Bible study. . . .

"There are the ardent souls who violate the principle that some things are secret and belong alone to God, by seeking to fill in the details of an unfulfilled prophecy. It is remarkable how brief most prophetic statements in the Scriptures are. Evidently God did not see fit to tell us all the details. He has given us enough prophetic information to provide us with great waymarks that leave us in no doubt as to the direction in which the world is going, and the direction in which our feet should go in order to reach the kingdom of God. But how tempting it is to paint in detail where God has given only a few simple, bold strokes in the outline. And how plausible the painting looks when it has been completed with the aid of a vivid imagination. . . .

"We have a message that must be preached, and with courage we should preach it. But there is a wide difference between proclaiming the great time prophecies, with the related Bible forecasts of conditions in the last days, and unwarranted speculation on particular happenings of the day. Surely we have a sufficiently positive and startling message for the world when we stay by the clear statements of prophecy. Of course, to a certain extent we must deal with unfulfilled prophecies; but if we will confine ourselves to what is stated by the prophets, we shall be safe. The temptation is to fill in details where the prophets are silent.

"Sir Isaac Newton, who was as devout as he was learned, well remarked that 'the folly of Interpreters has been, to foretell times and things by this Prophecy [of the Revelation], as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also in contempt.' *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 251.

"With such a wide field of fulfilled prophecy to expound to the world, how unfortunate that any should fall before the temptation to wander off into speculation on unrevealed details of unfulfilled prophecy, or to attempt to construct out of some present happenings a whole chain of closely connected links to tie together that happening in direct and logical relationship to the day of Christ's coming! It is not a sufficient defense for a person who thus makes predictions to inquire, 'Well, is not my explanation of the outcome of these present happenings plausible and reasonable?' Experience proves that too often in this uncertain world what is plausible and apparently reasonable today becomes impossible tomorrow. Where the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy are both silent as to the details of future events, reverence and a realization of the blunders of former speculators prompt us to be silent also.

"Fortunately, there are not many who allow themselves to fall before this temptation to speculate. But sad to say, it takes only a few such people to bring great perplexity, embarrassment, and even confusion to many. It is one thing to view with godly fear the events of our present troubled day as playing a part in the last act of this world's sinful drama, and to declare with confidence that all these events provide increasing evidence that the day of the Lord is near and hasteth greatly. It is an altogether different thing to single out some particular happening and dogmatically attempt to find in it the key to unlock the mystery of all the remaining details of this world's history. We will never go astray, nor will our message ever be brought into disrepute, if we confine ourselves to the definite utterances of the prophets. Nor will we lack for a timely, soul-saving message for the world."—Pages 26, 27.

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## Appendix E

### Sequence of Events Under the Sixth and Seventh Plagues

The following is a suggested sequence of events that occur under the sixth and seventh plagues, based upon the Bible and the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. The writer is greatly indebted to Raymond F. Cottrell for the following material:

1. Three unclean spirits—Spiritualism, apostate Protestantism, and the Papacy—go forth to gather the nations.

2. They deceive the kings of the earth, and the people join in making void the law of God. Rev. 16:13-16; Isa. 24:21, 22; Zeph. 3:8. (See also *The Great Controversy*, pp. 561, 588, 624; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 43.)

3. Satan beholds his masterpiece—men who reflect his image. Rev. 17:2, 8, 11, 12; 18:3, 23; *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

4. The challenge, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" leads to exaltation of Satan incarnate as director of the battle against the saints. Rev. 13:4, 7, 8.

5. Satan is invested with supreme authority over the nations, and the "ten kings" receive power for one hour with him. Rev. 17:12-14, 17; 18:2, 3; 19:19; *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 182.

6. Thus the nations are gathered to the final contest that will result largely from Satan's master delusion. Rev. 16:14, 16; Isa. 13:4; Zeph. 3:8; Jer. 25:31; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 561, 562, 656.

7. A power from beneath leads men to war against Heaven, and the nations marshal their armies for the last great battle against the Lamb. Rev. 17:14; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 43; vol. 6, p. 14; *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

8. Earth's leaders consult together to root out and destroy the remnant people of God. Psalms 2:1-5, 9; *Early Writings*, pp. 282-285.

9. The universal death decree against Sabbath observance has already been issued by the highest earthly authority. *The Great Controversy*, p. 615; *Early Writings*, p. 36; *Life Sketches*, p. 117; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 213; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 512; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 353, 354.

10. Time is fixed when secular protection is withdrawn from those who will not yield their faith, and liberty is given after a time for their enemies to kill them. Rev. 13:15-17; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 615, 631, 626; *Early Writings*, pp. 282, 283; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 512.

11. All not surrendered to God will join Satan in his rebellion against heaven. *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 465; *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 141; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763; *The Great Controversy*, p. 560.

12. There is a simultaneous conspiracy to strike a decisive blow in one night to destroy God's people. *The Great Controversy*, p. 635; *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 117.

13. God's pitying eye rests upon His people in this great crisis. *The Great Controversy*, p. 634.

14. The wicked suffer thirst from the fourth plague, but angels will provide food and water for the saints. Isa. 33:16; *The Great Controversy*, p. 629; *Early Writings*, p. 282; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 122.

15. Many of the saints are imprisoned and under the sentence of death; many flee, are pursued; but weapons of enemies fall powerless to the ground. Isa. 33:3, 10, 16; *The Great Controversy*, p. 626; *Early Writings*, pp. 282-284, 34.

16. Fierce battle wages between those who fear God and those who fear Him not. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 15.

17. On all sides the saints hear plottings of treason and see the working of rebellion. *The Great Controversy*, p. 619.

18. The trials of the saints are acute; the furnace fires seem about to consume them. *The Great Controversy*, p. 621.

19. In this their severest trial they endure weariness, delay, hunger, and privation. *The Great Controversy*, p. 621.

20. Some of the saints suffer under terrible pressure of discouragement; all are tried to the limit, but none are left to perish. Rev. 16:15; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 622, 618, 629.

21. It is a time of fearful agony; the saints cry to God for deliverance. Ps. 50:3-6; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 630-632; *Early Writings*, pp. 34, 37, 272; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 213.

22. They suffer great mental anguish, and wrestle and agonize with God, as did Jesus in Gethsemane. *Early Writings*, pp. 283, 284.

23. It seems to the saints that God has forsaken them, and that they must seal their testimony with their blood. *The Great Controversy*, p. 630.

24. Angels desire to deliver them, but may not, for they must "drink of the cup." *Early Writings*, p. 284.

25. In this crucible of affliction, during this time of Jacob's trouble, their characters will be perfected. *The Great Controversy*, p. 631; ELLEN G. WHITE in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 12, 1884, p. 513.

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26. Urged by Satan, men surround the saints to destroy them before the time appointed, but God preserves them. Ps. 121:5-7; 91:3-10; 46:1-3, 6-9; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 353; *Early Writings*, pp. 283-285; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 725.

27. Satan cannot destroy the living saints, now 144,000 in number; angels protect them. Rev. 15:2-4; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 17; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 256; *Early Writings*, pp. 15, 60, 283-285; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 634, 649, 654; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 513.

28. In a supreme exercise of faith they learn to trust wholly in God. *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 596, 597.

29. All the elements of strife are still let loose. The whole world is involved in ruin more terrible than was Jerusalem of old. *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

30. The time comes appointed in the decree—the crisis when powers of earth are arrayed against God's people. Rev. 17:14; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 634, 635.

31. At midnight, just as the wicked rush forth to slay the saints, God manifests His power to deliver, and darkness covers the earth. Isa. 17:12-14; Ex. 12:29, 30; Job 34:20; Amos 8:9; *Early Writings*, pp. 283-285; *The Great Controversy*, p. 636; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 354.

32. The King of kings rides forth to deliver His beleaguered people. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 406; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 633, 634.

33. Signs and wonders are seen, angry clouds clash, the moon stands still and the sun shines in its strength. Rev. 6:14; *The Great Controversy*, p. 636; *Early Writings*, pp. 285, 34.

34. The voice of God announces, "It is done"; the 144,000 are delivered. Rev. 16:17; Hosea 1:7; *The Great Controversy*, p. 636; *Early Writings*, pp. 285, 37; *Life Sketches*, p. 117.

35. The saints behold the Son of God seated on His throne. *The Great Controversy*, p. 636; *Early Writings*, pp. 285, 286, 34; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 354.

36. The faces of the saints are illuminated by the glory of God. *Early Writings*, p. 37; *Life Sketches*, p. 117.

37. The angry multitude are arrested and filled with fear. They see the rainbow of the covenant and gaze terror stricken upon it. *The Great Controversy*, p. 636; *Early Writings*, p. 285.

38. There is a mighty earthquake; great hail falls from heaven. Isa. 24:1-6, 18-22; 30:29, 30; Rev. 16:18, 21; Isa. 13: 13-15; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 637, 562; *Early Writings*, pp. 34, 285.

39. The sea boils; the earth heaves and swells; palaces crumble to ruins. Rev. 16:18, 19; *The Great Controversy*, p. 637; *Early Writings*, p. 34.

40. The graves are opened, and many come forth in a special resurrection. Dan. 12:2; Rev. 1:7; *The Great Controversy*, p. 637; *Early Writings*, p. 285.

41. The tables of the law are revealed. God's voice pronounces the doom of the wicked. Rev. 11:19; 16:17, 18; Joel 2:11; Ps. 50:1-5; Isa. 30: 27-33; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 638, 639.

42. God delivers the everlasting covenant of peace and announces the day and hour of Jesus' coming. Shout of victory over the beast and his image. *The Great Controversy*, p. 637; *Early Writings*, pp. 34, 285, 286; *Life Sketches*, pp. 102, 103; *The Great Controversy*, p. 640.

43. The saints cry out, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." Isa. 25:8, 9; *The Great Controversy*, p. 644; *Early Writings*, p. 287.

44. The wicked are dismayed as God's voice turns the captivity of His people. Jer. 25:30, 31; *The Great Controversy*, p. 654; *Early Writings*, pp. 92, 266.

45. The refuge of lies (incarnation of Satan) is swept away; the covenant with death is disannulled (Spiritualism). Isa. 28:17, 18; Rev. 16:19; 18:19-21; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 560-562.

46. The multitudes are filled with regret that God has conquered, and apostate Sabbathkeepers, particularly, are in agony as they see the saints delivered. *The Great Controversy*, p. 654; *Early Writings*, p. 37.

47. Recognizing that they have lost out, both ministers and people fall at the saints' feet and confess God has loved them. *The Great Controversy*, p. 655; *Early Writings*, p. 15.

48. Realizing they have been deceived, the people accuse one another; they unite in condemnation of their ministers who confess their work of deception. *The Great Controversy*, pp. 655, 656; *Early Writings*, p. 282.

49. Those deceived then turn on their false teachers, who suffer tenfold more than the people. Rev. 17:16; Jer. 25:34-38; *The Great Controversy*, p. 656; *Early Writings*, p. 282.

50. The swords with which the saints were to be slain are now turned by the wicked on one another. Jer. 23:1, 2; Isa. 63:1, 6; 34:8; *The Great Controversy*, p. 656.

51. The ten kings, in their hatred of Babylon, now proceed to burn her with fire. Rev. 17:16, 1; 18:6-10, 19; 19:1, 2.

52. Strife and bloodshed are now everywhere, leaders and people fight among themselves, and the nations are locked in deadly combat. The world is deluged with blood. *The Great Controversy*, p. 656; *Early Writings*, p. 290.

53. While the wicked are engaged in this dreadful scene of carnage, a small black cloud appears—the sign of the Son of man. *The Great Controversy*, p. 640; *Early Writings*, pp. 15, 16.

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54. As it nears the earth it becomes brighter and brighter, and the Son of man is seen with the sickle in His hand. Rev. 14:14.

55. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, is now stilled as the armies of the living God take the field. Isa. 9:5; Rev. 6:15, 17; Isa. 2:10-21; *The Great Controversy*, p. 642.

56. The tribes of the earth mourn, hide in caves, in rocks, and in mountains, and pray to be buried from the presence of the Lord. Matt. 24:30.

57. God now calls for a sword upon the inhabitants of earth, now trodden down by the "overflowing scourge," God's "strange act." Jer. 25:29-33; Isa. 26:21; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 562, 627, 634.

58. The angel of death, represented by Ezekiel's five men with slaughter weapons, go forth in the general destruction of the wicked, including their leaders. Isa. 28:17-22; Eze. 9:5-7; *The Great Controversy*, p. 656; *Early Writings*, p. 289; *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 267; ELLEN G. WHITE in *Review and Herald*, Sept. 23, 1873, p. 117.

59. The light that illumines the faces of the saints causes the wicked to fall like dead men, and now at the coming of Christ they are slain by the brightness of His glory. Rev. 16:19; Isa. 26:20, 21; 63:1, 6; 11:15, 16; Jer. 25:33; Ps. 50:3, 6; Zech. 14:12; Rev. 14:19, 20; *The Great Controversy*, p. 657; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 184, 354.

60. The beast goes into captivity; the great whore has been judged, for God has avenged His people on Babylon. Rev. 18:21; 17:16, 1; 18:6-10, 19; 19:1, 2; 13:10.

61. Satan, pronounced guilty, is banished to the desolate earth for one thousand years; the land rests; the jubilee begins. Rev. 20:1, 2; *The Great Controversy*, p. 658; *Life Sketches*, p. 103.

62. As a cloud nears the earth there is another mighty earthquake, and the sleeping saints are called forth from the tomb. 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:17; *Early Writings*, pp. 16, 285, 286; *The Great Controversy*, p. 644; *Early Writings*, p. 287.

63. The harvest is now reaped; the saints meet the Lord in the air and are taken to the city of God. Earth is completely emptied of its human population. Rev. 14:14-16; Matt. 24:31; *Early Writings*, p. 16; *The Great Controversy*, p. 657.

64. Now the Lord God omnipotent reigns supreme; the dominion of this world has at last become His, and He "shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

## Appendix F

### The Use of *Polemos* and *Mache* in the New Testament and in the LXX

In the study of the use of these words we have briefly considered not only the substantive but also the verbal forms of these two words. What is mentioned in this Appendix will give further data on the use not only of *polemos* but also of *polemeō*, the verb, and of *machomai* and *mache*, the verb and the noun respectively.

In the text of the presentation, emphasis was laid upon the fact that the words *polemos* and *polemeō* would more properly be translated "war"—a word that describes the entire period of hostilities; that *machomai* and *mache* would better be rendered "battle"—a term usually given to designate one engagement.

Let us observe:

#### 1. Concerning "*Polemos*" and "*Polemeō*"

a. In the New Testament.

*Polemos*: This is rendered—

Battle—1 Cor. 14:8; Rev. 9:7, 9; 16:14; 20:8—5 times

War—Matt. 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 14:31;

21:9; James 4:1; Rev. 11:7; 12:7, 17;

13:7; 19:19 10 times

Fight—Heb. 11:34 1 time

16 times

*Polemeō*: This is rendered—

To fight—Rev. 2:16; 12:7, 17 3 times

Make war—Rev. 13:4; 17:14; 19:11; James 4:2 4 times

War—James 4:2 1 time

8 times

24 times

It will be noted that "war" rather than "battle" is the general thought expressed by these words. While they are rendered "battle" 5 times, they are rendered "war" 15 times. Several of the English translations give "war" instead of "battle" in Revelation 16:14, as will be seen in the renderings of the R.V., Alford, Robertson, Fenton, Cunningham, Moulton, Spencer, et cetera.

*b. In the Septuagint.*

These words are referred to many times in the LXX. There are more than 350 instances of their use, and taking the over-all use of the words, it would seem that they are rendered "battle" about as many times as they are rendered "war." In drawing our conclusions, however, we need to bear in mind two facts concerning many of the references in which the words are used:

(1) Since there was but one engagement in many of the wars, the conflict was both a war and a battle.

(2) Quite often reference is made to no particular contest, but rather to going to war or to battle.

With these considerations in mind, it can be said that these two words are quite generally used with the sense of "war," and convey the idea of a period of conflict during which there could be one or more engagements. Naturally the sense would have to be determined by the context in each case.

## 2. Concerning "Mache" and "Machomai"

*a. In the New Testament.*

The use of these words in the New Testament is confined more to verbal controversy than to the field of military operations. This is true in the 8 times the words are used.

They are translated:

Fight, fighting .....	3 times
Strife, striving .....	5 times

*b. In the Septuagint.*

The words are used more often in the LXX. There the words express both military and verbal controversy.

One can find such translations in the A.V. as: contend, rebuke, strive, chide, strife, fight, smite, and battle.

## 3. Concerning the Hebrew Word "Milchamah"

*a.* This is a Hebrew word for war that is rendered *polemos* in the Greek of the LXX. *Milchamah* is used frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures to designate military encounters in Old Testament days. In the A.V. it is rendered:

Fight .....	5 times
Battle .....	150 times
War .....	158 times

b. It is the word rendered "battle" in Ezekiel 13:5:

"Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the *battle* in the day of the Lord."

c. It is rendered "war" in such texts as Genesis 14:2; Jeremiah 4:19, and Joel 3:9. We quote:

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare *war*, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up." Joel 3:9.

"My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of *war*." Jer. 4:19.

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## **Health and the Gospel Message**



## Our Bodies a Living Sacrifice

BY T. R. FLAIZ, M.D.

It is a matter of more than passing significance that a small Christian denomination, less than a million in membership, has seen fit as a part of its world program of evangelism to pour millions of dollars annually into the support of health education and medical ministry.

This small denomination has during the past few years trained some three thousand physicians, more than eight thousand nurses, and hundreds of other medical workers.

In both home and foreign lands a large percentage of its annual appropriations includes some form of medical and health education activity.

This group has accepted for its membership and loyally maintains certain health standards and habits, certain practices in matters of diet and drinking, and a personal relationship to health questions not generally regarded by Christian peoples as essential to Christian life and yet acknowledged universally as desirable for those who have the fortitude to live according to such standards.

It may be reasonably asked, "On what basis and for what reason have these people espoused these health ideals and assumed these large medical responsibilities?"

In the closing verses of that impressive book of Malachi, the prophet tells us that "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," God would send the prophet Elijah, who would lead out in a mighty reform movement,

turning "the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," and, obviously, the hearts of all toward their God as a preparation for the coming of the Lord. Luke, in speaking of this, states that the Elijah message would "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Paul, in writing to Titus, gives directions as to how to live in this present world. He says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," who would redeem a people "from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

This is a brief but glorious statement of the closing scenes in the great drama of the conflict between Christ and Satan. This is but the meager portrayal of the transformation that will be experienced by the people of God before the coming of their Saviour.

The battleground of heaven, where the devil challenged the authority of the government of God, was shifted after creation to this world. Satan set about the conquest and destruction of the latest subject of creation—man and his Eden home. Man was brought into being through a process that gives us an insight into his nature. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and we are told that he "became a living soul."

We are told also that man, as he came from the hand of the Creator, was perfect. He was endowed with three distinct characteristics and entities—his *spiritual*, *intellectual*, and *physical* forms—all a part of the original man as he first came *perfect* from the hand of the Creator.

The enemy of this new creation set about the subversion and the destruction of this newest handiwork of God. It had been made clear to man that undivided loyalty and obedience to God were the conditions attached to the continued enjoyment of his Edenic bliss. It had been made clear to him also that the result of disobedience would be death. Through deception of the evil one, man was led to experiment with

sin and disobedience. The moment man sinned, that perfect physical body, intended—with the nourishment of the life-giving properties of the fruit of the tree of life—to live forever, began to weaken and die.

Even so, not until more than two thousand years passed did man so fully lose the vital principles of life that he fell from the prospect of *eternal* life to a mere span of *threescore years and ten*. Constantly increasing disease and early death were to be the lot of man to the end of time. This disease and this death were, according to Scripture, the immediate result of sin. It was the mark of triumph of the evil one.

The work and the character of Satan in this world are well illustrated in the story recorded in the first chapter of Job. As prince of this world he ruled with a relentless and cruel hand. Our every disease, our every plague and pestilence, is the handiwork of the evil one, who, since the fall of man, has worked for his continued destruction. The dread malaria, which claims its millions of victims each year, the degenerative diseases—cancer, arteriosclerosis with its cardiovascular diseases, poliomyelitis (four families have been driven from the mission field in recent months by this paralyzing, killing disease), the crippling and punishing arthritis which binds so many millions in torturous suffering—are all the inglorious achievements of the evil one in his progressive program of wrecking not only the spiritual and the intellectual but the physical man created perfect in his original Edenic home. Christ mentions specifically that these are the work of the archenemy.

Rebuking the hypocritical ruler of the synagogue who protested against the Sabbath-day healing of the woman afflicted with what was probably an aggravated case of spinal arthritis, Christ replied, "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" The ruler of the synagogue was in agreement that it was desirable to come to the synagogue on the Sabbath day for spiritual refreshment, for a restoration of those spiritual

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powers that had been lost in the onslaught of the evil one, but he did not recognize that the physical marks of the work of the enemy were just as truly tokens of his triumph, evidences of his degenerative activities. The Lord pointed out that it was just as desirable that this woman should receive physical restoration as that her lagging spiritual experience should be restored on this day of rest.

So, also, the unfortunate victims of satanic power who had lost their mental faculties, and had wandered in lonely and waste places over across the Sea of Galilee in Gadara, were restored to their natural powers by the healing words of our Saviour.

Christ's entire ministry was an exemplification of His statement that He had "come to seek and to save that which was lost"—that which was lost spiritually, intellectually, and physically. He healed the palsied man, but He did so with that challenging statement, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," indicating that the Lord was accomplishing a twofold, yes, a threefold work of restoration in those for whom He labored.

Christ told us that He had come to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and His entire labors during the three and a half years of His ministry here on earth were labors in which He was restoring those whom Satan had demoralized spiritually, confused mentally, and weakened or destroyed physically—restoring into the image of God!

Christ's ministry was well prophesied by Isaiah in the words, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isa. 61:1-3.

This prophecy emphasizes that one of the ministries to be performed by Christ was the loosening of those who were bound. Christ spoke of the arthritic woman as having been bound by Satan, lo, these eighteen years; and He declared it to be a part of His legitimate ministry to free those who had been thus bound—whether by arthritis, by leprosy, by mental ailments, by palsy, or by actual death.

Christ selected and commissioned first of all twelve disciples, and later seventy, whom He sent out, as reported by the apostle Luke, himself a physician, in these words: "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

Matthew, the publican, in reporting this same occasion, when he and his fellow disciples were sent forth to their mission field, states, "When he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." And Matthew records that they received the following charge as to the *type* of ministry they were to carry out: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

And how well the disciples in the days that followed fulfilled the commission here given in their own ministry!

Peter and John, two great preachers of the early church, were on their way to the place of worship to conduct one of those remarkable meetings when they were stopped by a helpless beggar whose withered legs and broken ankles permitted him only to sit by the way and beg for alms. In line with their Lord's instruction, and on the authority of His name, the disciples healed this man, changing his hopeless and helpless infirmity into the radiance of athletic vigor. Here was another of these children of Abraham, bound probably from childhood by the bonds of Satan, now loosed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to glorify God in his restored

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body. Was there any purpose in this act of healing, beyond merely allowing one more Jew to go about his way among the thousands of Jews of that great city of nineteen hundred years ago? The devil was hereby rebuked and buffeted. A prisoner, a victim of his, was snatched from his hand and restored to the image and glory of God. Five thousand men, besides women and children, influenced no doubt very largely by this manifestation of the power of God, turned their hearts to the One which had come "to seek and to save that which was lost." Obviously, the ministry of healing was also the right arm of the Pentecostal message of the early Christian church.

The spiritual degeneration of sin, of which we have read, resulted directly from the repudiation or violation of moral law or principle. The almost immediate physical decay and degeneration, observed concurrently with the fall of man, resulted, not from some mysterious malign influence wielded over him by Satan and his hosts, but from the violation of certain well-defined and understandable physical laws or principles by which man was intended to live as an obedient child of God.

We have, therefore, violation of *moral* law, with its resulting sin and degradation. We have the violation of *physical* law, physiological law, with its resulting sickness and death. The interdependence of the physical upon the spiritual health, and to a lesser extent the dependence of the spiritual experience upon the physical health, made so clear in Christ's ministry, is a scientific principle recognized only recently by the medical world. One of America's outstanding physicians, pressed by this perplexing medical and psychological problem of his large practice, observes:

"In advising such people . . . , I found myself more and more frequently using some Biblical expression, or summing up certain recommendations in terms of an accepted religious doctrine. This growing tendency was forced upon me by the realization that my professional and scientific vocabulary was not always adequate. . . . I found it a great help in counselling people to be able to reduce a set of scientific or at least partly scientific facts to a few, simple, practical precepts.

The frequency with which these precepts resembled the teachings of religion impressed me increasingly as time went on until, finally, I found that I had adopted a large body of religious beliefs most of which I had discarded twenty years ago."<sup>1</sup>

Modern scientific medicine recognizes, not just a relationship between the spiritual and the physical being, but a close interdependence. A whole field of medicine, psychosomatic medicine, is placing its greatest emphasis on exploring the possibilities of healing the body through restoration of proper *spiritual* environment. The intelligent person struggling with a guilty conscience, or fighting against convictions on moral principles, is a very likely candidate for ulcers of the stomach or related disease. A man, perilously near death with hemorrhaging ulcers, made reconciliation with his estranged and somewhat wayward son. Hemorrhages ceased, and in an unbelievably short time he was fully recovered. Patients with serious nervous disturbances find in renewed religious experience their only source of healing.

Let me quote again from Henry Link:

"The religion I speak of, therefore, is not the refuge of the weak but the weapon of those who would be strong. I see religion as an aggressive mode of life, by which the individual becomes the master of his environment, not its complacent victim."<sup>2</sup>

Jesus was the first exponent and practitioner of this three-fold plan of healing. We read of His ministry:

"Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole."<sup>3</sup>

And we are told that "the Saviour made each work of healing an occasion for implanting divine principles."<sup>4</sup> Men of science are only now realizing the truth given to us many years ago:

"Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or im-

<sup>1</sup> Henry Link, *Return to Religion*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

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part peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. . . . The life of God in the soul is man's only hope."<sup>5</sup>

These basic principles of healing were the possession of this people three quarters of a century ago. Are we perhaps somewhat recreant to our duty in not giving wider emphasis to such basic principles in the test tube and the laboratory? We have from the lips of the apostle Peter just what is to be the state of the chosen people of God, the remnant people who will be waiting for their Lord when He comes at that "great day of the Lord," spoken of by Zephaniah. Peter says:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9.

Here is a people spoken of as a "royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people"—this remnant church that would be waiting for their Lord. For what purpose had they been *chosen* to such a high estate as to be regarded as "a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people"? Peter states that it was that they might "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

Now, the priests of old were men chosen from the very finest of the family of Aaron in the tribe of Levi—the best, physically, mentally, and spiritually! Men who were diseased or crippled or otherwise physically imperfect were not acceptable to this priesthood. How much *more* this royal priesthood, which will be showing forth the praises of God in this closing generation! He calls that people a "holy nation," and how could any people be called a *holy nation* if they were in any state less than the most perfect possible as relates to their spiritual, intellectual, and physical condition? They were to be a *peculiar* people. They should stand out as separate from, different from, the rest of the world. The Advent people were called *out* from the world in and accord-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

ing to God's prophetic plan, for the one purpose of serving as His instruments in heralding the second coming of our Saviour and of being used by God in the time of the "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" for the calling out of a people whom He would "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The early Advent people were zealously evangelistic. Thousands of devoted Adventists sacrificed their all in their devotion and dedication to the cause to which they had been called. Among other sacrifices made by these early Advent believers, and particularly the Advent *workers*, was the sacrifice of their health. Not until this movement was fifteen years on its way was it brought forcefully to the attention of our people that their responsibility in calling people to the repairing of the breach, the restoration of paths to dwell in, involved a return not only to spiritual paths but to paths of obedience to the physical laws of our being. From inspiration there came to us that first message indicating the importance of physical health as related to spirituality.

To most fully appreciate the significance of the message that came to our people at this time, we must remember that in the middle of the last century principles of diet were little better understood in America than they are today in the wilds of Africa. Very little was known about the treatment of the more common diseases. Typhoid fever was treated at that time, as it still is in parts of the world, by depriving the patient of his necessary food and liquids, without which recovery would seem to be almost impossible. Measles, pneumonia, influenza, bronchial infections, and other common diseases, including gastrointestinal diseases, were treated routinely by the use of arsenic, strychnine, calomel, quinine—drugs, the action of which these early physicians had not the faintest idea.

Diphtheria, smallpox, typhoid fever, measles, with its many and serious complications, scarlet fever, different kinds of enteric diseases, tuberculosis, pneumonia, were all plagues of serious consequence, taking a large toll of the population

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both of the country at large and of our own Adventist believers and workers. Of the causes of these diseases, of their bacteriology, their prevention, little or nothing was known at that time. In frantic effort to stay the scourge of such diseases, physicians administered one drug after another, with no knowledge as to their efficacy. The result was that the patient must recover not only from the disease but from the depression of the poisonous drugs administered.

Add to this the fact that the country knew little or nothing concerning food values and the bearing of food, good or bad, upon health, and you have a picture of what the human frame had to surmount in case of illness one hundred years ago.

Common misconcepts concerning health matters of that time included the idea that white flour was far superior to the ordinary crude whole-wheat flour ground in the simple hand mills or on the stones out away from milling centers. Rich pastries, pies, cakes, and puddings not only were an evidence of affluence and good living but were supposed to contribute to the strength and health of the eater. The excessive use of cooking fats, butter, grease, and fat meats was recognized to be an important factor in adding to the waistline of the eater, which in turn was thought to be of itself an evidence of health and strength. Fresh or leafy vegetables were practically unknown as a common source of food value in America, whereas fruit was mostly of a poor quality and enjoyed by only a limited few.

If water appeared to be clear, it was regarded as perfectly safe to drink. Milk that was handled with any reasonably satisfactory degree of care was supposed to be wholesome and healthful. There was no knowledge at that time of the deadly organisms of typhoid, of tuberculosis, of dysentery, of undulant fever, and of many other diseases carried in these innocent-looking beverages.

Houses at night were kept closed securely against the dangers of "night air," a factor contributing substantially to the prevalence of tuberculosis in those days. Fresh air and

the free use of water were thought to be dangerous to those suffering from any form of fever. Energetic and ambitious people conceived of sleep as something for the weak and the slothful. Intellectuals vied with one another in cutting their hours of sleep as low as possible. John Wesley, the great evangelist, took pride in having disciplined himself down to four hours of sleep nightly.

Alcoholic beverages were supposed to give strength and ruggedness to the hard worker, courage to the discouraged or those in hardship, and to the soldier on the battlefield. It was supposed to give warmth to the one endangered by cold. Liquor was served as a regular ration to many groups of hard workers, such as coal miners, those working in the forests or in factories. Tobacco smoke was considered a cure for bronchitis.

Meat was thought to be indispensable to health and vigor, particularly to those who were working under heavy stress.

It was in a time of such ignorance of health principles that the first light on healthful living came to the Advent people. That first message contained this remark:

“I saw it was a sacred duty to attend to our health, and arouse others to their duty. . . . We have a duty to speak, to come out against intemperance of every kind,—intemperance in working, in eating, in drinking, in drugging, and then point them to God’s great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases, for health, for cleanliness, for luxury. . . . I saw that we should not be silent upon the subject of health, but should wake up minds to the subject.”<sup>6</sup>

Mrs. White says further:

“I saw that it was duty for every one to have a care for his health, but especially should we turn our attention to our health, and take time to devote to our health, that we may in a degree recover from the effects of overdoing and overtaxing the mind. The work God requires of us will not shut us away from caring for our health. The more perfect our health, the more perfect will be our labor.”<sup>7</sup>

In a time when it was thought to be a weakness to give any attention to personal health, to rest, to take full night’s

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<sup>6</sup> E. G. White letter 4, 1863, quoted in D. E. Robinson, *The Story of Our Health Message*, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.

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sleep, or to take needed relaxation, it took courage to come forth with the observation:

“When we tax our strength, overlabor, and weary ourselves much, then we take colds, and at such times are in danger of diseases taking a dangerous form.”<sup>8</sup>

A candid statement as to concurrent health investigations indicates the complete honesty of those engaged in this earlier health promotion program. I quote:

“We do not profess to be pioneers in the general principles of the health reform. The facts on which this movement is based have been elaborated, in a great measure, by reformers, physicians, and writers on physiology and hygiene, and so may be found scattered through the land. But we do claim that by the method of God’s choice it has been more clearly and powerfully unfolded, and is thereby producing an effect which we could not have looked for from any other means. As mere physiological and hygienic truths, they might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence; but when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel’s message by the sanction and authority of God’s Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of *present truth*, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril.”<sup>9</sup>

This position was in full harmony with the plain statements of the apostle Paul in his emphatic stand in regard to care of the human body. He tells the Corinthian church:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” 1 Cor. 3:16, 17.

And a little later, in the same letter, Paul emphasizes this same thought with these words:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

With these basic principles so clearly stated we can better

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>9</sup> J. H. Waggoner in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 7, 1866, p. 77.

understand the significance of Paul's appeal to the Roman church when he said:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

Such unequivocal instruction from the Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy made it abundantly clear to the pioneers of this movement that health instruction for our own personal health and for those to whom we carry the gospel is not a matter of mere personal whim or taste, but of great significance, and that any disregard of this knowledge or of this care of our health is a matter for which we must render account in the judgment.

The church, in its commendable purpose to give physical form to its spiritual convictions, has reacted to the counsel of the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Spirit of prophecy along four main lines:

1. The establishment of health institutions and sanitariums and hospitals in the homeland and in mission fields.

2. The acceptance of personal standards of health as individuals, health education of church membership, and health education as a feature of our public and lay evangelism.

3. Medical training of physicians, nurses, dietitians, and technicians—medical, X-ray and physical therapy—and now in the near future, dentists.

4. Medical evangelism at home and in mission lands characterized by personal instruction, medical-evangelical literature, temperance literature and promotion, and public service in Red Cross first aid, et cetera.

#### **Health Institutions**

Time does not permit deep or analytical study of the significance of these various fields of endeavor, but we must observe at least a tentative definition of the sanitarium, a term that is peculiarly Adventist in origin and in its worldwide interpretation by both Adventists and non-Adventists. When first applied to Seventh-day Adventist medical institu-

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tions the term *sanitarium* described a medical institution, preferably in a rural environment, staffed by conscientious Christian physicians practicing the very latest and best medical diagnostics and therapeutics and bringing to their patients highly conscientious personal care and attention in the spirit of humility and service, with the purpose of healing not only the physical malady but also the ills of their souls. Such could be accomplished only in an institution in which the nursing service, the room service, the food service, and the business service—in fact, all services of the institution—were Christ centered, and Christ centered in their unselfish devotion to the institution's high spiritual ideals. Only in the sanitariums, or in the mission hospital of the various mission boards, do we find the threefold ministry of healing the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual as the avowed and the practical object of the institution.

We hear many today lamenting the supposed fact that the true sanitarium is definitely a thing of the past, that we no longer have institutions such as we had in the Battle Creek Sanitarium in its prime, the early days of the Washington Sanitarium, the St. Helena Sanitarium, the New England Sanitarium, Paradise Valley, Boulder, and others whose origins date back to the turn of the century.

Some have proposed that the genius of this institution of another day was to be found in its fomentations, its hydrotherapy, its electrotherapy and massage, its sanitarium-type of dining room, with its wonderful spread of foods. Some have felt that the genius of this institution was in the fact that popular medications as they were known in those days were *not* given in these institutions. Some have felt that the genius of the sanitarium idea lay in the fact that the institution was staffed by full-time institutionally employed physicians, all of them with a devoted Christian outlook. Some have thought that the genius of the institution was in the fact that patients in those good old days came and stayed, not a few days to a week, but a month, two months, four to six months, and left the place feeling that they almost shared

in its ownership. Only with such a long stay could the Christian influences come to their natural and fullest maturity. Doubtless all of the factors contributed their share to the sanitarium reputation.

We are now, in this year of our Lord 1952, frequently reproached for having left the "good old days" of our sanitariums, in which all these conditions prevailed. Let us examine for a moment the validity of some of these observations:

A patient of the "good old days" of fifty to seventy-five years ago came to the sanitarium with abdominal distress, loss of weight, dizziness, nervousness, poor sleep, irritability, and gloomy forebodings. Under the care of the institution's physicians he was finally solemnly declared to be suffering from the very specific disturbance of his physiological functions known as dyspepsia, with chronic indigestion. This patient was placed on a regime of treatment excellent for those days—abundant rest, hydrotherapy with its fomentations, baths, massage, and what-have-you. His diet was carefully studied by a trained food specialist, who, of course, knew nothing of vitamins, minerals, balance in diet, et cetera, but who nevertheless prepared an excellent menu for such patients.

Further, this dyspeptic was solemnly inspected at frequent intervals by the physician, until at some time, perhaps a month or six weeks later, the patient was given the hope that, all things going well, he could probably make some degree of recovery and ultimately might return to his work. Three, four, or five months later, if he survived, this patient, still a sick man, having been trained as to what foods he could but tolerate and what his limitations of work and exposure would be, and assured that he must return to the sanitarium at occasional intervals, returned to his home to live a convalescent existence for months. And after months of struggle with diet, hydrotherapy, and all the rest, this patient ultimately, in spite of all attentions and the kindest of care, began to lose ground and went under with the disease,

the nature of which was quite unknown to these excellent physicians.

This same patient, coming to a sanitarium in the year 1952, would be placed on an accelerated program of careful examination and diagnostic X-ray work. At the end of two or three days there would be laid on the desk of the attending physician complete laboratory reports clearly indicating the nature of the disease with which the patient was suffering. This man, afflicted with pernicious anemia, would be told that he must receive injections of a simple nature the rest of his life. He would be able to live his normal span in excellent health, and before the week ended, with instruction as to diet and his general care, and perhaps with a supply of medications—which his wife or his daughter might be able to give him at home—this man would return to his office desk again, carrying on his business and his family responsibilities, feeling the vigor of health he perhaps supposed would not be his again.

But some complain that we have departed from the *spirit* of our “good old sanitarium days,” that we no longer sponsor the fine therapeutic measures employed in those earlier days. Why do our pneumonia cases not receive the hot foot baths, the fomentations, the chest packs, the mustard plasters—all of which contributed to the fame of the earlier institutions? The therapeutic value of these procedures is no less today than fifty years ago. We might observe, first of all, that today the arrival of a pneumonia patient in our sanitariums is not a frequent occurrence. Let us notice, however, what has happened in the treatment of pneumonia since the “good old days,” taking an actual case as an example.

Sometime, about the year 1905, a physician was called to the home of one of our workers in southern Minnesota. The father had been stricken with pneumonia, and was in such serious condition that the physician called had not too much hope of his recovery. The mother, not discouraged by a physician's lack of faith, bundled up her husband, took him on the train to Madison, Wisconsin, to the fine sanitarium

our denomination conducted there in those days. The physicians shook their heads gravely when they saw the man's condition, but assured the mother that they would do their best. Hot foot baths, fomentations, hot sheet packs, cold-mitten frictions, mustard plasters—the entire “menu” was served strenuously for ten days before the patient turned for the better. Doubtless it was just these very therapeutic procedures, vigorous and rugged as they were, that saved this patient's life. It required another month of careful treatment during his convalescence to put the man sufficiently on his feet to be able to return to his home. After returning home he was not to do any work for another two or three months. Fortunately, in this case there were no complications so common in those days, such as lung abscess or empyema.

There can be no doubt that except for the excellent rational treatment given to this worker at that time he would not have survived. This patient, had he been visited by a physician in his home in 1952, would on the first visit have been administered the appropriate antibiotic. When the physician called the following morning he would have doubtless found him temperature-free and calling for food. The next day he would have been complaining that he was just wasting time lying around in bed when he felt so well. The wise physician would have required him to stay in at least another two or three days, but probably by the third or fourth day he would have been up and as likely as not back in his office, returned to his normal health with no complications. He probably would never even have come to the sanitarium. Had he been conveniently situated to be placed in a sanitarium, much the same procedure would have been followed by the wise physicians of the institution. The patient's stay would have been limited to a very few days, and these few days probably under protest.

This is much the picture with the entire field of medicine. Then, are we to admit that our sanitarium plan of treatment and care of the sick has become obsolete? If we refer to our time-honored sanitarium techniques in physical therapy, I

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can assure you that these definitely continue to have a wide range of use. This is more particularly true of rehabilitation work following such diseases as polio and arthritis, in which areas we should be doing much more than we are. This also applies to those diseased conditions resulting from the high pressure and tensions built up as a result of the fast living and highly competitive business life of the twentieth century. For such patients our sanitariums are indeed a haven of rest, and in this aspect lies one of our greatest but most neglected opportunities of service.

One of the greatest changes in the medical world that has been reflected so largely in the change of tempo and atmosphere in our sanitariums is the greatly shortened period of time that the patient is required to be under institutional care.

From an average hospitalization period of more than thirty days in the "good old days" the period of hospitalization now has dropped to less than seven days. These seven days cover the acute stage of the disease, or the postoperative period, when the patient is somewhat limited in activity. Diagnosis and therapeutics today deal in terms of far greater certainty. When the patient is able to be on his feet, he is usually securely on his way home. This accounts for the disappearance of many of our attractive sanitarium dining rooms so well known thirty or forty years ago.

Earlier in this discussion our sanitariums were defined as a place where the sick are treated according to the very finest and latest-known medical therapeutics in the atmosphere of Christian medical ministry, in the Christ-centered atmosphere of prayer and praise, an atmosphere made possible largely by the attitudes of a Christian medical staff—nurses, helpers and attendants—all serving in the spirit of the Great Physician Himself.

The uncertain therapeutics of a half century ago have given way to the more effective and speedier lifesaving procedures of modern medical science. Patients leave the hospital or sanitarium after a few days' stay instead of after weeks

or months. Has this militated against our missionary objectives? On the contrary, from my intimate knowledge of the spirit prevailing in our sanitariums today, in our schools of nursing spread around the world, in the various departments of these institutions, I can assure you that the spirit of a Christ-centered medical ministry is no less a vital potent force in the impact upon the communities concerned than were the perhaps more colorful and certainly more patrician institutions of a generation or two ago.

All around the world, we meet those who have been patients in our sanitariums, and the story is the same. The patients, although impressed with the good diagnosis, the good surgery, the good therapeutics, are more impressed by the *spirit* of the institution—the atmosphere of prayer, the bedside prayer offered by the student nurse at the close of the day, the prayer offered by the surgeon before the anesthetic is administered for major surgery, and by the morning worship service brought to the patient over the communication system.

Hundreds, yes, thousands of those who have had contact with our medical institutions, whether we call them sanitariums, hospitals, or clinics—whether in America, India, Australia, Europe, Africa, or the islands of the sea—have been turned to their Saviour by the kindly Christ-centered ministry received in these institutions that we still like to call sanitariums.

#### Health Reform

Turning to the second phase of our medical ministry, let us look for a moment at that which we have traditionally called *health reform*. We have already noted the popularly accepted habits of a hundred years ago: drugging, drinking, smoking, use of undesirable foods, overeating, fear of ventilation, wrong concepts of rest and recreation, absence of knowledge of immunological protection against epidemic diseases—all of these shared the responsibility for the unbelievably low expectancy of life, less than thirty years at that time.

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This, against the present life expectancy of seventy years! Any wonder there was a demand for *health reform*?

In respect to the Biblical truth that our bodies are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in us, Paul carries truth home to us more personally when he says: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Out of respect to this basic truth that our bodies are not our own, that they are lent of God, and that we must hold them in purity and in physical protection, our people at an early date set about to study what would constitute the greatest honoring of God in our bodies.

Obviously, the reeling, incoherent, repulsive alcoholic was not glorifying God in spirit, in intellect, or in body. Alcohol was therefore written off as having no place in the life of the dedicated Christian.

Every smoking physician knows in his heart that tobacco is no boon to his health. He knows that it damages vital structures and tissues of his body. These evils of tobacco were recognized a hundred years ago by our people, and fell under the ban of our early pioneers.

The habitual use of coffee and tea was recognized as lying at the foundation of certain neurological and circulatory disturbances often leading to a serious degree of ill-health. These drinks were condemned as being inimical to the best of health, and our people were counseled to leave them entirely alone.

Our pioneers were advised as to the desirability of exercise, fresh air, and wholesome recreation. At a time when intellectuals were priding themselves in cutting the amount of sleep on which they could survive, our people were counseling a rational program of sleep and rest consistent with the bodily needs. The popular concept of diet centered around the desirability of a liberal intake of strong foods—meat, potatoes, bread, rich and heavy cakes, pies, pastries, puddings.

People who could live on such a diet were regarded as indeed fortunate, and their adequate contours were the evidence that these foods must be healthful and wholesome.

*Health reform* cut directly across this concept and taught the desirability and the healthfulness of eating only what one needs of the most desirable foods. A variety of well-prepared vegetables, whole-grain cereals, nuts, fruits, and dairy products prepared under sanitary conditions were recommended as the ideal diet. Our early Adventists, believing that there was more than ceremonial ground for the Levitical prohibition of certain so-called "unclean" meats, condemned their use on the grounds of unfitness for food. In addition to the well-known trichinosis carried in the flesh of swine, science is now revealing other reasons for repudiation of this popular article of diet.

Vegetarianism, maligned by physicians of that time as scientifically unsound, has been accepted by most Adventists as a highly desirable way of life. The complaint that the vegetarian diet is inadequate to maintenance of health has been abundantly proved false by the eating habits of fifteen million Brahmans and two million Jains of India, as well as by a few million Americans who are vegetarians by choice.

Health reform is not a troublesome prohibition of certain foods, drinks, or indulgences. It is not a penance by which we gain merit. We roundly condemn the too-prevalent attitude that would almost suggest that there is some kind of earned merit in eating or not eating, in drinking or not drinking, this or that.

Health reform in its broader aspects is a plan for life by which our spiritual, intellectual, and physical bodies and powers are maintained at their highest potential of effectiveness, for a more abundant and joyous life, an honor to our Creator and a fit dwelling place for His Holy Spirit.

Health reform, of necessity, includes a number of don'ts. It warns of the dangers of alcoholic beverages and tobacco. It counsels against the use of the stimulating drinks, tea and coffee. It tells us of foods that we are best advised to avoid;

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but more important than this, it tells us of the wide variety of good and choice foods, and it tells us of the desirability of consuming even the best of these in moderate quantities and at appropriate times. Health reform counsels us to live as far as possible in the open fresh air, preferably in a rural environment, of developing habits of breathing that will give our lungs full range of their capacity. It tells us of the desirability of an adequate intake of good fresh water. It tells us of the value of a full night of restful sleep induced by a wholesome and physiological natural readiness for such rest. Health reform warns us against the twentieth-century practice of working entirely beyond the human capacity for endurance, thereby developing tensions and pressures *within* which may result in either mental or physical tragedies, or possibly both. True health reform reflects its physical fitness and its mental alertness in a wholesome, joyous, and optimistic outlook, and a love and toleration toward others as described in Paul's great treatise on charity.

Health reform, above and beyond everything else, teaches us the limitations of the human frame as we attempt to breast the current of our modern pace. It invites us to accept the invitation of the Saviour:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7.

*Such* is health reform, and in such a program Seventh-day Adventists believe!

### Training for Service

The third element in the Adventist program of medical ministry is that of training for service in such medical ministry. Time does not permit us to recall the long story of training first nurses, then physicians, and more recently a wider range of medical personnel. Our most recent addition to this splendid educational program is the development of

our dental training college, which will open its doors to its first class of forty-eight students in September, 1953.

The Adventist concept of *training* in medical lines is clearly set forth in certain statements from the Spirit of prophecy. The sacred nature of the work these medically trained workers were to do is plainly indicated in the following quotation:

"Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick. In response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel, who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete."<sup>10</sup>

The reason for this attitude is made clear in the following statement:

"The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel. Those who are selected to act the part of missionary physicians are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice. No selfish motive should be allowed to draw the worker from his post of duty. We are living in a time of solemn responsibilities; a time when consecrated work is to be done."<sup>11</sup>

In regard to the attitude of those thus trained and thus consecrated to this sacred ministry the messenger of the Lord has this counsel:

"The Lord calls for self-denial in His service, and this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers. We have before us an aggressive work which requires means, and we must call into service young men to labor as ministers and as physicians, not for the highest wages, but because of the great needs of God's cause. . . . We need physicians and ministers whose hearts are consecrated to God, and who receive their marching orders from the greatest Medical Missionary that has ever trod this earth. Let them behold His life of self-denial,

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 245 (written in 1901).

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 546.

and then gladly sacrifice, in order that more workers may engage in sowing the gospel seed."<sup>12</sup>

Thus, in every home base and in every major mission field *medical* training is going forward in avenues appropriate to the area concerned, preparing those who will be able to step into this sacred ministry, following in the footsteps of the Great Physician Himself.

### Medical Ministry Around the World

As we turn to the fourth phase, or area, of Adventist medical ministry, we find already prepared to step into this phase of service not only a large corps of missionary physicians and nurses but also thousands of ministers, Bible instructors, lay workers, volunteer workers from every walk of life—all ready to use this right arm of the message as a means of hastening the gospel to all of the world. Physicians, nurses, and technicians operate hospitals and sanitariums in which they pray with the sick and direct the expectant hopes of their patients to the Saviour, the only Source of true healing and of complete restoration.

We find these medical workers training the youth in various lands to go out and do a comparable service for their own people. We find them writing and editing health literature, temperance literature, preparing books, tracts, magazines, to carry this same message of medical ministry. We find our gospel ministers and Bible instructors teaching their converts the simple principles of healthful living. We find others, trained for the purpose—and perhaps the earnest laymen—teaching classes in first aid, home nursing, and the simpler techniques of caring for the sick. We find earnest laymen and these workers ministering to those who are afflicted with disease. We find them visiting the sick in their homes, giving simple treatments, teaching principles of healthful living. We find colporteurs carrying from door to door, from home to home, the gospel story in the millions of copies of our

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<sup>12</sup> E. G. White letter 330, 1906.

health evangelistic literature or our health and message-filled books.

Thousands in many lands are susceptible to the kindly ministration of some form of medical service—ready to listen to the comforting words of the doctor, nurse, or medical worker, ready not only to listen to the medical counsel given but also to learn from their lips of the love and the redeeming power of the Great Physician Himself.

Christ, our Example, in His ministry gave first attention to the distress, the suffering, the material needs, of those who came to hear. Not only did He heal their diseases; He restored their weakened, distressed, and confused minds. To the hungry, on occasion, He supplied good food in abundance. He comforted those in distress, and even restored to life some who had been snatched away by death. The cleansed leper, the liberated arthritic, the blind who now could see, and the restored mental sufferers—all had had opened into their souls avenues for the entrance of the present truth the Master sought to tell them. Their restored and sound bodies were now fit dwelling places for the Holy Spirit, and they were candidates for citizenship in that heavenly kingdom.

But these people were cleansed and restored, *not* that they might go and sin again. The Master had said, "Go, and sin no more." They were tokens of a far greater occasion of triumph; they were tokens of the millions who will one day be redeemed from suffering, from sorrow, and from death—tokens of that time when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality." Having lost their taint of deadly infection, the curse and the suffering of crippling deformity, the remorse of enfeebled mentality, they can now truly glorify God.

Yes, those to whom Christ preached the gospel, He first healed, restored them to health, to physical perfection, that they might glorify God in their bodies!

We too are called to share in this glorious experience. We, Seventh-day Adventists of the present day, through this four-fold ministry of health—our health institutions, our personal

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practice and teaching of health principles, our education of health workers, and our worldwide health evangelism—seek a more practical application of Paul's challenge:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

It is to this intent that we honor a way of life which we choose to call “health reform.” It is to this intent that we take an intelligent interest in temperance, exercise, rest, food, drink, our living habits, and we hereby better understand that rational, well-balanced counsel of the apostle Paul: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

## The Laws of Health

BY J. WAYNE MCFARLAND, M.D.

My talk is based on the Bible, the Spirit of prophecy, and science. I find the first two in perfect agreement. Many times I find the latter not to be in agreement with the others, because many times a man-made idea creeps into science.

I feel it is time we moved forward in our health message. Our health work needs to be made health evangelism. We must unite as medical workers and teachers and ministers to save men and finish the work soon.

There are three texts I wish to call to your attention as a basis for discussing healthful living as a part of the three angels' messages. *First*: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

In the old dispensation the sacrifice had to be without spot, blemish, or any disease. In the new dispensation the apostle Paul definitely refers back to this sacrificial service with which they were all familiar, and says *we now* are to be "living" sacrifices.

*My second text*: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23.

Man is composed of three parts. This is clear and distinct as set forth by this text. The Lord came to seek and to save that which was lost, and since all was lost, *all* must be saved.

Man's body, mind, and soul came under the bondage of sin, and all three parts must be saved from Satan's bondage. We cannot emphasize too strongly that God saves the entire being. It is an absolute fundamental of Seventh-day Adventist thinking.

We preach the imminent return of our Lord, and the apostle Paul directs our attention to the fact that the *entire being* will be preserved blameless unto the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel of saving the entire man is the same gospel preached by Paul, by Peter, by James, and by John. And, thank the Lord, the gospel of saving the entire man is the gospel preached by the remnant church!

When we preach this gospel of saving the entire man we are but preaching the gospel given by Jesus Christ, the great Minister of soul and body, which brings me to my *third text*: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." Luke 10:27.

The next evidence that I wish to bring is from the Spirit of prophecy, which, in pointing out the basis for teaching health principles, is in perfect agreement with the scriptures quoted.

"In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform,—that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul."<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, I turn to medical science for proof of the inseparable nature of man's spiritual and physical and mental life, this time in the words of Dr. Andrew Ivy, world-famous physician and physiologist:

"Medicine is the handmaiden of science and religion. Religious and spiritual realms overlap more with the healing arts and sciences than in anything else man does. Try as we might to separate them, we can't do it, because that is the way we are built."<sup>2</sup>

This statement brings us face to face with *laws*—laws that cannot be changed. We are built that way. God created each

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by George T. Harding, M.D., in *Review and Herald*, May 11, 1950, p. 1.

of us with a mind, a body, and a soul that are inseparable. Everything that God created He placed under law, and these laws are for our benefit if we will follow them and obey them.

Let us study these laws governing the entire man. There is no question about there being a great moral code that governs the spiritual life. It is the Ten Commandments. If we disobey it, we have spiritual disease, soul sickness.

Now, about the laws that govern mental life. If we disregard them, we have mental disease, for we then are ill at ease.

But we are looking for the laws that govern the physical life, the body. The rest of nature is under law—the stars, the planets, the birds, the insects. Everything in nature follows well-defined laws. It would be inconceivable to think that the human body would not be placed under law. It is, and that law is written very plainly and distinctly. Listen closely as we read to you the following quotation:

“All nature expresses the law of God, but in our physical structure Jehovah has written His law with His own finger upon every thrilling nerve, upon every living fiber, and every organ of the body.”<sup>3</sup>

This is indeed a wonderful revelation. God wrote the great moral code with His own finger on tables of stone, but He writes the laws of health with His own finger on every physical structure.

This thought helps us to understand another profound truth:

“Transgression of physical law is transgression of the moral law; for God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law. His law is written with His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty, which has been entrusted to man. And every misuse of any part of our organism is a violation of that law. . . . All should place themselves in the best possible relation to life and health. Our habits should be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God.”<sup>4</sup>

Yes, God has three sets of laws. They are inseparable and they frequently overlap.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 18, 1881, p. 241.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 347, 348.

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As a backdrop for our study of our body and the laws that govern it, let us go back to the day of creation on which man was created. Let us study just a bit of the design and the Designer.

The crowning act of God's handiwork was the creation of man. On the sixth day God the Father and God the Son completed the creation of living creatures, and Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator a perfect man. He was the masterpiece of creation, for God had said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Gen. 1:26.

We find delight in studying about birds, flowers, and creatures of the woods, but when we come to man we find the most marvelous study of all. The fact that we are created after the likeness of God should solemnize our study of the human body, for are we not studying the image of the great Omnipotent One, marred though it be by sin? Should it not lead us to study the laws governing our physical life in an entirely different manner from the way we study those governing any other part of nature? Surely no one can pursue such a study or delve into the mysteries of the body without exclaiming with the psalmist, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Ps. 139:14.

Let us consider some of the remarkable facts that occur at the beginnings of life. Just a few of these will help us to realize that we are fashioned both fearfully and wonderfully. From the union of two microscopic cells a new life develops. In the space of a few short months this one cell has divided and multiplied over two hundred billion times. In that original cell, created by the union of two cells, were present all the potentialities to form bone, muscles, hands, ears, eyes, and the various organs of the human body. The life coming from the Giver of all life has thus been perpetuated.

In beautiful language the Scripture describes how our heavenly Father watches and guards the tiny new being yet unborn. "My substance ["body," margin] was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret." Verse 15.

Is not this a precious promise, to know that Heaven watches over us from the very beginnings of life?

One of the many unraveled mysteries in the formation of this new life is the time at which the baby's heart begins to beat. Ordinarily organs respond to electrical impulses, which pass along over nerves. But in this case the heart begins beating before there are any nerve connections going to it. How does it start? Why does it always begin just at the time it should? Men may call it natural law if they choose, but it remains one of the Creator's unsearchable mysteries. The nerves that control the heart finally do grow down into the heart muscle before birth; they then carry on the work of sending electrical impulses to the heart about seventy-two times a minute throughout a lifetime.

The study of human anatomy and physiology reveals the skill of God. There can be found no place for chance or the theory of evolution in explaining man. The greatest embarrassment to the evolutionist is man himself. Evolution is hopelessly lost in explaining a design so complex and yet so beautiful and perfect in all its detail as a newborn babe.

After forming a perfect man with perfectly formed organs and in the image of Himself, God saw that one thing was still lacking. Man did not have *life*. The delicate and intricate design of the lungs had never functioned, but when God breathed into those nostrils the breath of life, the lungs, the nerves, the brain, responded instantaneously, and man became a living soul.

Should it not cause us to stop in awe and reverence, as we trace the finger of the great Master Designer in cell and tissue? Does it not make the study of the human body and the laws of physiology more than simply the acquirement of a lot of interesting facts?

We are not studying a mere mechanism. We have drawn aside, ever so slightly, a corner of the curtain that veils the mysteries of creation. We are looking upon the crowning workmanship of our heavenly Father, who said, "Let us make man in *our* image."

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Sin entered the world and now we find disease and illness on every hand. These are the results of an enemy power. We have become so accustomed to seeing sickness and suffering, perhaps having suffered many illnesses ourselves, that we think this has always been the common lot of man, but such is not the case. Much of the suffering that exists need not be. Through either ignorance or willful disobedience of the laws of health, individuals bring upon themselves the vast majority of ills. Ellen G. White says:

“The violation of physical law, with its consequent suffering and premature death, has so long prevailed that these results are regarded as the appointed lot of humanity; but God did not create the race in such a feeble condition. This state of things is not the work of Providence, but of man.”<sup>5</sup>

Now if we can find out what will restore man’s diseased body so that his nerves, his heart, his lungs, or any other function is renewed, then we will have come across one of these great laws. What are the agencies or remedies that will restore God’s image in man? In *Ministry of Healing* I find them listed; and I think this is a statement on which every Seventh-day Adventist minister should be able to speak: “Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power,—these are the true remedies.”<sup>6</sup>

Isn’t that a beautiful sentence! Why, I don’t have to go looking through the drugstore, I don’t have to go down to the grocery store, trying to find some food supplement, I don’t have to go to the doctor to find out whether there is some latest shot that is going to do the trick. Many times, brethren, it is by merely following these true, simple remedies that God has given to us that we can have our health restored.

Here are eight simple but very effective remedies to help us to better health. These are God’s remedies, and if we could learn how to present these health factors to people in the right way, we would lead the world into a new field of preven-

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 127.

tive medicine. For not only are these eight simple measures true remedies; they are eight ways in which to keep the body in good health and the mind functioning properly; and it is time that we were leading the world. These are eight methods to foil the devil, who constantly endeavors to prostrate man with illness and to cast doubt and fears into his mind. Let me enumerate them again:

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|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Air.            | 5. Exercise.              |
| 2. Sunlight.       | 6. Proper diet.           |
| 3. Abstemiousness. | 7. Use of water.          |
| 4. Rest.           | 8. Trust in divine power. |

Now I must reread Romans 12, verse 1 and also verse 2:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

From this point on we shall discuss how health of body, health of mind, and health of soul are related. We must learn how to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We have chosen to touch on four of these remedies to show the interdependence of the physical, mental, and spiritual realms, and in addition, how through neglect or ignorance of any one of these physical agencies we would find it more difficult to know what is the "acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Now where do we start? Should it be diet? No, there is something more important than diet. In fact, I should like to call your attention to the fact that health reform is not just any one particular phase of healthful living. It is not just any one of anything. It includes a well-rounded, well-balanced program. Diet is only one of the eight natural remedies about which the Lord would have us learn. It is vital and important, but we can become greatly unbalanced by overemphasizing any one of the principles of health reform to the neglect of the others. There is something more vital than diet and more vital than just one article of diet in keeping us alive. Let us not forget that.

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### Fresh Air

Through the pen of inspiration we are told, "We are more dependent upon the air we breathe than upon the food we eat."<sup>7</sup> *Counsels on Health* states: "Fresh air will prove far more beneficial to sick persons than medicine, and is far more essential to them than their food."<sup>8</sup>

That is scientifically correct, for an individual could stay alive several days without water, and, believe it or not, he could last even longer without food, but without air—with its life-giving element of oxygen—he would die in a matter of just a few minutes. Here is a law of the body. We must have fresh air. As we study the process by which this vital element is used in the body, we find ourselves exclaiming with David, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Through one of the most remarkable transportation systems ever devised, oxygen from the air, taken in through the nose, finally makes its way to every minute cell composing the body tissue.

"The average quantity in the ordinary tranquil respiration of an adult is about a pint. . . . As the average in health is about eighteen inspirations a minute, . . . it follows that three thousand gallons of air pass through the lungs of an adult man every day."<sup>9</sup>

The lungs in turn are composed of 750 million air sacs or cells through which this oxygen passes to get into the blood stream. The blood then takes on oxygen from the air we breathe for the return circuit back to the cells. Four thousand eight hundred square yards of blood cell surface was exposed to the air while this sentence was read to you just now. Every second the blood goes rushing by, picking up the life-giving oxygen. The cells that transport this oxygen from the lungs throughout the body are the red blood cells, of which there are about twenty-five trillion in number. So strenuous is the work performed by these cells that each cell lives only about thirty days. This means that twelve million cells must be produced *every second of every day*—

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 526.

<sup>8</sup> *Counsels on Health*, p. 55. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 701.

<sup>9</sup> J. P. Cooke, *Religion and Chemistry* (1880 ed.), p. 108.

and *all* this to provide oxygen for millions upon millions of cells throughout the human body.

Some cells suffer more readily from the lack of oxygen than others. Listen to this: Those cells that are the most sensitive to the lack of oxygen are the cells that compose the nervous system. That is what we are interested in, for it is nerves and nerve tissue that make up the brain, and the brain is the organ that houses the mind, and it is with this mind that we choose and decide to do the "acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Nerves are important, then. They are something you should know about.

Now we must go one step further. There are cells in the brain that control motion, cells that control circulation, and cells in which reside the higher centers of man, such as his reasoning and will power; and it is these latter cells that are the very first ones of all the nervous system to be affected by lack of oxygen. Furthermore, this nervous system is electrical in nature. Some have compared the brain to an electric dynamo. These electric currents we can actually measure. Medical science can detect disturbances in the electric flow of the brain, and thereby locate brain tumors and scar tissue. Now, brethren, if the devil wanted to upset your mind, he would have easy access to it if he could upset the brain nerves. You probably have anticipated how he does it. How forcefully comes to us this remarkable statement from the pen of Mrs. White. She wrote of electrical brain currents before man ever discovered them. This to me is one of the most profound statements on physiology I know.

"The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind."<sup>10</sup>

Science and the Spirit of prophecy are in perfect agreement here.

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<sup>10</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 347.

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The next logical question to ask then is, Where do I get this electricity? How does the brain keep up its supply? The answer is simple: By getting fresh air. Mrs. White mentions several other places where we get the electricity for the brain, I can't go into that, but let me read you this most important statement: "Air is the free blessing of heaven, calculated to electrify the whole system."<sup>11</sup>

Now we turn to science. In his textbook on physiology Dr. Samson Wright describes what happens with the gradual loss of oxygen:

"If anoxia [oxygen lack in the body from any cause] develops more gradually, the intellect and the senses become dulled without the person being subjectively aware of what has happened. . . . Symptoms similar to those resulting from an overdose of alcohol may be present: headache, depression, apathy and drowsiness, or excitement and general loss of self-control. . . . Memory is impaired. . . . Understanding is impaired more than sensation; the subject sees without knowing what he is looking at. He finds it difficult to understand printed or written words. . . . Finally, each sense is lost suddenly, hearing being retained longest."<sup>12</sup>

We can see, then, that reasoning, will power, and judgment are affected by a slight lack of oxygen. Reduce the oxygen a little more, and the body cannot coordinate; reduce it still further, and one goes into coma.

Now, my brethren, exactly the same thing occurs when an individual takes alcohol. As Dr. Wright points out, the higher centers are affected first, the will power and reason; next the powers of locomotion; and last the cells that help one to breathe.

Now, the devil could not get *us* drunk, but just remember that he can keep our bodies in about a half-dead state by keeping us poring over books, studying day and night, so busy campaigning that we don't relax and forget to get outdoors to take in fresh air and oxygen. Then comes a problem that needs good, keen thinking, and we must "prove what is that good, and acceptable . . . will." But our judgment

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 701.

<sup>12</sup> Samson Wright, *Applied Physiology* (7th ed.), pp. 542, 543.

is impaired by lack of oxygen; we have had no fresh air or outdoor exercise and so we say "yea" when we should have said "nay." Perhaps that is a strong statement, but it is no stronger than science can prove today. I repeat, "Air is the free blessing of heaven, calculated to electrify the whole system."

A supply of this electrical energy would not hurt some of our churches. Does your church group have individuals in it who are depressed and gloomy? The pen of inspiration gives a vivid description of such poor saints with an insufficient supply of oxygen.

"The skin becomes sallow, digestion is retarded; the heart is depressed; the brain is clouded; the thoughts are confused; gloom settles upon the spirits; the whole system becomes depressed and inactive, and peculiarly susceptible to disease."<sup>13</sup>

Why? For one reason—they do not have enough oxygen! It is not the only cause of disease, understand, but here is one cause for confused and gloomy thoughts that should not happen to Seventh-day Adventists. Incidentally, did *you* have some fresh air today?

Speaking of patients, Ellen G. White says, "As they take exercise in the open air, restoration will begin in body, mind, and soul."<sup>14</sup> Now you can begin to see how these great laws overlap.

Here is a wonderful truth—that by exercising in the open air you are helping God to *restore His image in you*. You are keener of mind; therefore, better able to keep the soul from the snares of the devil. I submit to you that there is good religion in proper breathing and exercise. Do you believe that?

#### Water and Its Benefits

Now, brethren, if you will permit me, I would like to present this next topic just as we do in our evangelistic efforts. Pretend you are good Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians,

<sup>13</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 273.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 232.

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won't you, for just a little bit? Are you ready? Then we shall begin.

Today the health law we shall discuss is very simple. It requires only a bit of everyday knowledge and the determination to follow through. This one: *Thou shalt use water*. I hear someone say to himself, "Oh, is that all? Just water. I thought there might be a new wonder drug, something that I could swallow in pill form, and health and youth would bloom forth."

Unfortunately for those with "pillitis"—and we have many of them—water, in the form easiest to take, comes not in capsules but as a liquid. You cannot have good health unless you get six to eight glasses of water daily.

How often, when doctors inquire of the patient, "How much water do you drink in a day?" the conversation runs something like this: "You know, doctor, that's a strange thing about me. I just *never* am thirsty. I can go all day without taking even a glass of water. I'm just like a camel."

The doctor probably muses over the facts as he sits and listens. The fact that people treat themselves like "camels" is the very reason they must sit across the desk hoping the doctor can relieve them of their back pain and other miseries. Naturally, the doctor does not embarrass them by pointing out all that he thinks. They might be offended, and then he would never have the opportunity to persuade them to give up their "camel" complex. But camel physiology and human physiology are quite different!

Many people do not realize how vital water is to the human system. Perhaps a few facts on body composition will make this more evident. From 70 to 75 per cent of the human body is made up of water. Even the muscles, which you might not think of being very much like water, contain about one half of that total amount. The blood, the life-giving fluid of the body, makes up only 1/14 of the total amount of fluid. The brain cells, some fifteen billion of them, are 70 per cent water. It really is a compliment to you when someone, perhaps thinking to speak disparagingly, says, "You have a

little water on your brain." If the water level of the body drops beyond a certain critical point, then actual changes in people's behavior occur. Water and disposition are more closely related than we think. This fact should encourage you to get your full quota of water each day—six to eight glasses.

Most people, of course, think of the kidneys when the subject of water is under discussion. True, it is that here we have the most wonderful filter system to be found anywhere. Nothing yet that man has devised can equal the wonder of the kidneys. Although they weigh only about five ounces, yet the amount of blood equivalent to all that is in the human body (about six quarts) passes through them every eighty minutes. These tiny filters inside the body know exactly what substances to let pass by, and then reabsorb the fluid after the poisons have passed on. The tiny tubules in the kidney are so small that you can only see the individual filters (called glomeruli) with a microscope. There are some two million of these filters. They do not all work at once, but each one starts and stops in a mysterious fashion. Each has a rest period. You find the law of rest throughout the body.

They, the kidneys and their tiny tubules, excrete one to two quarts of fluid each day, and they will not work properly if you neglect to furnish them sufficient water. Yet some folks work them overtime by trying to get along without water or by feeding them a little poison. Some beverages, that are all too common, could be dispensed with entirely and you would not suffer one bit. I speak of caffeine-, tannin-containing drinks and alcohol. It is true that you get liquids *with* coffee, tea, and cola drinks, but you also get *poisons*.

There are no vitamins or minerals in tea, coffee, and cola drinks; and if there were, they would be handicapped by the sugar used, because sugar contains neither vitamins nor minerals.

Besides, these liquids have habit-forming propensities that are alarming to school authorities and nutritionists. Teachers and nutritionists speak out boldly against their

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use by children. Why? Because tea and coffee and cola beverages have a direct effect on the nerves of the mind, and *minds* are what educators are trying to train. And control of nerves is what many adults need. So, for best health of body and mind, let's mark these off the list and we shall be surprised how much better we feel. Then let's be sure we are taking six to eight glasses of water, between meals.

Isn't it grand that science comes along to support us in following out God's instruction to us through His messenger—to dispense with tea and coffee? Some of our people need help on this point. Do deal gently and kindly with them—it is hard business giving up tea and coffee, I know.

Here is a health tip: On arising in the morning, two glasses of warm water is all the laxative that many persons require. And isn't that much better than the "stuff" some folks swallow in order to force the intestinal tract to become punctual? Just a word of advice on the warm water: Should your stomach be one that has never had this pleasant surprise, better not gulp down the two glasses too fast! Your stomach may decide you have made a mistake and return it.

I must say one word about water on the *outside*. Very early in the history of the denomination *hydrotherapy* was a well-known word in every household, but today if we are not careful the world is going to outstrip us in what was one of our glorious heritages. Physical medicine and rehabilitation, as it is called today, is a part of the curriculum of every medical school in the United States, and it is rapidly finding its place in every hospital in the United States. I wouldn't want you to think that it is the last word in treatment of disease, for that is not true. But I do know this, that if we neglect it we will soon be having alternate hot and cold catching up with the world. Perhaps I am a bit biased toward physical medicine, having done considerable work in that field, but I have seen hydrotherapy do what no amount of drugs could ever accomplish. However, I find a statement that helps me to keep my thinking balanced on this question of hydrotherapy so that I will not try to make

every sanitarium a bathhouse. Here it is: "More can be accomplished for sick people by regulating their diet than by all the baths that can be given them."<sup>15</sup>

### Diet and Health

This was penned by God's messenger to the management of the St. Helena Sanitarium in the early days of its existence. Apparently there was some danger of overemphasizing one feature of God's program of healing to the detriment of both patients and institution.

So you see water *inside* and water *outside* is not the whole question. For sick people who want to get well, and for people who don't want to get sick, *diet* is more important than hydrotherapy. When Mrs. White says that feeding patients correctly is more important than all the baths we can give them, that settles it for me. Diet is the most important. One of the most rapidly expanding fields of science and research today is in this field of nutrition and its application to the treatment of disease. See how wonderfully this harmonizes with light given to us many years ago. "The disease and suffering that everywhere prevail are largely due to popular errors in regard to diet."<sup>16</sup>

Here is an interesting statement by Dr. Victor G. Heiser, consultant in Public Health Administration, who has spoken about the relation of food to sickness in this fashion:

"Till recently we did not know that disease could be absolutely proved to be intimately connected with diet, but today I could prescribe a diet for you which you would not think at all unusual, predicting in advance any one of a half dozen diseases that you might contract as a result. . . . Your diet, what you eat, largely influences the rate at which your organism ages, and consequently, the duration of your life."

Our health law on diet reads: *Thou shalt eat properly to live*. In the diet of the average person what is one of the foods that will influence the rate at which he ages and the

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 408.

<sup>16</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 295.

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duration of life? We shall come right to the point. Dr. Lotta Jean Bogert says:

“Sugar is a habit-forming food, so that persons who acquire a taste for it want more of it as such or want other foods highly flavored with it. . . . Our acquired taste for sugar has ruined our taste for other foods with more subtle flavors, thus leading us into an unbalanced diet, and has tempted us to habitual overeating.”<sup>17</sup>

We now know that our biggest health problem right here is that of overeating. Some, I am afraid, have felt that it is the “survival of the fittest,” but actually it is the “survival of the fittest.” And to a person who needs help in curtailing his calories the following facts on terminating his earthly stay might prove interesting.

Dr. Louis I. Dublin, Ph.D., with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for forty years, gives us these facts: Between the ages of twenty and sixty-four overweight men have a death rate 50 per cent higher than their normal contemporaries. Overweight women pay for their poundage with a death rate 47 per cent higher. The deaths are due to heart disease, hardening of the arteries, kidney trouble, cerebral hemorrhage, and diabetes. And now we have learned that excessive weight and cancer run a close parallel too. There are three miles of blood vessels in every pound of fat. But I would hasten to ease a bit of tension that might arise from this question by stating that it is known that about 5 per cent—but only 5 per cent—of people’s overweight is due to some glandular disfunction. In the majority of cases it is just eating too much that harms the body and prepares the way for trouble.

I would like in this connection to bring out something from the Spirit of prophecy to let the thin ones know that they are not in any way allowed to escape this question of overeating; in fact, the Spirit of prophecy, if read in its broadest, fullest sense, will usually have something to say on both sides of any question. We ought to remember that. “Some grow corpulent because the system is clogged; others

<sup>17</sup> Lotta Jean Bogert, *Nutrition and Physical Fitness*, p. 22.

become thin and feeble because their vital powers are exhausted in disposing of an excess of food.”<sup>18</sup>

This question of nutrition is a far-reaching one. (We shall have time to touch upon only one or two more points.) We know that about 50 per cent of the American people, and probably many from a good many other countries, fail to obtain optimum health and maximum vigor because of a low intake of vitamin B components. As a result they are nervous or tired, irritable, and feel half dead. They suffer from aches, pains, nervousness. Junior is irritable, puny, catches everything that goes around. We have a popular idea that we can make up the deficit by swallowing a vitamin pill or two or getting a shot from the doctor. That's taking a long chance to remedy something that usually can be corrected at the dining-room table.

But just what does happen to a person's health—to these over-fifty-per-cent people who are not getting enough of just one particular food element, B<sub>1</sub>? Here in the words of Dr. Williams and Dr. Mason, members of the Mayo Clinic staff, we have the picture. They took eleven normal women who were in good health and normally nourished and placed them on a diet of plain white bread, cornflakes, potatoes, polished rice, sucrose, skim milk, beef, cheese, egg white, butter, vegetable fat, cocoa, gelatin, canned vegetables, and coffee.

That resembles, in many respects, the diet of a lot of our neighbors. Of course, it wouldn't sound like *ours!* This diet is sufficient as far as providing vitamins is concerned, and other elements also; but *one* thing was at a low level—that was vitamin B<sub>1</sub> (thiamine chloride), *the* vitamin most essential to smooth-running nerves.

Here is what happened to the eleven women who ate this diet in the Mayo Clinic experiment: After several weeks marked changes occurred in the behavior of these previously normal women. They became depressed, irritable, quarrel-

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<sup>18</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 240.

some, and fearful. They all became weak, lacked energy, and were unable to carry on their tasks efficiently. To add to this sad mental state a variety of symptoms appeared, such as headache, backache, sore muscles, gastric distress after meals, sleeplessness, tenseness, prickly sensation of the skin, and intolerance to noise. "In short, a group of women specially selected for the cooperative qualities in their previous normal behavior were transformed in a few weeks into inadequate suffering creatures with all the features usually associated with a neurotic personality." And all this because they did not get quite enough vitamin B<sub>1</sub> in the diet.

I want you to notice just one symptom that these women complained of, and its consequences, for I think you will see the relationship between food, your mental attitude, and your Christian experience. Did you notice the symptom—intolerance to noise? One of the symptoms found with a low intake of vitamin B<sub>1</sub> is "intolerance to noise" because of the effect the lack of vitamin B<sub>1</sub> has on the nerves.

Well, let's imagine what this could mean in our neighbor's home. It is late afternoon, just about time for Johnnie to come home. *Bang!* goes the front door. Yes, Johnnie is home! He yells, "*Hey, Mom, look at it; I got a hundred in my spelling today!*"

"Stop that yelling; go on outside and play. I can't *stand* this noise! Now get out!"

And mother holds on to her head and frowns as though it would blow to pieces if she heard another word out of Johnnie. So, he turns and walks out, wondering what's wrong with mom. He thought she would be glad.

I'll tell you what's wrong with mother. She is feeding herself and family so that they are nervous, they are high-strung, and they jump at one another. Instead of throwing her arms around Johnnie with a great big hug and kiss and congratulating him on his progress, she sends him out; and he, instead of feeling a mother's love, feels the effects of *intolerance to noise*.

What many a family needs is not more prayers by the

preacher to keep them from squabbling, bickering, and fighting, but a change of practice at the dining-room table. The devil knows that as long as he can have people eat improperly, so that they do not get enough vitamins to run a nervous system, or taking so much sugar that it uses up all their vitamin B, so there is nothing to run the nervous system, he has it easy. They can't control their disposition until they learn to control their diet.

Now, perhaps this statement from Ellen G. White will mean much more to you:

"The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being. The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death. . . . Men and women must be awakened to the duty of self-mastery, the need of purity, freedom from every depraving appetite and defiling habit. They need to be impressed with the fact that all their powers of mind and body are the gift of God, and are to be preserved in the best possible condition for His service."<sup>19</sup>

I recommend that in order to know what is the best diet you study the Bible. You will find that when God created man He made up the menu for him, and I think He gave him the best food and not the second best. He tried to get ancient Israel to follow more closely the original menu, but you remember He had some difficulty.

The same Jesus who led ancient Israel is leading us. He is going to lead us on to Canaan. Listen to His message through the Spirit of prophecy. And do notice how generous the messages are. Brethren, when we became Adventists it was this light that saved our family from losing a father just at the time a boy named Wayne needed a father most. It has never been difficult for me to cherish this light. It is not harsh—listen:

"We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

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we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God's people."<sup>20</sup>

"Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away: flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it."<sup>21</sup>

It is obvious from a study of the Spirit of prophecy that this question of health was a gradual unfolding of light on subjects from good, healthful surroundings, cleanliness, and general hygiene, to alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee. And when the Lord began to send us testimonies that He would like to have modern Israel subsist largely on fruits, grains, vegetables, and nuts, with milk and eggs added, many of our people followed the counsel. That is the reason vegetarianism is among us as a people; that's why our medical school and sanitariums and educational institutions all began practicing a more healthful type of cookery. That is why all our health books, magazines, and health periodicals advocate vegetarianism as being the best way to provide the body nourishment. We should thank the Lord for this wonderful counsel, which is now corroborated by some of the world's leading nutritionists. Just one statement from E. V. McCollum, of Johns Hopkins University, discoverer of vitamins A and D:

"I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that it is a distinct possibility to be a well-fed and adequately fed lacto-ovo-vegetarian. Meat is not essential for endurance. This has been demonstrated in certain races, and by individuals more than once.

"When the diet is properly planned, adequate protein and other essentials such as vitamins and minerals, can easily be obtained on a lacto-vegetarian diet. I am certain that meat could be cut down or dispensed with entirely and no harmful effects would occur to the human organism provided the meatless diet contained milk, eggs and a liberal supply of fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts."<sup>22</sup>

Another nutritionist states:

"Milk and eggs are not only adequate substitutes for meat, but they carry in addition a rich supply of minerals and vitamins which

<sup>20</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 159.

<sup>21</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 119.

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication, 1949.

will have to be added to the meat ration to make it equally valuable with either of the other two."<sup>23</sup>

Having considered this problem thus far, let us keep clearly in mind that there are countries that have not had an abundance of the good things that we have. We must meet people where they are, and we are not to be conscience for them or for any individual in this matter. In many places where I have been I have had no burden to dwell at great length on certain questions of diet. What those folks needed was to learn the value of soap and water, rather than about meat substitutes. This question requires much tact and a degree of knowledge and much love; and on this one problem alone in some quarters we have had a considerable amount of zeal without knowledge, and, unfortunately, in other quarters a lot of knowledge with no zeal. Either extreme is dangerous, and from either of these extremes it is impossible to present a well-balanced discussion of vegetarianism.

Let us keep clearly before us that the question of meat eating is not a test of fellowship. I feel that we, particularly those who are keen to sit in the judgment seat, need to reread this statement and the others that are with it from the messenger of the Word.

"While we do not make the use of flesh meat a test, while we do not want to force any one to give up its use, yet it is our duty to request that no minister of the conference shall make light of or oppose the message of reform on this point. . . . Do not take a position before the people that will permit them to think that it is not necessary to call for a reform in regard to meat eating; because the Lord is calling for a reform. The Lord has given us the work of proclaiming the message of health reform, and if you cannot step forward in the ranks of those who are giving this message you are not to make this prominent. In counterworking the efforts of your fellow laborers, who are teaching health reform, you are out of order, working on the wrong side."<sup>24</sup>

"As a people we should make advancement proportionate to the light received. It is our duty to understand and respect the principles of health reform. On the subject of temperance we should be in advance of all other people: and yet there are among us well-instructed

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<sup>23</sup> Mary Swartz Rose, *Feeding the Family* (4th ed.), p. 122.

<sup>24</sup> *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 401.

members of the church, and even ministers of the gospel, who have little respect for the light that God has given upon this subject. They eat as they please, and work as they please. . . .

"We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God's people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for every one, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating were ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating.

"We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. As God's messengers, shall we not say to the people, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God?' 1 Cor. 10:31. Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the fleshpots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins? Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting.

"All are now being tested and proved. We have been baptized into Christ, and if we will act our part by separating from everything that would drag us down and make us what we ought not to be, there will be given us strength to grow up into Christ, who is our living head, and we shall see the salvation of God."<sup>25</sup>

### Health and Our Relation to God

Now we come to the last part of this discussion, which is the most important part of the health program—yes, more important than fresh air, water, exercise, as far as helping us to better health is concerned.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 404, 405.

I remember giving a talk on fresh air, at a camp meeting once, and a good sister came up and chided me: "Doctor, that isn't the most important element in order to have good health. Here, read this."

I will read it to you:

"Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does the spirit of gratitude and praise. It is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings,—as much a duty as it is to pray."<sup>28</sup>

That is the most important part of this health-reform program.

How, then, shall we present the question of good living to the world and to our people? Ah! let it be in the spirit of enjoyment and of positive, vigorous health and calm trust in God, and not as some form of penance that we carry on in order to place our bodies in a strait jacket, trusting that the Lord will count it to us for righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, although I think we have shown that it is possible for the devil to use his knowledge of chemistry and help us to eat our way *out*. But we do these things and follow these health laws because we love the Father in heaven, who has shown us a "more excellent way."

We should rid ourselves of this idea of healthful living as a form of penance. In the Spirit of prophecy we have law and love combined. The Spirit of prophecy should be used as a message of love. Reproofs are found, yes, but they are messages of love, and they are always spoken in love. The testimony of Jesus has always been one of love, for "love will do what duty makes a task, and love will run when duty slowly walks at last."

I believe the only way to put over the great question of healthful living is not by attacking what is wrong, but by showing people a better way.

"It is of little use to try to reform others by attacking what we may

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<sup>28</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 251.

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regard as wrong habits. Such effort often results in more harm than good.”<sup>27</sup>

Christ showed us how to work.

“In His talk with the Samaritan woman, instead of disparaging Jacob’s well, Christ presented something better. . . . This is an illustration of the way in which we are to work. . . . Of all the people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous.”<sup>28</sup>

It requires tact, courtesy, and a happy, considerate Christian to get men over their wrong physical habits. And that’s just the place we must begin, for “if we would elevate the moral standard in any country where we may be called to go, we must begin by correcting their physical habits. Virtue of character depends upon the right action of the powers of the mind and body.”<sup>29</sup>

A man who is full of tobacco, alcohol, sleeping pills, tea and coffee, and an aspirin for his headaches, many times is not able to grasp easily the doctrinal points. The 2300 days, the sanctuary service, the state of the dead, the Sabbath, are topics that you have to go over and over again before he comprehends them. And mark my word, he must comprehend them—his eternal destiny depends on knowing where he is and where he is going. Why not start on the habits that cripple his mental faculties? Why not start saving man just where Jesus started—correcting his physical habits?

Try to emulate the manner in which Christ won men. Show them how much better they feel when they get rid of that old coffeepot, how much better their nerves will be. Their minds will be clearer when they learn how to breathe fresh air and have regular hours for meals, rest, and exercise every day. I haven’t said as much as I would like about rest and exercise, but let me remind you that Christ says, “Come ye yourselves apart . . . , and rest a while.” We use our brains too much, our muscles too little.

Ellen G. White says:

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 156, 157.

<sup>29</sup> *Counsels on Health*, p. 505.

"Brethren, when you take time to cultivate your garden, thus gaining the exercise needed to keep the system in good working order, you are just as much doing the work of God as in holding meetings."<sup>30</sup>

That's how much the Lord thinks of this body—He wants it kept in top-notch condition.

"We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work."<sup>31</sup>

That can start right in the church member's own home.

Yes, our people are looking for leadership into a better understanding and a better knowledge of how to apply the principles of healthful living in their most beautiful setting, not only in perfecting their own lives but in helping their neighbors to learn to trust God for physical and spiritual healing.

*Trust in divine power?* Ah! That's what the world needs now. I can perhaps help get rid of the sniffles and some of the few aches and pains, but there is nothing in the field of medicine or hydrotherapy or of diet that can take away the burden of sin that bears a man down with fear and remorse. Only Christ can do that. I must lead him to the cross of Calvary. If I am to give him the spirit of gratitude and praise, if I am to give him the thing which tends more to promote health of body and soul, more than anything else, I must bring him to the One who is all health and altogether lovely—the great Master Physician, Jesus Christ.

"When love and skill combine, expect a masterpiece." Brethren, we have great light and great knowledge. The skill is here. What we need most is love, Christ's love. Then He will help this remnant church to become a masterpiece. We have light that would draw the greatest scientists to inquire of us if we would just follow on to know the Lord.

What we need today is more unselfish, kind, and courteous Seventh-day Adventist Christians who are happy and considerate, and are really enjoying living up to this health

<sup>30</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 240.

<sup>31</sup> Ellen G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 10.

message. "The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."<sup>32</sup>

We pray for the Lord to send reapers into the harvest to help reap men—the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. May those who delve into the question of healthful living be those who have a deep love for their fellow men, who are tolerant of what they consider weaknesses in others.

The story is usually this, that where one man is weak, his brother may be strong; and where that brother is weak, the other may be strong. Therefore, we ought to love one another and bear one another's infirmities, and pray that the Lord will deal gently with us, as we endeavor in our leadership to bring our people to a higher standard, to a new appreciation of healthful living.

"I beseech *you* therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that *ye* present *your* bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is *your* reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be *ye* transformed by the renewing of your mind, that *ye* may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This is my prayer for each of us.

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<sup>32</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

## Our Changing Medical World

BY T. R. FLAIZ, M.D.

Why do we have a health program? Why is it necessary for us to have a denominational health program at all? We have studied this question only briefly. We came to the point that I want to emphasize before we move away from this study, and that has to do with the question of preparation of personnel to participate in such a program.

There has, unfortunately, not been through the years the close, intimate relationship and fellowship between our medical and our ministerial brethren that we believe would have been greatly to the advantage of the cause of God. I am glad to tell you that this old cleavage is less and less apparent. We are getting closer and closer, and that dividing line is entirely disappearing, and I am glad it is almost gone.

We have explicit instruction in this matter of the training of our personnel for medical service in our denomination. I am going to call your attention to some of the instruction we have on this matter. While it bears very definitely upon the preparation of our physicians, I think it applies to our other medical personnel as well. The Adventist concept of training in medical lines is clearly set forth in certain statements from the Spirit of prophecy indicating the sacred nature of the work these medically trained workers are to do. We have the following plain statement of the relationship of our medical work to our work as a whole: "Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physi-

cians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick.”<sup>1</sup>

This is one of the problems they were meeting in an earlier day in our work. Some complained that the tithe was to be used for the support of the ministers. The tithe went to the priesthood in the olden times. Why should we use tithe for the support of medical men? Who were the medical men in olden days? They were the priests. To whom did people go in those days when they were sick? They reported to their temple, to the priests. This was the accepted plan. The doctor and the minister were united in one person, the priest. Some have complained that “tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick.” Mrs. White replies in response to such statements as these, “I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel, who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete.”<sup>2</sup>

Then we are told, “The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work.”<sup>3</sup> That is the emphasis we are placing upon our training in Loma Linda at the present time. I am glad to tell you that the spirit of Loma Linda today is just as highly spiritual in its emphasis on the dedication of its professors as any college we have in this denomination. “The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel.”<sup>4</sup> What a solemn statement that is regarding those who have the privilege of medical training. The medical man should feel as solemnly set aside as is the minister of the gospel. “Those who are selected to act the

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 540.

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

part of missionary physicians are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice. No selfish motives should be allowed to draw the worker from his post of duty."<sup>5</sup> We are living in a time of solemn responsibility, a time when consecrated work is to be done.

That is the message that was sent to our administrators at an earlier day, indicating the place that should be reserved for our medical men. It is the same place that was reserved for our ministers—that of soul winning. We have no other purpose for training physicians than that of developing soul winners for the world field. In regard to the attitude of those less trained and less consecrated to this sacred ministry we have this counsel: "The Lord calls for self-denial in service. And this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers."<sup>6</sup> I think this truth is something that should come home to the heart of every physician.

"The Lord calls for self-denial in His service, and this obligation is binding upon physicians as well as upon ministers. We have before us an aggressive work which requires means, and we must call into service young men to labor as ministers and as physicians, not for the highest wages, but because of the great needs of God's cause. . . . We need physicians and ministers whose hearts are consecrated to God, and who receive their marching orders from the greatest Medical Missionary that has ever trod this earth. Let them behold His life of self-denial, and then gladly sacrifice, in order that more workers may engage in sowing the gospel seed."<sup>7</sup>

I am glad for that call. I am glad that it classifies the medical man right along shoulder to shoulder with the minister, and I believe that that is where he should stand. I believe there should not be one jot or tittle of difference made between these groups of workers. I believe we should be in such a situation that we can call in these young men and women, these physicians, and put them into a position of soul winning in any part of the world without any worry

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White letter 330, 1906.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

about extra expenses. I believe that the Lord has such a plan for us. And I believe that when we enter upon such a program we are going to see our medical work occupy more fully that place which God intended originally that it should. And I wish to assure you, brethren, as I study the situation in our training college, as I become better acquainted with our young medical men who are looking toward denominational service, that we do have in these fine young men one of the most consecrated and devoted groups of workers that we have anywhere in the denomination.

I believe I am correct when I say that as we call young men to the medical ministry in the foreign field, we do not find those young men asking, "How much am I paid for mission service?" I don't remember ever being asked that question. I believe that we have among our young medical men as consecrated a band of workers as is to be found anywhere. I hope that we as ministers will warm up to this group and that we will assure them that we are working with them in a very close fellowship and that together we will go forward to the finishing of this work.

We are receiving letters in our office constantly from our pastors, asking for explanations of how it happens that we as a people are doing this or that thing in our denominational medical program. Two of the questions that we have here today are illustrative of the questions that come to us from time to time.

"How do we understand the instruction of the Spirit of prophecy to apply regarding drugging? Have our medical institutions gone astray on this matter? We have heard that our mission hospitals depend largely on drugging for their therapy. Is this true?"

I suppose we could reply to this in a Yes and No answer, and I am going to tell you why. I shall give you a little illustration of how our attitude toward physical therapy, hydrotherapy, and other natural means of treatment applies in our mission field. We shall take for an example the hospital with which I was most closely associated—the Giffard

Mission Hospital, in Nuzvid, South India. There we have a large turnover of patients. We see a great number of out-patients each day. One or possibly two doctors must see all of these patients. Perhaps fifty, seventy-five, or one hundred patients come in a day and must be seen by the doctor. There are three or four foreign nurses in that institution, assisted by the capable national nurses locally trained. Among the fifty to one hundred patients who come in and must be seen daily we will say there are fifteen or twenty who have some kind of infection, some acute infection, or it may be a respiratory infection, or pneumonia, or what have you. Now, the missionary doctor has his choice. He can select out of the one hundred patients, we will say, fifteen or twenty of the whole group and say, "I am going to take you folks and give you correct treatment, and we will take you to the hydrotherapy department and we will treat you according to the best concepts of physical therapy. We will see that you get your fomentations; we will see that you get your diathermy and all, but the rest of you, the other seventy-five patients, will have to go home without treatment because of the limitations caused by lack of personnel. We can treat just so many people with that method." Now, would you wish for us to operate your hospital on such a plan? No; and we don't. Patients who come in with acute infections we treat according to the indications. If the infection is something that responds very satisfactorily to one of those "deadly" drugs we hear so much about—sulfa drugs—we use sulfa drugs, and almost like magic the patient is restored to health. Yes, we use sulfa drugs, lifesaving sulfa drugs. And let me say there are probably many of you here in this audience today, alive and well, because of sulfa drugs.

Brethren, let us not get so far off to one side on this question of drugs that we cannot see basic principles of health involved. In the mission field we do use sulfa, and before penicillin came, we used very much of it. We use it to save people's lives; we don't use it just to be drugging. We find that it is a means of saving people's lives, lives that

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could not be saved otherwise. By this plan of treating with what we have, we care for the entire one hundred patients, and we don't send them away uncared for, as we would have to do if we depended entirely on the other methods.

Let us see how this works in the clinic. Here comes a patient with a carbuncle, we will say. We have many such cases in our part of the country. Rich people, you know, people who eat too much of overly rich food, seem to be the ones who get most of the carbuncles. And they come in with very large ones, as large as the palm of your hand and standing out as big as a saucedish on the back or on the neck. Ordinarily, with hydrotherapy that patient would probably by very careful treatment over a period of three, four, or six weeks finally come through, though not for certain. What do we do today? I will tell you the simple technic that I used. When these very critical cases with those huge carbuncles that might take life within a matter of days came into the hospital, I got out the penicillin. I mixed up 20, 30, 40 cc. of penicillin, and I went all around the base of that carbuncle—that great ugly thing, hard, so painful that the patient cannot sleep day or night—I injected it all around with this penicillin. What was the result? The next day the whole mass was soft and painless. The staphylococcus germs were now inactive. Two or three days later the patient was feeling absolutely comfortable. The abscess drained off in a matter of five or six days. Ten days later the patient was on his way home, entirely well. He was out of danger within a matter of hours after that first injection. Is that good therapeutics, or is it better to put him through the tortures of lancing that tender flesh and the discomfort of all the hot fomentations, packs, and all the rest? Well, now brethren, I think that is a good, rational, and sensible way to care for that disease. And if you come into one of our hospitals with a carbuncle, I hope that you won't ask to have it handled by the good old-fashioned method.

Now you say, "Hydrotherapy, then, is out." No, hydrotherapy isn't out at all. In fact, hydrotherapy is one of the

greatest lifesavers we know anything about, and I am going to tell you in a moment about that.

One evening when I was down in Bombay (this was about five years ago now) I had been out buying supplies in the city, and came back to the mission house. Those of you who have been in Bombay know the mission house with its guest room. I was just settling down to retire early when one of our workers came into the guest room weeping most disturbingly. He was a young man, probably twenty-eight or thirty years of age. I said, "Why, Winston, what is the trouble?"

He came over to me and leaned on my shoulder and said, "My father is dying."

I said, "What's the trouble?"

He said, "He has typhoid fever, and the doctor says he will probably die before midnight."

"Well," I said, "what has been done for him?"

"Oh, we have had the best doctor we can get here, and we have given him everything that we know available."

I said, "Who is your doctor?"

He told me of this supposedly good doctor who was in charge.

I said, "Winston, do you mind if I come over to see him?"

He said, "I will be happy for anything you can do for him."

Just at that moment Dr. Joseph Johannes, a fellow missionary physician stepped in, and I said, "Doctor, let's go over to see Winston's father."

We hurried over to the place and found that all that Winston had told us was quite true. His father was already (this was about 8 o'clock in the evening) going into Cheyne-Stokes breathing, which is a terminal condition.

I asked them, "What has been done for him?"

The nurse who had been taking the doctor's instructions told me how they had treated him. He had been given this drug and that drug and this medication and that medication.

I said, "What have you been feeding him?"

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"Oh, you don't feed typhoid patients."

I said, "What have you been giving him to drink?"

"Oh, we give a typhoid patient very little to drink. Eating or drinking might result in rupture of the bowel. Why, surely, that is common knowledge."

There that man had been starving to death and thirsting to death, because they had been afraid to give a little food or water.

I said, "It is obviously too late to do anything for him, but there is just a very bare chance that by going to work right now we may be able to help him." By present indications it seemed that he would pass away within a few hours. I thought the doctor was about right, that before midnight it would all be over. The family said, "He is gone anyway. If you can do anything for him, why let's do it."

In the first place this patient was in an inside room—hot, sultry tropical night that it was—he was in the inside room, with doors closed to make sure he didn't get pneumonia. It would, of course, be tragic to get pneumonia with the typhoid fever. We agreed that Dr. Johannes would go over to the bazaar with Winston and bring a good supply of intravenous fluid—glucose solution or just plain saline, just so it was intravenous fluid. The doctor hurried out to the bazaar with Winston, and I took charge in the sickroom. I asked an attendant to bring me a kettle of boiling water just as quickly as possible. I said, "Now, let's move him into the other room." We got him into a corner room and opened all the windows, and then to the horror of the family we turned on the fan directly over him. The nurse, now thoroughly shocked, made references to doctors with no better sense than to do such things, more than implying that such should not be permitted to practice medicine. She was sure that this patient, ready to die in a few hours, would get pneumonia or worse.

Quickly we got the hot-sheet pack functioning. We wrung those sheets out of the boiling water, laid them on his bare body, with the cold fan overhead. We changed those sheets

every two or three minutes, gave the treatment just as intensively as we knew how, while the nurse and the family looked on with critical eye, certain that it was hastening his death. In a little bit the intravenous fluid arrived. We opened his veins and got the water going into his veins. We gave him two quarts of fluid in less time than—well, a lot faster than the book says. Good methods say you are supposed to let it drip in slowly—but in this emergency we shot it in just as fast as it would go. This patient was dehydrated; his blood couldn't flow normally.

When we arrived there at eight o'clock that evening his temperature was 107°. You know that that isn't a very healthy situation. At ten o'clock we checked his temperature and it was 103°. We carried on with this vigorous program for a period of—well, from the time we started until about eleven o'clock. Now I noticed that he was beginning to move his leg a little. We were using hydrotherapy inside and out. We were pushing the hydrotherapy into his veins; we were using it all over him. We were using fresh air; we were using every agency we knew how. About eleven-thirty he began to move his lips as though he were trying to tell us something. At twelve o'clock the patient was speaking, though not coherently. Yes, he was now talking to us, and at twelve-thirty he was sitting on the edge of the bed, talking to the family who had supposed that it might all be over by that time. A few days later he was fully recovered and feeling fine. Now that, friends, is hydrotherapy, practical hydrotherapy, the hydrotherapy in which we believe and which we advocate.

I am sure you can see the rationale of it. Under those circumstances penicillin would have been of no use, sulfa would be of no value. We went to work on this patient with what we had. You may well imagine the surprise of the doctor on the case. The patient who conventionally should have been dead some hours before the next morning, is very much alive, and all due to what? Good hydrotherapy.

No, we have not turned our back on hydrotherapy. Nor have our sanitariums turned their back on hydrotherapy.

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We do use it, but we use it where it is most useful. I am sorry we do not use it more than we do. The greatest reason for its limited use is the lack of help. We try to use it in its place. We find it necessary to use other facilities and technics besides hydrotherapy. We do use some so-called drugs—useful, lifesaving drugs—and there are many people alive today because somebody had the good judgment to use some of these drugs. These are not the drugs referred to by the Spirit of prophecy. The Spirit of prophecy was talking about those useless, senseless things that doctors used to give just to be giving something. No one knew why he gave quinine in malnutrition; no one knew why he gave strychnine. They were given simply because there was nothing else to do. It might do some good, you couldn't tell; perhaps it was better to do something than nothing. Arsenic, calomel, surely we had better give the patients something. Some of these are pretty potent.

That was the kind of drugging that the Spirit of prophecy referred to fifty or seventy-five years ago. It was obviously not speaking of the rational lifesaving and life-restoring medications that we use today in good medicine. I hope that we will recognize this fact. I hope that we will be able to reassure our people on this matter. There are so many of our people who feel that our sanitariums and our doctors have really lost their way because they are using some of these medications. We receive in our office frequent complaints that "the doctor in our community is recommending or using this or that drug. What shall we do about it?" "Where can we go to get someone who uses just the natural methods?" Penicillin is one of the most natural methods we know of. It kills germs quicker, and gets the patient on his feet quicker in many cases than was formerly thought possible. Isn't that a good natural way of treating disease?

They say we should be using herbs as the Spirit of prophecy says. Do you know where penicillin comes from? Why, of course, it comes from a plant, after it is carefully extracted and made available in a very convenient form to use, and

you don't have to eat a quart of mold to get the benefits of it. Does it make it something less desirable because we buy it on prescription from a drugstore? We should be rational about these things, and, brethren, we are trying to be rational. We are trying to educate our doctors and our nurses along rational lines, and we believe that the procedures being used in our institutions are good, sane, sensible procedures that we can stand behind. Let me assure you that these procedures are not in violation in any way of the spirit of this instruction we have in the Spirit of prophecy.

No, let us stand behind these physicians, these institutions, that are attempting to do a good service in restoration to health. You know there is something wonderful about the good balance that we find all through the Spirit of prophecy, and this good balance is something we ought to be able to carry on out into our medical ministry. The more we go into the instruction we have in the Spirit of prophecy, the more impressed we are with the excellent balance that appears in these important matters of health. We do not find condemnation of those things that we know to be perfectly rational. And remember, we must put ourselves in the setting in which the Spirit of prophecy instruction was given. The more I study the Spirit of prophecy on these matters of health, the more I am impressed with the wonderful treasure this denomination has in these volumes. I think that perhaps we have in recent years not studied them as carefully as we should, and I certainly recommend them to you, brethren, that we come closer, that we understand better, the intent and the spirit of these volumes. I recommend that we use them not only to instruct others but in our own personal lives as a guide, and that we attempt, through the guidance we shall receive from this instruction, to reach more fully the standard that was set for us—that which was given to us by John, by Paul, and by the other apostles when they commended to us that wonderful instruction, "Whatever ye do," do it to the glorification of our Saviour.

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**The Companions of the Lamb**

By

T. H. JEMISON

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## The Companions of the Lamb

Comparisons are not always odious; sometimes they are inspiring and challenging. One such is a comparison of two experiences mentioned in a few words of Peter and some from John in the Revelation. Peter's words are these from 1 Peter 1:8, where, speaking of Jesus Christ, he says, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Here is this world's supreme joy. The joy is not *of* this world, but while mortal man walks his way in this present life there is no delight comparable to that of loving the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting Him fully. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not," ye rejoice. Human tongue cannot speak that joy and glory.

Inexpressible as is the gladness of loving and trusting our Saviour, there is ahead an exultance which is beyond reasonable comparison with any known this side of the day when "this mortal shall have put on immortality." John pictures it in Revelation 14:1-4:

"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. . . . And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. . . . These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

Here is the zenith of hope fulfilled. If love and trust in

the Saviour and anticipation of the kingdom to come produce joy unspeakable—inexpressible, indescribable—the realization of being one of that incomparably favored host who shall sing a song no others can sing and who will “follow the Lamb,” will occasion such rejoicing that even immortal lips will be incapable of framing words adequate to depict it.

If, however, we look at those experiences as they really are, we find that they are not two, but only two phases of the same experience. The members of the group standing on Mount Zion have reached the climax of a fellowship with the Saviour that was begun during the days of their earthly life. It is that fellowship which today leads to joy unspeakable and which tomorrow permits us to sing the song of praise which no others can know that is of particular interest to us now. What kind of persons will this fellowship make of human beings “conceived in sin and born in iniquity?” Through what type of experience will they pass? Why is special honor granted them in the kingdom of glory?

There is one source of information as to the character and destiny of these persons as there is for all other spiritual matters—the voice of the Spirit of God speaking through God’s chosen prophets. The Bible contains the basic revelation on all of these matters. To lead us to study the Scriptures more diligently and to aid us in understanding them, our God has given special leading and insight through Ellen G. White—the lesser light to lead to the greater light. It is interesting to conjecture beyond that which is revealed, but these conjectures must not then be regarded as on a par with that which has been revealed. Sufficient has been disclosed for all of our spiritual needs, if not to satisfy all of our curiosity. Then, for the things that we *know* about the 144,000 we must depend on that which has been revealed: the Bible, with the insight into its pages given through the modern prophet. This word of caution is contained in the following statement:

“And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed

through her, read her published works. Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said."<sup>1</sup>

We must preach on the subject of the 144,000. The topic must be given a larger place in our thinking and in our speaking. It is not necessary that we enter the field of controversy that has caused so many to avoid more than a simple mention of this special group. (1) We may remain within the realm of that which has been revealed and preach frequently on the kind of character that will be possessed by each of the 144,000. We may deal with the steps in the preparation of that translation character. (2) Much has been revealed concerning the experience of the 144,000 just before the second Advent, during the seven last plagues and the time of Jacob's trouble. How to prepare for that time is pointed out. These things must be preached. (3) Revelation has made plain that the religious beliefs of the 144,000 will be free from erroneous teachings. We must instruct our people in how to test their beliefs and become established on a firm foundation. (4) Another clear point is that Satan, personally, and through the beast, has had a special controversy with the 144,000, and they have come off victorious. We must lead our people into the kind of experience that will withstand all the onslaughts of the evil one. (5) A little insight is given into the special reward that is to be theirs. We shall consider these items one by one, in each case only as an introduction to suggest lines of further study and preaching.

#### The Character of the 144,000

John states a profound idea simply: "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. 14:5. The fact that there was no guile found was the result of their condition—"without fault." Significantly, *amomoi*, the word here translated "without fault," is the same word that is used to describe Christ in

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 696.

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1 Peter 1:19 as “*without blemish* and without spot.” Paul uses the same word in Hebrews 9:14, where he mentions that Jesus offered Himself “*without spot* to God.” How could the character of these “firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb” be better portrayed than by describing their character in the identical terms used to depict the Master Himself? We may consult the Gospels and the New Testament Epistles to discover anew the meaning of possessing that kind of character.

We must not for a moment underestimate the significance of this expression “without fault.” It means far more than is generally thought. Today even some of the ministry are declaring that it is discouraging to the people to emphasize this point frequently and strongly. There need be no discouragement to anyone. The prospect is the most glorious that has been set before man for this life. It is maintained that such perfection is even beyond what the human mind can conceive. That is true, for “higher than the highest human thought can reach is God’s ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached.” For those who are to be members of the 144,000, there must remain no barrier, nor even a shadow, to separate them from Him who is their life.

“One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City. He who enters heaven must have a character that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”<sup>2</sup>

“Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel.”<sup>3</sup>

Even the transformed mind has difficulty in grasping the idea of that perfection of character. We are inclined to set up in our own minds standards that are far below those established by our heavenly Father. Because our minds cannot comprehend all that He plans to do for us, we set our sights on a goal that we believe can be achieved. This, then,

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 38.

is our standard and not God's. We may reach that goal and still miss the entrance into the kingdom that is reserved for those who have met God's measure. There can be no question about it, when John saw the 144,000 "without fault" before the throne, he saw a group of persons who by the grace of God possessed perfect characters here on this earth in preparation for heaven.

There are numerous mentions of specific sins, wrong traits of character, weaknesses, and deficiencies that will exclude one from heaven. It is worth our while to notice a few of them briefly here, and to think of each often in connection with our personal experience.

"I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action."<sup>4</sup>

"No impatient man or woman will ever enter into the courts of heaven."<sup>5</sup>

"Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests?"<sup>6</sup>

"The peace and harmony of the heavenly courts will not be marred by the presence of one who is rough or unkind."<sup>7</sup>

"Selfishness, envy, pride, jealousy, idleness, or any other sin which is cherished in the heart, will exclude one from the blessedness of heaven."<sup>8</sup>

The particular characteristic mentioned in Revelation 14:5 is that "in their mouth was found no guile." Guile is falsehood—deception. James said, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." James 3:2. The Spirit of prophecy says plainly:

"An intention to deceive is what constitutes a falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the counte-

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 21, 1888, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 542.

<sup>7</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 140.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 453.

nance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment."<sup>9</sup>

Trickery, craftiness, double-dealing, political maneuvering, hypocrisy, all are lies, all are guile, all must be expelled from the life of the man who is preparing to be one of the 144,000. An Old Testament prediction states the matter emphatically, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." Zeph. 3:13. Purity and truthfulness of speech and action is the badge of the Christian as contrasted with those who know not Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life," but as we approach the end it is becoming a rarity to find an individual who is genuinely truthful in all things.

"The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven."<sup>10</sup>

Revelation 14:5 is in effect a summary. We must go back now to the beginning of the chapter to notice some of the other characteristics of these guileless ones. In verse 1 they are said to have the "Father's name written in their foreheads." That they bear the name of the Father indicates that they bear His approval. That the name is written in the forehead signifies that the Father's endorsement has been affixed to the mind, to the kind of thinking done by the individual. Here, then, are persons whose thinking reflects the thoughts of God, men and women who possess what Paul called "the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16.) Through accept-

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 309.

<sup>10</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 216.

ance of the promises and power of the Creator and Redeemer, those standing on the sea of glass have become partakers of the very nature of God Himself. (2 Peter 1:4.) "In this world their minds were consecrated to God; they served Him with the intellect and with the heart; and now He can place His name 'in their foreheads.'"<sup>11</sup>

Christ made sharing the divine life and the divine nature a possibility for every one of the children of men. When one becomes united with the Saviour, the true vine—

"The life of the vine becomes the life of the branch." "By faith in Him as a personal Saviour the union is formed. The sinner unites his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fulness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might. *Then he has the mind of Christ.* The humanity of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. Thus through the agency of the Holy Spirit man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is accepted in the Beloved."<sup>12</sup> (Italics supplied.)

By faith each of the 144,000 who bear the Father's name has united "his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fulness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might." And because of this he possesses the "mind of Christ." This, of course, is righteousness by faith—imputed and imparted righteousness—making the life of His trusting disciples "a series of uninterrupted victories,"<sup>13</sup> climaxed by complete victory and translation.

#### The Experience of the 144,000

It is the similarity of the experience of the 144,000 to that of the Saviour that sets them apart from all the others of the redeemed host. Review rapidly the chain of events leading up to their appearance on the sea of glass. These men and women all received the seal of the living God before the close of probation. That means that by the grace of God they perfected character under the most difficult circumstances in the history of the world—a time when Satan was

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 591.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 675, 676.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 679.

working in such a fashion as to nearly deceive the very elect of God. They were ready when probation closed, and they had not known when that would take place any more than had others. If we can see the parallels that exist between the course of the life of a member of the 144,000 and the life of Jesus, we shall begin to see the reason why they will be so honored in the kingdom. To gain a concept of an experience matching that of the Saviour is the most important part of our study, and prepares us for the most necessary and fruitful field of our preaching. We will notice now a series of similarities between the closing events in the life of the Master and the last period in the life of the 144,000 before the coming of the Lord. For the most part there will be selected either a single Bible verse or Ellen G. White sentence regarding Christ, and that will be followed by a parallel declaration concerning the 144,000.

1. Of Christ in Gethsemane it is said: "Christ was now standing in a different attitude from that in which He had ever stood before. . . . Hitherto He had been as an intercessor for others; now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself."<sup>14</sup>

And of the remnant after the close of probation, this statement is made: "In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor."<sup>15</sup> There was no mediator to stand for Christ before the throne; His life must be sinless. After probation closes, none may intercede for the 144,000. No sin must mar their life. Under the circumstances, sin would mean death. Never before have men stood in such jeopardy.

2. Of the Saviour it is said: "One stain upon His human life, one failure of His humanity to endure the terrible test, and the Lamb of God would have been an imperfect offering, and the redemption of man a failure."<sup>16</sup>

What was true of the Saviour and His perfect example is

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 686.

<sup>15</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>16</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 734. (See also p. 761.)

true of those who are to enter with Him into His kingdom. "One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City."<sup>17</sup>

3. As the end of Christ's ministry approached, Satan in desperation focused all the forces of evil on the Son of God, that he might cause Him to fail. "Satan saw that he must either conquer or be conquered. The issues of the conflict involved too much to be entrusted to his confederate angels. He must personally conduct the warfare. All the energies of apostasy were rallied against the Son of God. Christ was made the mark of every weapon of hell."<sup>18</sup>

A comparison is made between the course of Satan in dealing with Christ and his line of action in the last days. "Satan summoned all his forces, and at every step contested the work of Christ. So it will be in the great final conflict of the controversy between righteousness and sin."<sup>19</sup> "The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent."<sup>20</sup> "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Rev. 12:17.

4. The fullest Old Testament picture of the agonizing of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane is given in the description of Jacob's night at Jabbok. Those who saw the Master "saw His face marked with the bloody sweat of agony."<sup>21</sup>

Of the comparable time in the lives of the 144,000, Jeremiah questions: "Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?" Jer. 30:6. "It is a time of fearful agony. Day and night they cry unto God for deliverance."<sup>22</sup>

5. As Christ endured the suffering of the cross there came the contemptuous railing: "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him." Matt. 27:43.

<sup>17</sup> *Messages to Young People*, p. 144.

<sup>18</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 116.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>20</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

<sup>21</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 690.

<sup>22</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 630.

Of the fearful time of the agony of the remnant comes this comment: "The wicked exult, and the jeering cry is heard, 'Where now is your faith? Why does not God deliver you out of our hands if you are indeed His people?' " <sup>23</sup>

6. An element that we frequently overlook in the experience of the Saviour was that of fear, but "as Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness." <sup>24</sup>

And the remnant cannot escape the trial of their faith. "They fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfilment of the Saviour's promise, 'I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.' " <sup>25</sup>

7. No assurance came to Christ during this hour of test. "Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that their separation was to be eternal." <sup>26</sup>

The 144,000 likewise lack any immediate confirmation of their hopes. "If they could have the assurance of pardon, they would not shrink from torture or death." <sup>27</sup> They seem shut off from the very presence of God. <sup>28</sup>

8. Despite the apparent lack of assurance, there was one thing that remained for Christ to tie to: "In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore given Him. . . . By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey." <sup>29</sup>

The assurance to God's people is similar. "God will test

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 687.

<sup>25</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 619.

<sup>26</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.

<sup>27</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 619.

<sup>28</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 685; *The Great Controversy*, p. 630.

<sup>29</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 756.

their faith, their perseverance, their confidence in His power to deliver them. Satan will endeavor to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless; that their sins have been too great to receive pardon. They will have a deep sense of their short-comings, and as they review their lives, their hopes will sink. But remembering the greatness of God's mercy, and their own sincere repentance, they will plead His promises made through Christ to helpless, repenting sinners. Their faith will not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered."<sup>30</sup>

9. But, "All the efforts of Satan to oppress and overcome Him, only brought out in purer light His spotless character."<sup>31</sup>

Of the final days of testing, it is written, "Let opposition arise, . . . let persecution be kindled, and the half-hearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity."<sup>32</sup>

10. "By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love."<sup>33</sup> Through His obedience, Christ opened the way so that man could live the life of righteousness also.

In the time of greatest trial, when Satan brought his severest accusations, God could say of the remnant, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. They could join Christ in saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. 40:8. Thus before the universe they vindicated God's character and law.

11. Through the long series of tests and trials the work of Christ for mankind was accomplished. So, when the time

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<sup>30</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 202.

<sup>31</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 759.

<sup>32</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 602.

<sup>33</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

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comes for their deliverance, the remnant have accomplished what the Lord has entrusted to them as their work in the finishing of the great controversy. "Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, 'It is finished.' The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost."<sup>34</sup>

Step by step, test by test, trial by trial, the experience of the remnant has paralleled that of the Saviour. They have been tried as He was tried and have overcome as He overcame. They are honored as He was honored and made His special companions for all eternity.

Our evaluation of what constitutes honor is generally faulty. The 144,000 are to be most highly honored in heaven because they have been so signally honored on earth. The kind of honor they will enjoy in the world to come is in harmony with what we classify as distinction, but the honor which is theirs before the coming of Christ is a variety that most of us seek to avoid. This impressive declaration is beyond our understanding: "Of all the gifts that Heaven can bestow upon men, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and the highest honor."<sup>35</sup> Of all generations of men, the 144,000 have entered most fully into fellowship with Christ in His suffering. They alone have known what it means to face the unbridled wrath of the evil one. They alone have stood without a Mediator at the throne of God, knowing that one flaw of character, one sin, would exclude them from entrance to the kingdom. Under these circumstances they have given the final demonstration of the validity and the efficiency of the plan of salvation, and have vindicated the law and the character of God. What greater

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 758.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

honor could be bestowed on any mortal being than that of entering into the very purposes of God and cooperating with Him in putting into effect the plan that reflects His character, and of showing to the universe that that plan is a practical and workable one that is capable of achieving the results for which it was intended. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8:17. Because their experience has been so closely related to that of Jesus, because their fellowship with Him through suffering has been so personal, the 144,000 lift their song of praise to the Lamb in a fashion that cannot be equaled by any others of the redeemed nor by the angels themselves. While their voices will blend with those of all the redeemed host, their words and tones will bear that incomparable quality that reveals oneness of understanding and purpose and experience. This is the most important of all our knowledge of the 144,000. This is to be the personal experience of each of us.

### **The Religious Beliefs of the 144,000**

The next characteristic of the 144,000 is stated in Revelation 14:4. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." It seems obvious that the Lord is here presenting a spiritual condition rather than a physical one. There is nothing defiling about the condition of marriage; nowhere in the Scripture is it pointed out as sinful when it is lived in harmony with God's plan. Even the relationship of the Saviour with the saved is beautifully depicted as the marriage relation. (Eph. 5:22-33.) It is not celibacy but purity of life and of religious belief that is referred to here. Speaking to the church at Corinth, Paul said: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2. According to Jesus, it is the "pure in heart" who "shall see God." (Matt. 5:8.) But the best insight into the meaning of this expression

is found in a sentence in the Spirit of prophecy writings: "They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith."<sup>36</sup>

Satan's plan for the last days has a twofold foundation. He seeks to lead men from believing the truth to accepting a strong delusion (2 Thess. 2:10, 11), and he attempts to cause men to distrust God—to lose that deep and abiding confidence which is the right of one who knows his Lord. It might be said of the remnant as it was of Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:31, 32. The 144,000 standing on the sea of glass have followed carefully instruction like this:

"We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His word. . . . Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the people who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. God calls upon us to hold firmly to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority."<sup>37</sup>

Of the trust that God's chosen ones have put in Him, this comment is made:

"But in this hour of trial the saints were calm and composed, trusting in God, and leaning upon His promise that a way of escape would be made for them."<sup>38</sup>

The faith of the 144,000 entered into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary as long as Christ ministered there for them; then it followed Him as He left the sanctuary, His ministry ended. They stood stiffly for His truth in both theory and practice. Their faith was a pure faith. They stand as virgins—undefiled before God.

#### The Victory of the 144,000

Another fact is made plain concerning the 144,000. They have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." Rev. 15:2.

<sup>36</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 406.

<sup>37</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 298.

<sup>38</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 283.

“After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, ‘Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ Since those who keep God’s commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God’s law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.”<sup>39</sup>

“The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord’s memorial of creation. . . . The mark of the beast is the opposite of this—the observance of the first day of the week. This mark distinguishes those who acknowledge the supremacy of the papal authority from those who acknowledge the authority of God.”<sup>40</sup>

The final decision of each of the 144,000 against accepting the mark of apostasy is made under the most deceptive and trying circumstances. Satan himself appears as Christ. He appears as a being of dazzling brightness and deceives most of the world. As he goes about among them, the people prostrate themselves “in adoration before him.”

“The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’ . . . His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the 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>41</sup>

Severe as have been the tests of God’s people in the past, nothing has compared with this personal appearance of the master deceiver as he appeared to Christ in the wilderness. It is only with a “Thus saith the Lord” that it is possible for them to meet the tempter successfully.

“The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement

<sup>39</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 445, 446.

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 117.

<sup>41</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

and every miracle must be tested. . . . None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict."<sup>42</sup>

It is obvious, then, that the victorious ones have been diligent students of the Bible. They have mastered not only the simple fundamentals but the details of Scripture principle and prophecy; as a result they have been able to distinguish between a "Thus saith the Lord" and the most subtle and clever imitations of the world's master deceiver. Not once have they been fooled into accepting the counterfeit in place of the genuine. As their minds are filled with the Word, the Spirit of God, who spoke the word originally, comes in to possess them and to endow them with a spirit of discernment they could not own otherwise.

Jesus said of Himself, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." John 14:30.

"There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.

"And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan?—By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. . . . When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours."<sup>43</sup>

Revelation 14:3 begins, "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne." Revelation 15:3 identifies this as the "song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." "It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven."<sup>44</sup> We do not know all about this song, but some details have been revealed.

"When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 593, 594.

<sup>43</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 123.

<sup>44</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 433.

gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and reechoing through the heavenly courts. . . . The church history upon the earth, and the church redeemed in heaven, all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song,—Christ all and in all,—in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb.”<sup>45</sup>

Others of the redeemed host will join in the singing of the grand themes, but none will sing as do the 144,000, for no others know as do these specially honored ones the depths of the sacrifice and suffering of Christ. Although the *words* of the song may be learned, the *experience* cannot.

#### The Reward of the 144,000

The climax of the story of the 144,000 is reached in the Bible account in the simple statement that “these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” Rev. 14:4. All that is involved in following the Lamb is not made clear, but it indicates a fellowship that is not enjoyed by others of the redeemed host. It is natural and logical that those who have, through suffering, entered into the closest fellowship with the Saviour in this life will be closest to Him in the life to come. There is a bond of unity, a oneness of thinking and experience that draws the Saviour and the 144,000 together. With Him they have the privilege of entering the temple of God, where their names are inscribed in letters of gold on tables of stone.<sup>46</sup> In vision Mrs. White visited some of the other worlds. On one of them she saw and talked with Enoch, who had been translated without seeing death. She begged the angel to let her remain in that place, for she could not bear the thought of coming back to this world again. “The angel said, ‘You must go back, and if you are

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 19.

faithful, you, with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.' ”<sup>47</sup>

It is clear that they do not remain with Jesus at all times. The record of one vision says, “After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us, and went to the city.”<sup>48</sup> Wherever the Lamb may lead them, they will follow, joying in His fellowship, witnessing to His power and love, and glorying that they may be used as exhibits to “shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us.” Eph. 2:7.

In the preparation of this paper an attempt has been made to conform to the words of counsel given through the Spirit of prophecy concerning the study of this subject.

“Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truths, which should ever be kept in the treasure-house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand? This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question.”<sup>49</sup>

It seems apparent from this statement that Mrs. White did not believe that the matter of who compose the 144,000 had been made absolutely and unmistakably plain. The clear implication of the statement is that even if we could determine exactly who will make up the group, it would be of no particular spiritual benefit to us. Most certainly, though, entering into controversy on the subject will militate against spiritual growth. If two men enter into controversy, and a spirit of bitterness, of harsh criticism, or division ensues, one may be right in the points he maintains, but both will be excluded from the kingdom where no such spirit may enter.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>49</sup> E. G. White manuscript 26, 1901.

There is one point of major importance to each of us and to each of our church members—the question, “How can I prepare to be among the 144,000?” There can be no doubt regarding the *kind* of persons who will be included among these chosen ones.

“The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd.”<sup>50</sup>

The meaning of the wearing of the robe of righteousness is made clear in these words:

“When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”<sup>51</sup>

God’s ideal for His children is “higher than the highest human thought can reach.” “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

“The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.”<sup>52</sup>

“When the light is received and acted upon, you will be crucified to sin, being dead indeed unto the world, but alive to God. Your idols will be abandoned, and your example will be on the side of self-denial rather than that of self-indulgence.”<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 591.

<sup>51</sup> *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 312.

<sup>52</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 311.

<sup>53</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 436.

“Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand. And let us do all that we can to help others to gain heaven.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905, p. 8.

**The Gospel Commission and the  
Remnant Church**

By

W. R. BEACH

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# The Gospel Commission and the Remnant Church

## Part I

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” Rev. 14:6.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Matt. 28:18-20.

Some weeks ago I had the privilege of visiting our first Seventh-day Adventist church in Switzerland. It was, in fact, our first organized church on the European continent. It is situated high among the forest-clad Jura Mountains of western Switzerland at Tramelan.

The church itself, a simple Swiss structure, was built in the early eighties. The pioneers of that day—sturdy in spirit and in purpose—built well the house of God. The church and its furnishings remain to this day in perfect condition.

As the chapel doors swung open before me, I thought of that Sabbath day in 1886, when the messenger of the Lord paid a visit to the Tramelan group. I felt a real thrill as I walked up the aisle to the platform and took my place behind the sacred desk. There Ellen G. White had stood and had spoken to the people. My heart kindled with emotion as I rested my hands on the old pulpit and looked into the eyes of our people.

I asked whether any present had attended that historic meeting sixty-six years ago. Two elderly sisters, their eyes still aglow with the first love of the Advent faith, indicated that they were among the early group and heard Mrs. White's sermon.

"Do you remember the subject?" I asked. "Oh, yes," they replied. "We shall never forget that." The text was, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14:6.

This passage of Scripture was highly cherished by the early Advent believers. They considered it essential to a correct understanding of the Advent faith and responsibility. Through it they came to grasp the mighty purposes of God for the last church. The work of God on earth was now to be finished. The "everlasting gospel" was at long last to be proclaimed to "them that dwell on the earth." They realized—

"The work that centuries might have done,  
Must crowd the hour of setting sun."

In short, the remnant church was commissioned to carry God's program through to completion. Indeed, the apostle John in the Revelation did no more than to re-echo, for the last days, Christ's great commission. Said the Master, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

"Go ye!"

This was a divine command to spread the glad tidings of salvation, a summons to evangelize.

Evangelism is the genius of Christianity. Is it possible, then, for one who professes to follow Christ not to dedicate himself to this objective? Men sometimes talk about heresy as if it related only to creed. Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." This was a mighty statement. But Jesus also said, "Go ye." Is it not as heretical to deny one statement as the other?

Failure here to understand and to do the will of God would emasculate the essential idea of gospel organization. There could be a noble edifice, a large congregation, close-knit theology, brilliant oratory, and inspiring music, but if the Master's call is not heard and heeded, the church is not that of Christ.

"Into all the world."

Nor was this parting word to the disciples an isolated pronouncement. It fitted perfectly into Christ's teachings and program. He who came to seek and to save that which was lost, proclaims, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. Christ offered Himself a "propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*." 1 John 2:2.

Jesus did not say, "I am the light of Palestine." He proclaims, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. He did not teach His disciples that they would be "the salt of Nazareth." Said He, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Matt. 5:13.

Jesus had a world vision. He had a vision of world conquest. He explained: "I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 8:11.

This was grand strategy on a universal scale. It arose from the fact that God's plan of salvation embraced the world. The total riches of heaven were poured out to assure the success of the plan. There could be no provision for any other. It had to be for all men. All men had to be made acquainted with it, and brought to a decision to accept or to reject it.

The initial contacts with sinful Adam and Eve made this clear, and revealed that the controversy between the serpent and the Seed of the woman would be long and severe. Throughout the vicissitudes of the struggle, God would make Himself known to all men. To this end He called patriarchs and prophets and humble instruments to be His messengers. A people was entrusted with His oracles and set at earth's crossroads with a mission to instruct the nations.

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Fitful, more or less unsatisfactory efforts followed through centuries on end. However, Divine Providence overruled the hesitations of God's representatives. The Bible story tells countless tales of how a knowledge of true worship was communicated to many peoples. Children and youth played their part. Each of us could recount a goodly number of these exploits.

Then, "when the fulness of the time was come," Christ came to fulfill and to promote the plan. He set the pattern for a more enlightened, aggressive evangelism. The salvation of all men was His supreme thought. He called this His Father's business, and He made it His one occupation. He set out with His little band along the dusty roads of Palestine to save men. As He went, He evangelized and instructed His disciples in the way of His witnesses.

In the midst of a successful evangelistic trip through Samaria, Jesus called the attention of His disciples to the ripening fields about them. In four months the harvest would be upon the Samaritans. Any Palestinian could understand that. But the gospel task must suffer no such delay. No delay, in fact. Said Jesus: "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35.

Christ invited His disciples to make two things foremost in their minds: The field and the harvest. "The field," explained the Master, "is the world." He added, "The harvest is the end of the world." (Matt. 13:38, 39.)

These two statements were to be the pillars of the Christian program. They enabled the apostles to sharpen their vision and to bring their thinking into focus. They mark out the highway of the gospel dispensation along which the church must travel, and indicate the terminal point. They imply several fundamental considerations, very important for the church of God. To these we now turn our attention. Let us consider, first, those that arise from the declaration, "The field is the world."

Brethren, a world field lays upon the church the obligation

of proclaiming a truly world message by truly world-minded messengers.

The apostolic believers came early to this conception of the task. They came to it in the teeth of opposition and despite bitter dissensions born of a native chauvinism. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) was the high-water mark of the crisis and set the course of the Christian institution. The church would not be sectarian; it would not be provincial, national, not even continental. It would be a world undertaking. It would have a universal message.

In this respect, too, there came a falling away. The church finally busied itself with building up the ecclesiastical institution and with codifying its requirements. Church dogma had to be buttressed against renovation. The salvation of the church institution finally superseded the salvation of the soul. The highest spiritual benefits were jealously reserved for ascetics, the initiated Jew. This brought sectarianism of the purest type. The church outlook was limited to the confines of a politico-religious world. They called it for a time, the empire, and then the Holy Roman Empire, which, of course, was neither holy, Roman, nor empire! But within the confines of this limited perspective the true world evangelistic urge was lost.

Centuries went by. Then came the time of the end, and the complete revival of apostolic faith and practice. God lifted the scales from off the eyes of His men. In response to the prophetic call a people set out upon a world task.

We are that people. We are to go to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." We go with God's last message. We must address ourselves to all faiths, to all religious bodies, to all national entities, to all races, to all men. Must we not, then, in every section of the world field, disentangle ourselves, or, to say the least, preserve ourselves from all ecclesiastical and national commitments and affiliations, from all regional philosophies of religion, economics, or government, and stand firmly on the platform of God's world organization and message?

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Our thinking, our planning, our preaching, must stem from this fundamental conception. We must follow the universal Master to the ends of His domain. We go out to convert men, not to Protestantism, nor to any special brand of Christianity. We must bring them to God's "everlasting gospel." We will cooperate, to be sure, with all men of good will and purpose. But we will dedicate ourselves undividedly to the mandated trust. We shall wear the garb of divine revelation, and carry with us the atmosphere, not of this land or some other land, not of this culture or any other culture, but of heavenly places.

We will go to all men with God's message for all men. That is what it means to encompass the world in thought and action. And it is most pertinent that there should come to this council a yet better realization of this divine order of procedure.

A world field implies, further, acceptance of the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man.

"I bow my knees," said the apostle to the nations, "unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. 3:14, 15.

This sublime truth caused a new day to dawn upon our earth. It broke down the partition wall between adversaries, between races, between men. The enemy was to be loved; even the Samaritan was to be a neighbor. Christ, from heaven, sent Paul to evangelize the Gentiles. The elect of earth became a universal race, a new humanity. The Christian would be "a new creature," said Paul. (2 Cor. 5:17.)

No more was there to be a distinction of race or caste or people. The consequences of this were far reaching. The implication was love and pity toward all men—total love, unrestricted duty. The most attractive spots on earth became those crowded with the densest masses of human beings. Christians, moved with compassion, looked upon a dying world with deep concern, for God is the Father of mankind and all men are their brothers.

Yes, something of this universal family love will reach

out from Christ's disciples, will tug at the heartstrings of the unsaved. The prodigal may be a good way off, in language, in race, or in color, but this love in the lives of the disciples will draw him up the steep path from the miry pit. With the father of the parable they will look for him, gaze often with unspeakable yearnings, far down the road which the lost wanderer must travel homeward. Every lost brother will be found for the Father's sake.

Brethren, a denial in any form of this universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man will eat the heart out of a world movement, and will stifle, as nothing else can, the spirit of "Abba, Father."

Another implication of this world field conception is that Christ's disciples shall not be prompted in their action alone by feelings of pity and commiseration, nor by considerations of expediency.

The church will not evangelize simply because certain populations are in great physical or spiritual distress. Who can judge the degree of suffering and perdition? Are they the peculiar lot of backward peoples? Moreover, the pity motive would wax and wane as physical and spiritual needs increase or decrease. Sudden sorrow or distress at home might extinguish the evangelistic urge. The improvement of situations afar could lessen our concern for missionary undertakings. The Christian responsibility, the Advent responsibility, is tied to something more stable, less fickle. It is part and parcel of our faith. We go forth to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" because the world is our field, because God has entrusted us with the responsibility of saving all men. The love of God will kindle in our hearts the fires of a universal passion for all men. With the great apostle we shall say, "The love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Cor. 5:14. There can be no obstruction. We will go.

Then, this world conception of the task will eliminate any distinction between "home" and "foreign" missions.

"Go ye," reads the commission, "into all the world"—simply that.

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To be sure, lands differ, people vary. This must be taken into account in our world planning. The work must be organized in such a way that the task can be prosecuted successfully and quickly. Men must be called and sent; funds must be gathered and allocated; organizations must be effected; achievement must be the goal. However, there is one field—it is the world. The evangelistic appeal and the missionary undertaking will be one and the same thing. The love of Christ will direct us toward the man across the street and the man across the seas simultaneously.

Jesus did not put a time lock on His great commission, to be released for the man afar after the home base had been converted and the work built up. He knew that such near-sightedness would prove the end of the Christian religion. He was almost impatient with His disciples in their narrow and overzealous thought of the kingdom of "Israel." "Ye shall be witnesses unto me," said He, "*both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*" Acts 1:8. This was a bifocal utterance. The "both" and the "uttermost part" were not accidental, and they are not the antithesis of "first" and "then," which is often the false reading. The matter of geographic difference is irrelevant. "The field is the world."

We find in our midst sometimes a few long-visioned but impractical souls who are moved by the needs of distant peoples, but who remain listless about conversions next door. There are others with a strong evangelistic fervency for those they can see, who are not interested in the winning of people obscured to them by the veil of distance.

Both are wrong. In the Advent cause each believer, each worker, each church, each institution, is responsible for the evangelization of the whole world. "The world is my parish," must be our inalterable vision.

The Spirit of prophecy makes a vital statement in this connection, that we do well to ponder:

"To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the

prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working to supply the necessities of others that we bring our souls into touch with the Source of all power. The Lord has marked every phase of missionary zeal that has been shown by His people in behalf of foreign fields. He desires that in every home, in every church, and in all the centers of the work, a spirit of liberality shall be shown in sending help to foreign fields, where the workers are struggling against great odds to give the light to those who sit in darkness. That which is given to start the work in one field will result in the strengthening of the work in other places."<sup>1</sup>

This statement sets forth a close, interlocked relationship that we must recognize, and which when accepted will bring strength and power to the achievements of all sections of the world field. The work will never be finished in our sector, be it church, district, conference, or continent, or in any other sector, until it has been finished among all them "that dwell on the earth." Our resources must be pooled and directed to the world field.

Have we geared our thinking, our planning, our finance, to this fundamental consideration? I think we have in principle. Each section of the world field feels a close tie with, and definite responsibility for, every other geographical or racial area. I have seen instances of this that cheer the heart. You all have.

I was visiting some time ago an evangelistic station deep in the equatorial forest. I had been telling the brethren of the progress of the work. They love that, you know. I mentioned the recent dedication of a union headquarters and evangelistic center in Rome, on the Tiber. I explained to our believers that this was a real victory, and a subject of rejoicing for the Advent church. My listeners sensed the importance of the news item. At the close of the service the worker led the people in earnest prayer.

"O Lord," he prayed, "how good Thou art to Thy people. We thank Thee for *our* new center in Rome. Help *us* to

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, pp. 465, 466.

use it to Thy glory and the finishing of Thy work in all the world. Amen."

That's it. That's the spirit. And this spirit is wonderful. We recognize it, we revel in its beauty. It warms our hearts. But how about its practical implications? Have we achieved, in reality, the best, the most effective balance in the distribution of our resources? One question cannot be avoided. It is this: How shall the legitimate desire to expand and strengthen the work at home be related to the needs, the desperate needs and meager resources, of lands afar and of unentered fields?

The question is one of particular interest for this fair land of America, upon which God has laid so bountifully His hand of blessing. It must be answered, however, in every section of the world. Every unit is at the same time a home base and a mission enterprise. There always is, there always must be, a foreign field. This is the result of Christ's bifocal commission—at "Jerusalem, . . . and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It arises from a truly world conception of the field. A correct answer, therefore, should, it appears, take into account the following:

1. The total resources of the Advent movement must be contributed and pooled.
2. These accumulated resources must be allocated according to the requirements of the great commission summoning us to the evangelization of all lands.
3. Our contributions and allocations will be inspired by sacrifice. Just voting resolutions and fixing ratios, perhaps, will not get us very far. "Others, Lord, others" must be the motive. Our greatest efforts, our largest gifts, our most prodigious exploits, must be for others. This spirit will lead us along the fragrant paths of sacrificial living to unprecedented heights of achievement. Unrestrained sharing of God's favors, says the Spirit of prophecy text just quoted, will generate irresistible power, divine power, for the accomplishment of the task. The spirit of sacrifice is the spirit of love—this is the law of the kingdom.

4. The example of the more favored lands will be decisive out to the four corners of the earth. Let us not forget that. How great, therefore, is the responsibility! It grows with our privileges, our favors. How easily in one or another part of the world we can become the self-appointed pallbearers in burying an extinguished mission giving.

Brethren, let us build up the work at home and abroad in the light of these considerations. We have one message, one field. We must never cut this universal purpose and appeal out of our belief and work. Should we do so, the Advent movement would bleed to death. Further, this world conception of the gospel task means unity in world results.

5. Seventh-day Adventists around the circle of the globe profess the same faith and identical Christian practices. They serve one God, hold one doctrine, constitute one people, are one field. For some, this is, I suppose, the most astonishing achievement of Seventh-day Adventists. A Seventh-day Adventist is always the same Seventh-day Adventist, whatever his race, language, or nationality. This is a modern religious phenomenon.

This is because of the message. It is universal. We proclaim it to all peoples. The same message produces the same results. The preacher on the highlands of Imerina, in Madagascar, our evangelist in the Land of the Midnight Sun, tell the same story, announce the same faith, proclaim the same religious practices as the pastor of the Sligo church and the missionary to the cannibals of the South Sea Islands. When the converts of these representatives come together, as at this Bible Conference, they need not ask, "Brother, what do you think? what do you believe? what is your work?" One God, one doctrine, one people, one work. And so it must ever remain if we are to pursue a world task to final success and prepare a people "without spot, and blameless" at the Lord's appearing.

6. I would make bold to note a sixth point. It pertains to what might be considered a very critical phase of the mission program.

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We hear a great deal of discussion today in mission circles of the problem of the "old" and the "young" churches. The time has come, it is said, to place more responsibility upon the young native churches. They must be led into self-support as well as self-propagation. The native churches, it is added, must become autonomous. The leadership must be national.

These problems are crucial. Mission leaders feel that nothing short of the future of the mission program is at stake. Solutions are put forward according to circumstances and possibilities. Expediency regularly appears as the determining factor.

Is it not remarkable, brethren, to find that the Advent movement parries this crisis? It precludes, in fact, the inception of such a crisis.

We have no conflict between the old and the young churches. This is due primarily to our world conception. Why, every unit of the Advent church is self-propagating and self-governing within the framework of a world church. Every part is responsible for the whole. The whole is responsible for every part. The weaker units find assistance in associating themselves with the whole. The stronger gather inspiration in this same association. The French say, "One hand washes the other, and together both wash the face."

This movement is one body with many members. These members organize and direct their labors, build up the house of God and extend His work, in counsel with one another through a general leadership which itself is the sum total and expression of the component parts.

These are fundamentals upon which can be built the edifice of a world church. They are the large basis of normalcy in our organization. The foreshadowing or emergency of a crisis should not be a determining factor. Without thought of a crisis or of the forced departure of missionaries, the leadership of the church will be appointed as the projection, the natural projection, of our world conception. Qualifications for this leadership will not be the special gifts of a race or a people or a school.

Experience teaches that the work of God is best fostered in any section of the world by a cosmopolitan working force. Such a group brings into action gifts sufficiently varied to counterbalance weaknesses and to enhance qualities, and constitutes the constant reminder of a movement embracing "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Then, the normal play of circumstances, the carrying out of the fundamental principles, will bring into specific positions of leadership the men and women whose preparation, whose spiritual, moral, and mental powers, whose experience, authority, and ability to get the work done, indicate that they are the best qualified for these positions.

In this way we can hope to lead a world church. Thus can we maintain the miracle of a truly world church with a truly world mission. Onlookers will continue to marvel at it, while the cause of God advances triumphantly to the four corners of the earth.

Now we come to a group of considerations arising from Christ's second declaration. Said He, "The harvest is the end of the world."

This statement caused astonishment among the disciples. Only gradually did they come to understand it. As their comprehension developed, God's plan of salvation, the future of the world, moved into a correct focus. The disciples began to think in terms of a universal achievement and ultimate goal. There would be a conclusion, an end.

The disciples made inquiries regarding the time and the circumstances of this end. Thus, in the shadow of the cross, they approached the Master with this question: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3. Jesus answered in a long discourse replete with instruction.

For the disciples, much remained a dim outline. But the ultimate goal toward which history and the church were marching, emerged clear and glorious. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. After

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the Master's departure the disciples continued their investigations in Holy Writ and looked forward to the consummation of the centuries. With Peter they awaited those things "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21. A time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19) would prepare abundant harvest. Jesus, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things," would be released to return to earth. Sheaves would be gathered in from every land in the midst of the greatest manifestation of power ever witnessed.

Such was to be the setting of a world task.

The apostles gave the lead. And since their day the true church has ever looked forward to "the end of all things." The task was therefore to be limited in time. A sense of urgency was to accompany the work of evangelism. Today, down in the last hours of the harvesttime, this sense of urgency is sharper, is greater. The church no longer has centuries before her. "The night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4.

God's summons is imperative. This is the harvesttime. There can be no relaxation, there can be no letting down. There must be more men, more funds, more missionaries, more members, more work until the last trump shall sound.

Yes, brethren, this is the harvesttime. This is the favorable time to do God's bidding. Heaven's providences have prepared the earth for this time. Keen opposition oftentimes thwarts the efforts of the heralds of the gospel. But this is only opposition; it cannot be obstruction. There can never be more than apparent failure or withdrawal. Doors cannot remain closed before God's messengers. I could give plenty of evidence to support this statement, and I shall explain it later.

Far and wide, brethren, this is our day of opportunity. Just look upon the field. Here is one land.

People who accepted the message there thirty years ago were martyred for their faith. Until recent times one was considered an outcast, a scourge of society, because he became

a Christian. Today all is changed. Not only is an Adventist hailed a good citizen, but having changed his religion, he actually raises his social status. In that country the Spirit of God is calling hundreds out for His cause.

Brethren, the world picture is clear. The harvesttime is here. Portentous omens, to be sure, overcast the horizon. Curtains of separation, elements of discord, and factors of opposition and conflict are everywhere. Ominous rumblings sound up and down the frontiers of the nations. But this shock of hopes and despairs is fraught with harvest day possibilities. It is bringing the Biblical viewpoint and solution to the forefront in countless lands today.

This statement is quoted from a Paris daily:

"We are traveling on an open sea. We know not whither we go, much less how soon we shall get there. The trackless maze of events offers nothing by which we might hope to set our course. Could it be that our condemned world is carrying us along to inescapable perdition?"

This is not from the *Signs of the Times*. It is not from the *New York Times*. It is from a Paris daily.

Then, in one of Europe's religious weeklies, this appeared:

"Eschatological studies must now occupy a greater place in the church's activities. Groups of the faithful must be organized as numerous as possible to inquire with their directors of conscience into the paths of providence and the destiny of our world. The prophecies of the Holy Book must be examined, lest we miss the directions of God."

Do we realize the far-reaching implications of like statements? Men and women are reaching out and searching for a "Thus saith the Lord." Walls of opposition and prejudice to Biblical truth are crumbling in countless lands. Catholic leaders on a high level are among the most ardent inquirers. Some are coming into our ranks, among them graduates of the highest institutions of learning, including the Gregorian Institute of Rome. Men who have associated with popes and bishops are breaking their church ties and joining the people of God.

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Look too at the Moslem world. Mohammed's millions are preparing for the harvest of the nations. I believe that with all my heart. Closed Moslem circles are today the hotbeds of revolutionary religious unrest. Sheiks and Arabs are peering out of their encircling gloom. One of them said to our brethren in North Africa, "Why, the Lord Jesus will come, and when He does, all Moslems will be made followers of Jesus Christ, and He will set up Allah's kingdom."

It is astonishing. There is a sound of a going in the Moslem world. That does not mean that Mohammedans are ready en masse to accept the Advent faith. But it does indicate, in this case as in others, that God is watering the earth for the harvesttime. The most barren places are preparing under God to render a hundredfold. Indeed, the whole world is looking for a message. Never were Paul's words so appropriate, for all creation is yearning, longing to see "the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19.)

The field is white, ready for harvest.

"In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness."<sup>2</sup>

Today this "firmament of chosen ones" shines brightly in the gloom of world's end. Thousands from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" are marching into the saving light of the Advent message. The "gleams of the golden morning" fall gloriously upon this assembled throng.

This is the time of earth's harvest. This is God's supreme hour. This is our day. This is the time of the Advent triumph.

But here we must rest our presentation. Essential questions still beckon for a hearing. We must get a vision of the magnitude of a world task. We must understand the significance of God's message to the world. These questions overshadow all others: Will the work be finished? Has God

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<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 189.

made provision for a triumphant conclusion? How shall it come?

We shall come to these problems and to others. We shall come face to face with imperative needs. Very evidently, dear brethren and sisters, we have met the first today. It is to yield ourselves to God and to His world plan.

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## The Gospel Commission and the Remnant Church

### Part II

No one, I think, can ever forget a first visit to the Library of Congress. Mine was twenty-six years ago. What a marvelous collection of books, documents, and papers, and what a magnificent setting in which to consult them!

When I had finished the reading I had come to do, I sat back and began to contemplate one after the other those mural paintings at the very top of the great dome. They represent, you know, symbolic figures of the world's great civilizations: Egypt, Greece, Rome, Europe, Russia, and America. My gaze was arrested and my interest quickened by the fact that Judea, symbolized by a beautiful maiden with a scroll of Scriptures across her knees, occupies the commanding position in the circle. There in the midst of great civilizations that have conquered the world through philosophy, military prowess, and commercial acumen, sits the figure representing a little speck of desert hill country that was destined to conquer the world through religion.

Then I thought of the lonely Nazarene surrounded by a handful of humble followers, calmly bidding them to carry His teachings to the end of the earth.

The tragic events of Calvary were but of yesterday. The echo of a roaring, murderous multitude had barely been silenced in the stillness of the tomb. To face the ancient Roman world of militarism and Greek culture with the

story of the crucified and risen Saviour could appear to ill-prepared fishermen as a hopeless task.

But it did not. The disciples were not overawed by their Master's injunction. To "teach all nations" soon became their marching orders. Mantled with His power and authority, they broke forth from the sandstone fastness of Judea, "conquering, and to conquer." (Rev. 6:2.)

Now we have come to earth's harvest. The church of the remnant is upon the scene of action. The work of God has entered its concluding phase. This final gospel program, as has been previously pointed out, embraces "all nations." A world must be warned.

We today are in the midst of this gigantic undertaking. God has led His people a great way toward the ultimate goal. Many of the principal areas of earth are studded with beacons of light. Many lands have been inundated with the printed page. The air is being saturated with the spoken word, the graphic picture. The achievements of the past century cheer our hearts. They must not blind us, however, to what remains to be done.

Brethren, so much is yet ahead. In city and country, in forest, desert, and plain, millions still wander in the deep death shade of sin. And each year further millions are added to earth's teeming population.

It is well that in our thinking we encompass this formidable challenge. Nor should we forget tonight the black array of earthly powers that hold their sway over the lives and bodies of these millions of men. Materialistic, selfish philosophies have engulfed imposing sections of the globe. Men have been regimented into combat against God. Deeply entrenched religions hold people in the grip of gross idolatry. Populous centers are sated with extremes of sensual pleasures.

Heathen darkness is still a tragic sight. These lands are still draped in deepest night. Their awful gloom is filled with hopeless, hungry, sad-faced men, with sorrow-driven women and children. Yes, from yet thousands of African villages the smoke of heathenism mounts to heaven.

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However, the secular, godless, materialistic challenge no doubt has become the most formidable challenge to the remnant church. It has, I say, engulfed great areas of earth, and has dethroned God in countless hearts.

This is the field. This is the task. And the span allotted for its accomplishment is limited by God's timetable. Truly the gospel summons brings this last people of God face to face with a colossal undertaking. There is no point in belittling it, dear friends.

I make bold to state, however, that the immensity of the task is not the chief problem. The problem is the measure of our faith, the insufficiency of our spiritual vision and experience. We think and work too often on the scale of a human enterprise. For us the Advent movement is too often the End of the World, Inc., or Ltd. The challenge requires faith and experience on the high plane of a divine task.

Brethren, we must lift our sights; we must step upward, as it were, into a supernatural realm, into a heavenly experience. Then we shall see this world task in a correct perspective. We will recognize that God is in charge of the evangelization of the world. Ultimate success will appear as His responsibility, His achievement. We will go with Him; we will be coworkers with Him. The apostle Paul rose to this viewpoint. Quoting from Isaiah, he wrote this:

"A remnant shall be saved: for he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:27, 28. (See Isa. 28:22.)

Let us never lose sight of this great fact. It clears vision. It imparts confidence. It gives faith, bright as the noonday sun, that God is proceeding according to His plan, in His time, with His message. Our great need, brethren, is to identify ourselves with God. The *must* of the Advent movement is to fall in step with God and to advance with Him to the ends of the world.

Now, this brings us to a number of fundamental observations. Let us consider them in orderly sequence.

The first is that God has a last message for every creature and that His remnant church must proclaim this message. This message and its proclamation alone will accomplish God's work.

What is God's message? Simply this: the gospel, the "everlasting gospel." The word in the original Greek was created for the Christian cause. The "evangel" was "good news."

Leaders in human thought had lighted many bright stars along the path of earth's night. They thrilled practically every age and clime with genial ideas. Their programs were often constructive, helpful. We cannot gainsay this. But only Jesus of Nazareth was the "Sun of righteousness." Only He brought "good news" to the world. His message was different. It proclaimed to men precisely what they needed, what they were seeking for.

What, then, was this "good news"? We must ask this question, for it discovers the power of attraction in Heaven's message. The "good news" was God's three-point proclamation to a lost world.

First, the gospel was the good news of *pardon for sin*.

The apostle John stated this point most beautifully when he wrote: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

We could hardly exaggerate the import to men of this announcement. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and face the death penalty, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Sin brought in its dreadful train the evil, sorrow, and death that have come to be part and parcel of human existence. But there is a way out. "I, even I," says God, "am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa. 43:25. Through Christ our Saviour He removes "our transgressions from us" "as far as the east is from the west." Ps. 103:12. He casts all our sins "into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19. "Eternal life," which is the "gift of God" (Rom. 6:23), is the fruit of this pardon. Therefore, the poignant need

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of mankind is to come to God and confess sin, simply that. This frightful thing He calls sin He pardons and remembers no more, and causes His elect to live eternally.

This, dear friends, is good news. It is great news. This news finds ready hearts, open minds. But the gospel is yet more. It is not only forgiveness of sin, but it is *freedom from the power of sin*.

This is a tremendous fact for men. The apostle Paul sets it forth in these striking words:

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you.” Rom. 6:12-14.

The apostle sets forth in this remarkable chapter the nature of Christian liberty. True liberty, he explains, is freedom from the slavery of sin. Indeed, the most powerful chains are those forged in the fires of sinful passion. These ugly fetters hold the human being in abject bondage. There can be no liberty without freedom from the power of sin, for the sinner is a shackled slave, bound down in despair.

No philosophy of liberty outside this can bring freedom; and, my dear friends, men want freedom today. I think of a man who for some thirty years sought freedom in a political credo. “Now I am free,” he exclaimed. He had found that freedom in the power of God to set men free from the dominion of sin. His was the triumphant cry of an enlightened mind.

Millions today, in many parts of the world, aspire to a like revelation. Men are stirred for liberty. The gospel alone brings them hope of true deliverance.

The gospel announces a further step: *protection from the judgments of sin*.

The apostle Paul writes about this to the Thessalonians. We read:

"Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivers [original] us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. 1:9, 10.

God is love. Mercy is the guiding star of His plan of salvation. There is, however, the "wrath to come." The most hardened sinner feels at one time or another a creeping fear for the day of judgment. Felix felt the pangs of this fear as the apostle Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts 24:25.

Yes, "the wrath of God" has a definite place in the divine program. The revelator fits this wrath into the last scenes of earth's history.

"And I saw," he writes, "another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." Rev. 15:1.

Then in chapter sixteen he describes in detail these plagues in which the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth.

God's message announces full security on this day of wrath. His message is one of pardon, one of freedom and protection. It is indeed for mankind "good news." And we must proclaim it to the world. Then we need not philosophize and reason at great pains in an effort to conjure up a message adapted to the world's need. God's message fits that need. We must give that message, none other. Only thus can He use us and fulfill His great purpose toward this last generation. Only thus can our voice be heard to the ends of the earth. Only then can the power and the authority of heaven and earth be mobilized to ensure success and to warn the inhabitants of the earth.

Then, too, the setting of this three-point proclamation is essential.

We have pointed out that the task of the remnant church, the completion of the great commission, coincides with the harvesttime. This is true. And we have emphasized the urgency that this background lends to world evangelism.

The lengthening shadows of earth's history must never escape our attention. They must quicken our pace as we advance to the ends of the earth.

But let us look closer at this last-day picture. The "wrath" of the enemy is influenced by the shortness of time. (Rev. 12:12.) Satan has perfected his weapons and added to his store of beguilements. However, his array of strength is dominated in these last days by the impact of rationalistic materialism. This philosophy has swept across science and secular thought into the field of religion and piety. The Creator of the universe has been dethroned in millions of minds.

The apostle Paul foretold this time when he wrote that men would adopt "a form of godliness," but deny "the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:5. This has come to pass. Not only have worldlings fallen into the snares of materialism; churchmen charged with the sacred trust of the Divine Oracles have opened the doors of their organizations to materialistic evolution and its dire train of apostasies.

It appeared for decades on end that this reproach could only be leveled at certain Protestant circles. Those in charge of enunciating Roman Catholic faith and practice seemed to steer clear of rationalism's shoals. This was only a surface impression. The struggle came into the open with the encyclical published by Pius XII, entitled, "Humani Genesis." Despite the piety and the spiritual force of the terms employed, this document actually provided a place for evolutionist study and theory. A widening circle of Catholic investigators and clergy recognize this today.

We do not say this with evil motive. We only want to make it clear that God's message in the setting of Revelation 14:6-12 is Heaven's response to the spiritual and religious needs of the hour. The angel that carried "the everlasting gospel . . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14:6, 7. Only this setting and the

remnant people that fit into it can meet the assaults of materialism today.

And conformity to the prophetic preview will meet these assaults. It will meet the challenge on a world scale, leading the Advent movement to a universal achievement. Yes, the stage is being set for this achievement. Great vistas of evangelistic possibility spread out before us today. This is because we can meet the challenge of men's desperate needs. And as we put the message in its setting before the world, thousands in religious and nonreligious circles will respond to clear-cut preaching.

We must be heartened in our endeavors as, with the passing of the years, we are able to understand more fully and appreciate in a clearer light the appropriateness of the Advent message and work. We are heartened too by a sharper comprehension of God's purpose in the prophetic background and outlook. Some have been prone, in the past, to shear our message of what they considered unnecessary prophetic trappings. They felt a burden to purge our teachings of its "heads and hoofs and horns." But thank God for these prophetic trappings. You cannot improve on the heads, horns, and hoofs of the prophetic picture to ensure a swift proclamation of God's message.

Certainly we must never forget the three-point program mentioned above. The good news is essential. But, my dear brethren, it is the prophetic setting and outlook of this gospel that will provide the wings of timeliness and swiftness in its dissemination. This distinctiveness of the message will constitute a unique appeal to the masses. Let us not forget this as we reaffirm our message and focus our thinking in this great council.

Yet another group of observations beckon for our consideration. They are elemental. These concern the methods that God proposes to put into action through His remnant people.

The way of evangelism is evident in the apostolic pattern. That church went forward on a program of witnessing.

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Jesus had given definite instructions. Said He: "Ye shall be my witnesses." Acts 1:8. And the entire church set out to witness.

The believers were to begin with the man next door and encircle the known world with the good news. They were not to be separated from their race or their citizenship or their occupation. These were to be dedicated to the work of witnessing. True, men were set apart for the distinctive ministry of the word. In Ephesians 4:11, 12 we find the several facets of that great ministry.

Some were ordained to travel into new countries with their witness. In Antioch, Barnabas and Saul were separated for the work to which the Holy Spirit had called them. (Acts 13:2.) The church was perfectly sure that God meant for these men to set out for lands afar. That is evident.

But the church went with them. At home and abroad the appointed ministry led the faithful in a vast spiritual trek to the ends of the earth. All went out under the pressure of the divine hand. They had to go. They couldn't stay. Something had happened to them that demanded witnessing. The Acts of the Apostles is the chronicle of this witnessing. The church went forth to testify to the mighty acts and purposes of God.

This apostolic pattern was never changed. It must not be changed. Every member must carry the torch of soul winning in the remnant church. "He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver."<sup>3</sup> "Every soul whom Christ has rescued is called to work in His name for the saving of the lost."<sup>4</sup> "He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost."<sup>5</sup>

It's wonderful, brethren. Today, as in apostolic times, the

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 195.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 105.

elect are to go "every where preaching the word." Acts 8:4. This preaching will be by word of mouth and of life. With such a program, today as yesterday, the world will be turned upside down. There is no hidden secret to the apostolic achievement. God did a quick work upon the earth; He could do a quick work because the "called according to his purpose" fitted perfectly into His program.

In short, the apostolic church conformed its program to the example of the Master. Jesus accepted the divine mission and accomplished it. Lifting His eyes to heaven one day, He said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." This statement was preceded by another: "I have glorified thee on the earth." John 17:4.

I believe we have in these words the clue to evangelistic success, to missionary expansion. Of His disciples He said further: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John 17:18. "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." Verse 22. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Verse 23.

Thus the fundamental conception of evangelism is to glorify God upon the earth. This is marked in a special way for the remnant church. The call in the Revelation is to "fear God, and give glory to him." Rev. 14:7. Farther on the revelator unveils the last great fresco of a finished work. "After these things," he writes, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Rev. 18:1.

"Let the whole earth be filled with his glory," entreated the psalmist. Ps. 72:19. At long last this will be achieved.

But what does it mean to glorify God? To Moses God revealed that His glory was His character. (Ex. 33:19.) To glorify God is therefore to reveal His character, to "shew forth" His "virtues." (See 1 Peter 2:9, margin.) In the light of this we can understand the call of the apostle Paul: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:20. In

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writing to the Thessalonians, he mentions the sanctification of "spirit and soul and body." 1 Thess. 5:23. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31.

The apostle Peter had the same vision, for he wrote:

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." 1 Peter 2:11, 12.

This program makes two points completely clear.

First, God's witnesses will show forth the character of God and thus glorify their Maker. They receive from Christ the glory (character) of God (John 17:22) and set it before men in the regeneration of their lives. To state it in other words, the work of God will be finished in their lives.

Second, the influence of such a life is irresistible. Even the heathen will be won by it. Indeed, the Godlike life has at its command "all power [authority] . . . in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18.

I think, brethren, this lesson from the life of Christ and the apostolic church places the world task of the remnant church in the triumphant setting. This is so for two reasons:

1. A world need is met. Men will receive a revelation of God's character today.

2. Very simply, this is God's way.

"The followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb. . . .

"It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God

is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.”<sup>8</sup>

Brethren, that is the revelation of God for this day. Evangelism becomes thus the fruit of a life. The evangelist, the missionary, be he layman or one chosen by the church for a special mission, is not just a zealot seeking out proselytes. He is not just a recruiting sergeant exerting his talents to enroll soldiers under the banner of the cross. He will not just organize an effort or a campaign. He will do all that, but he will bear fruit from the abundance of his doctrine and of his life. He will finish the work in his field because the work of God has been finished in him. His message will go with swift feet. Through him God will do “a short work” in revealing His character to the world and in enlightening the earth with His glory.

The Lord of the harvest has placed countless means and methods at our disposal. The promise to the remnant church is that He has a “thousand ways” to finish His work. Many of them have been discovered and put into use. They are the marvel of the nations. They represent a concentration of incalculable possibilities. True, the efficiency ratio of these means is still just a fraction of their possibility. Let us recognize this. Our constant and daily care must be to develop them and to increase their efficiency.

Then we must make yet further discoveries. We are only at the beginning of these wonderful things. May the Lord save us from ruts and routine and complacency. And may He give us ready minds, ever fired with vision, ever ready to snatch up the least indication that He is bidding us to march into some new opening, into some new path of service. Let us not forget, however, that witnessing and glorifying God must be at the basis of every evangelistic and missionary plan in this last hour.

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<sup>8</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 414, 415.

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This was the basis for the apostolic achievement. A like experience will bring ultimate victory in this harvesttime of the gospel dispensation. It is bringing victory. It explains, in fact, what is taking place in many "closed fields." There, in some instances, the work has been well-nigh impossible. Ofttimes the situation has looked like retreat as doors seemed to close about us. But, despite disappointing appearances, the remnant church has prospered. Memberships even have been doubled, without considering the thousands we cannot count, and who are preparing to glorify God through the example of our people.

I could mention several lands. I am thinking of one great country, great for the Advent movement. It is Rumania. We there have a multitude of churches. They now count more than 40,000 baptized members. Someone has reported 75,000 Sabbath school members. The secret of all this? Lives dedicated to the glory of God, the witness of true piety. A Rumanian official said to me, "Your people are a good people." That is all. A good people—that is all it takes. And entire groups—numbering hundreds—are marching into the circle of Advent fellowship. Oh, the power of a life that bears witness day after day to the character of God!

This gives the pattern for finishing the work. It is, moreover, in harmony with the prophetic forecast. The apostle Peter predicts a vast spiritual "refreshing from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19-21.) This will take place immediately prior to the "restitution of all things" and the return of Jesus Christ. We think of this great flash of divine power as the latter-rain experience. It will follow the work of the former rain. True, the expressions "latter rain" and "former rain" are applicable to dispensations of the church. The former rain recalls apostolic days, the seed-sowing time. The latter rain is applied to the gospel harvest.

But these expressions have a definite application to the individual experience of the child of God. All must know the experience of the former rain, so that they can enter into, and experience, the blessing of the latter rain. The

testimony of the Lord's messenger is clear. It bears definitely, too, on the glorification of God on earth. We read:

"Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. . . . They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge, must be continually going forward. . . . The heart must be emptied of every defilement, and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. . . . There must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. . . . Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues [the work of the former rain], we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it."<sup>7</sup>

My dear brethren, the former rain prepares us to glorify God in our own lives. The Spirit, said Jesus, "shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16:14. When this work has been done, God will add the power of the latter rain to glorify His name in "all nations," that the whole earth may be filled with His glory.

And God is adding His power. He is giving the power of the latter rain. According to His promise, He is pouring out His Spirit "upon all flesh." Joel 2:28. There can be no mistaking this. Some perhaps do not discern it or experience it. But thousands of our people are proclaiming the "virtues" of God today. Thousands are revealing, according to the pattern, the intense sacrificial giving and going of Pentecost. Oh, we will yet see greater manifestations of the Spirit's fruits. At Pentecost, everything of everybody was thrown into the cause. The time is coming when we will throw everything, including ourselves and our children, into God's work. A great time is coming.

Brethren, millions are turning their eyes beseechingly toward heaven. Hundreds are being led by the Spirit to messengers in whose lives God has been glorified. I could speak a great while about that.

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<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 507.

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I think of that good brother from Macedonia. I met him at Belgrade just a few months ago. He told how he came to this truth. His eyes almost frozen shut, he walked along the way, seeking truth. He wasn't then a Seventh-day Adventist. He lifted his heart to God, and he heard the voice that said, "Get the book." So he went to the priest in the village. The priest was a good man and gave him a New Testament. He read the "book," and found instruction. He learned to keep the Sabbath. He learned to believe in the second coming of Christ and to prepare for it.

Then he met one of our colporteurs. This colporteur, who had the character of God within, became the messenger of salvation. Another child was born into God's kingdom.

Hundreds today are seeking such messengers of God's truth, messengers in whose lives God has been glorified. Everything, even the wrath of man, can be turned to glorifying God when God is revealed in the lives of His people.

God is baring His arm to shape up events quickly for the last great act. "Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones."<sup>8</sup> So wrote the servant of the Lord many years ago. Since then the tempo of earth's happenings has been stepped up. At the same time the dimensions of our world have shrunk considerably. Events come in concentrated packages. My belief is that suddenly, on a stage set for the final scene, God's Spirit could bring all humanity face to face with our last warning message.

Such is the situation today. Yes, brethren, we are to see stupendous things. The triumph of the work is tied to factors that escape our knowledge or control. Why, we cannot measure in denominational statistics, however thrilling their story, the expansion and limits of God's achievements.

Think of the billions of printed words that have been scattered like the leaves of autumn. They have done their work. They are doing their work. Think of the spoken word,

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<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 11.

the acts of mercy, the missionary visits, the radio, and all the circumstances that this Advent movement has brought into play to present the character of God to the world.

In one field it is reported that 60 per cent of the people visited by our Ingathering workers were acquainted with one or the other of our radio programs. Think of it! Sixty per cent of the people had heard something!

Over in Casablanca, French Morocco, the president of the mission handed me an envelope. It carried an incomplete address: Oeuvre de l'Evangile (Work of the Gospel), Casablanca. The city counts more than half a million inhabitants. Many churches and missions have representatives there. But the postman brought the letter to our mission. It contained five thousand francs for the "work of the gospel."

The brethren asked the postman, "Why did you bring the envelope to the Seventh-day Adventist Mission?" "Why," he said, "everyone knows that the Adventists are the people that are doing the work of the gospel today." Everyone knows! I'm sure millions do, and are convinced in their hearts that this people proclaim the message of God to the world.

In west France we had a typical experience a few years ago. At the time we had just a small beginning work. The brethren had to go to the bishop to get certain authorizations, or, rather, recommendations. He said he could not consent.

"This is the only request," said our brethren; "we shall not be back often. We're just a small people." "Oh, no," replied the bishop. "You will be back again. I know your numbers. Adventists already number more than one hundred thousand in this area."

We then had in that area one preacher, two Ingathering workers, four colporteurs, and seventy-five members! That was all. Why, perhaps a hundred thousand people have been stirred in their hearts and may someday march into the light of God's glory.

On the island of Mauritius, baptized Adventists number a little more than eight hundred. The recent government count gave us over three thousand.

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Think of that great country of Russia. That is a wonderful people. In Russia we used to count seven thousand, then fifteen thousand members. Today we have more than three hundred certified churches. A certified church is one that has been accepted by the government. It has to have at least one hundred members. In another country, where we have eighteen certified churches, the total baptized membership is actually more than seven thousand. This could mean, in the great and beautiful country Russia, seventy-five to one hundred thousand baptized members. We are preparing in that land, and in those other lands of Slavic peoples, a great spiritual revival. This could be the greatest upsurge of evangelistic achievement since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit launched the Christian church on its world mission.

Great days are here. We are much farther along the way than we think, and can know. A thousand factors are combining in supernatural accomplishments. God works in mysterious ways.

Who could have foreseen the future course of God's cause in the days of Jeremiah? His people had been crushed by a cruel invader. Calamity after calamity had struck at Israel's door. Who could have thought that these very events were to ensure the success of God's program, that the king whose armies had devastated the countryside and sacked the cities would one day recognize the supremacy of Jehovah and send an official document to the peoples of his vast domain calling them to the worship of the true God? Who could have ever imagined that? Truth was stranger than fiction. And history can repeat itself.

Yes, the tragedy of the ages will close with a dramatic scene. A decree will be promulgated that will bring the inhabitants of the earth face to face with God and His truth. This final scene will come as a conclusion to stupendous events. According to Revelation 13:14, "another beast" will deceive "them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This maneuvering and associated events and circumstances

and factors will prepare the stage for the decree and the final scene.

In Nebuchadnezzar's day, official documents took considerable time to reach the extremities of the empire. Today, radio and television can communicate events with the rapidity of light. In a few short days the entire world could be confronted with a final choice for or against truth. Who can appraise fully those underlying, permeating factors and events that have prepared thousands, perhaps millions, to understand truth and to be able to make an enlightened choice?

God will do a short work upon the earth. He is doing such a work. Divine power is combining with human effort. Then, wrote God's messenger, "The work will spread like fire in the stubble. God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern; angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God."<sup>9</sup>

We see the wonderful working of divine providence as was promised:

"Mountains of difficulty will be removed and cast into the sea. The message that means so much to the dwellers upon the earth will be heard and understood. Men will know what is truth. Onward and still onward the work will advance, until the whole earth shall have been warned, and then shall the end come."<sup>10</sup>

Wonderful promises! Wonderful days! We are marching right on to the great, supernatural stage from which God is preparing to give the knowledge of truth to the world. Why, the prospects of the present hour are thrilling. We have not been following "cunningly devised fables." 2 Peter 1:16. The millions of earth will be warned. God will do it in His way, at His time, through His provision of power.

God will do it through the remnant church, according to the prophetic preview. We, the members of that church, must play our part in preparing the stage for the last act. We must

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1885, p. 769.

<sup>10</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 223, 224.

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follow the paths of divine witnessing. That is all. We, like the first disciples, must come to the cross, penitent, then leave its shadow exultant witnesses.

This has been the way of all witnessing. It is strikingly portrayed by the brothers Van Eyck. I once sat before their picture in St. Bavon's cathedral, at Ghent, Belgium. I am thinking of the *Adoration of the Lamb*.

From all sides, popes, bishops, cardinals, kings and captains, knights and scholars, men and women of every state, press in to gaze upon the Lamb of God. There is great beauty in the painting. The worshipers in blue and scarlet, the castles in the distance, the flowers—every detail lends majesty to the experience. The throng cry with one voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." The tableau is marvelously impressive.

Then there must follow the other picture: the return of the redeemed from their adoration. They behold the Lamb; they adore the Lord, who for their sakes was crucified on the tree, laid in the tomb, and resurrected to glory, and whose life is imparted to them. They see and they worship; then they go forth "into all the world." They hasten away with a new light in their eyes, a new song on their lips. They carry a message of good news.

This is the divine pattern. It is for the remnant church at this glorious hour. It is for us. It must be my experience. It must be your experience. Like Raymond Lully, the faithful witness who met martyrdom at Bougie, North Africa, we must be able to say:

"But Jesus Christ of His great clemency  
Five times upon the cross appear'd to me.  
That I might think upon Him lovingly  
And cause His name proclaimed to be  
Throughout the world."

Every day, brethren, we must contemplate the Lamb. From such a vision will spring a faith and a power to finish the work in a flash of glory.

# **World Evangelism Our Basic Task**

By

R. A. ANDERSON



## The Setting of the Stage for World Evangelism

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world,” declared the Saviour. Yet when Jesus uttered those words, nothing could have seemed farther from possibility. He was the leader of a cause that had aroused the bitter antagonism of the ruling parties of His own people. His handful of followers represented a cross section of an insignificant nation. They had no money, no institutions, and no organization; yet here was their Leader setting before them a goal of world evangelism. The miracle is that they accomplished it in a single generation. Thirty-five years after the cross that gospel had been “preached to every creature . . . under heaven.” Col. 1:23.

Two things made this possible: (1) the political setting of the world stage, and (2) the divine empowering of the church. The Roman Empire, which stole the liberties of the nations, which made Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and a score of others mere vassal states, really linked the then-known world together by language and culture and by the building of roads. This made it possible for those evangelists to hasten from place to place in comparative safety, carrying the good news. The giant political octopus bent on world domination actually provided the conditions for the successful prosecution of their task. The tentacular methods of the emperors, designed by the enemy of truth as a devilish opposition, proved in the end to be a divine opportunity. The setting of

the world stage provided the circumstances for world evangelism.

#### **Apostolic Conditions Paralleled by Our Own Day**

The heralding of the gospel during the fast-changing political scene of the apostles' day is exactly paralleled by the heralding of the everlasting gospel to all the world in our day. And for the accomplishment of this special work the Advent movement has been divinely appointed. That is our basic task. We too are witnessing the breaking and remaking of the international scene, but on a far wider scale than did those first Christians. Transportation and communication have made different peoples conscious of one another. In fact, the nations are on one another's doorsteps. Age-old patterns of thought have been swept away by the fresh winds of an awakening world.

The Occident, which for centuries had been a synonym for cultural stability and commercial security, has during recent decades been rent by the storms of revolution and war; but the Orient, having slumbered for millenniums in undisturbed apathy, is now awake and alert and marching. The feudal system, which so effectively bound together men of different ranks by a sense of mutual responsibilities, loyalties, and obligations, but which disappeared so completely from Western Europe around the period of the Reformation, has now been almost obliterated from Asia. But with this difference—what it took two or three centuries to accomplish in a comparatively small area of Europe has been achieved in two or three decades over an area involving whole continents and affecting more than two thirds of the world's population.

#### **New Challenges to the Church**

But more important still, it is not the democratic concept of the West that is so rapidly replacing the old, but rather the totalitarian concept of the East. The new society emerging from the upheavals of our day is not so much that of groups linked together by mutual obligations and loyalties as that

of groups, irrespective of race or rank, being forced together by common antipathies and common dreads. A profound distrust of Western ideals has been awakened in the hearts, not of a few, but rather of literally hundreds of millions. To them the name of Christ and the church stand for aggressive imperialism and are regarded as merely myths of a declining civilization. The result is that doors which, a few years ago, were wide open to the gospel have been in recent times slammed shut in our faces or at least fast closed behind the backs of retreating missionaries.

A restricted view of this situation might easily bring discouragement to the church. But we must recognize that God is never taken by surprise. Let us take courage, knowing that He has made provision for this very situation. Not only has He foreseen the confused pattern of our time, but He has divinely ordained that the Advent church should be matched with the most desperate hour of history. No age has ever been so darkened by tragedy as ours. Surely the words spoken in the days of Hezekiah are true today: "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy." Isa. 37:3.

Yet in spite of the colossal difficulties of our time the outstanding and striking fact is this, that the very upheavals which have broken down the feudal barriers of the East have at the same time hurled aside the walls of racial prejudice and economic independence that have kept Europe divided for so long. Nationalism, in the old sense of the word, is rapidly giving way before the rising tide of a new internationalism, and the total effect of all this is that the whole world is now open and eager for new ideas as never before.

Age-old barriers have broken down under the impact of new thought patterns, and now every nation under heaven is being swept by concepts that are bewitching and captivating. The questions before us are these: Can the church of Jesus Christ match these new ideologies? Can she offer anything comparable in sweep of thought and drawing power? Some way must be found to arrest the attention of the enormous populations of our day. This requires that our preach-

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ing be infused with that sense of apostolic wonder and awe that made those first evangelists cry to the shaken world about them, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." 1 John 3:2.

#### The Problem of Evangelizing Great Cities

Nothing less than this will enable the church to bring the realities of grace to the consciousness of a rent world. And here is a real difficulty. Among those whose ideals have so vitally changed are millions of Americans, Britons, Germans, Frenchmen, Dutch, Italians, who comprise part of that alert and rapidly growing industrial community which, conscious of its own unity, is intensely eager to alienate itself from everything outside of itself. This is aggravated by the recent shift of whole populations and the crowding together of vast masses into the modern cities. Millions of rural dwellers have left their childhood environment and have moved into the great urban centers. It is claimed that the number of cities in the world with more than a million population has trebled in the last half century, the most rapid growth being witnessed during World War II.

That in itself poses a tremendous problem for the leadership of the Advent cause, for although city evangelism was never easy, today it is harder than ever. In 1908 this message came to us: "It is harder to reach the hearts of men today than it was twenty years ago."<sup>1</sup> But how much harder is the task today! Yet the message of God must be heard in these great centers. It must sound out above the rush and din of the conflicting voices of confused loyalties. Political affinities must be overmatched by higher and larger imperatives. The free-thinking peoples of the West as well as the pagan peoples of the East must hear the message of salvation.

#### The Problem of Pagan Populations

It is tragic but true that in many areas of the Western world the great mass of the populace seems almost as ignorant

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 178.

of the glories of the gospel as are the primitives of Central Africa. This is both humbling and challenging. But the greatest need is still in the non-Christian world. Take India, for example. Only 2 per cent of the populace are Christian. And that counts in all the regular and the irregular, the faithful and the unfaithful, the half-converted and the nominal church members. Moreover, the great majority of these are simple village or mountain folk. God loves them, but the Christian church has yet to make its full impact on the intellectuals of that land. That which has been already accomplished is truly marvelous, but when we realize what yet remains to be done, we can but look on aghast.

Then what about the great massed millions of China, where for the time being at least the church is definitely outlawed? Add to this the almost two hundred million in the Dark Continent, and then the hundreds of millions of Moslems in North Africa and the Middle East. Ponder the great populations in Roman Catholic countries, such as Southern Europe and South and Central America. Then truly we can say in the words of another:

"Sudden before my inward open vision  
Millions of faces crowded up to view,  
Sad eyes that said: 'For us is no provision;  
Give us your Saviour too!'

"'Give us,' they cry, 'your cup of consolation;  
Never to our outreaching hands is passed.  
We long for the Desire of every nation,  
And, oh, we die so fast!'"

—*Author Unknown.*

#### Need of New Awakening

During the days of this conference we have once again been made aware of the imminence of our Lord's return. Evidence piles on evidence telling us that His coming is near, even at the doors. If it is true that the world is having its last chance, then it is also true that the church is having her last chance. We sometimes speak of ourselves as a judgment-bound people, but the world to which we are sent, the con-

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fused, bewildered world of our day, is also judgment bound. To *talk* of His coming is not enough. *We need a new awakening to our responsibility and a clearer understanding of God's mighty provision.* To carry God's last message to the world in such a garish day as ours is a colossal task, calling for big thinking, courageous planning, and a faith that can pierce the fog of muddled ideas and discern a harvest where outwardly there seems but a desert.

We need to build bigger budgets, but our greatest need is to build bigger faith. This is a day of advance, and restrictive planning is not in the divine program.

Dr. Frank Laubach stated a tragic truth when, speaking before a group of Protestant leaders in Pennsylvania in January, 1950, he said:

"Heaven trembles lest we may prove too small, our deeds too small and too late, lest we be bound by our weak habits when God summons us to great deeds. . . . I'm afraid of some . . . who have neither fire nor vision . . . who begin to see why this might be hard, or unprecedented, or premature if not properly surveyed, or too informal, or too big. The put-on-the-brakes type, the go-slow type . . . can ruin God's program. O ye of little faith, keep your foot off the brake. . . . Who ever heard of God holding us back? He is impatient! He weeps over us as He did over Jerusalem. We have nothing to fear but fear; we shall not fail when God is pushing us. I tell you what we need to fear, *fear the way we are now*, for we aren't good enough, hot enough, high enough, daring enough, far-visionsed enough, for this splendid hour.'" <sup>2</sup>

#### Church Needs New Concept

The reshaping of the world program must be matched by the refashioning of the church's concept. God is eager, waiting, longing to pour out upon His people the power of His Holy Spirit. The hour has come for the great climactic close of His work in the earth. For many decades the heralds of the Advent message have been hastening out to every country and island in every part of the globe, laying down a cable, as it were, ready for that moment when God will release the power. Through radio and literature and personal witness

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in R. Allan Anderson, *The Shepherd Evangelist*, pp. 652, 653.

we can say with the apostle Paul, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Rom. 10:18. But the dramatic moment is yet to come when the divine hand will move the lever and the whole world will be lightened with His glory.

"During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interpositions of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation so abundantly that light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere."<sup>3</sup>

The greatest things of this movement are just ahead of us. And the agencies with which God will finish His work and cut it short in righteousness are already in His hands. We may not discern all the ways in which He will do it, but we have His own promise that His work will close in triumph and that what men have failed to do will be consummated by heavenly beings. Listen!

"When divine power is combined with human effort, the work will spread like fire in the stubble. God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern; angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing, had they not neglected to answer the claims of God."<sup>4</sup>

Despite the confusion of the international scene and the worldwide apostasy of professing Christendom, God has a faithful people through whom He will finish His work. Elikim, in another day of crisis, declared that it was "a day of trouble, a day of rebukes, and of blasphemy." And it truly was, for had not the king of Assyria come with an army of 200,000 men, a conquering host, determined to destroy the kingdom of Judah? A day of trouble indeed! A crisis hour in the history of the nation! Breaking forth into the lament of the king, that royal representative and his associates spoke from full hearts when they said, "For the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." Isa.

<sup>3</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 694.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1885, p. 769.

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37:3. Could there be anything more pathetic? The time had come for the issuing forth of new life and power among the ancient people of God, but there was no spiritual strength to match the crisis through which they were passing. In the agony of their souls they cried to Isaiah, "Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." Verse 4.

The doctrine of the remnant is central in the faith of Israel. And that word is familiar to us. It is a vital part of the vocabulary of Advent believers. But what is a remnant? When my wife makes a garment there is always a remnant or two left over. A remnant is the minority that is left after the majority has been used up or destroyed. Many times in his prophecies Isaiah speaks of the remnant. In the eleventh chapter he pictures God gathering out a people from the scattered nations of earth. These he calls the remnant.

#### **Vision of Isaiah Keeps Him Confident**

Those truly were evil days when Isaiah preached and wrote. It seemed that the whole nation had gone into apostasy. But see him standing there, a true optimist. He faces the future with hope, and the basis of his hope is this, that he knows God and knows His plan for His people. He plainly declares that the great majority of the professed people of Jehovah are going into exile, but a remnant will be spared, he says—a chosen few, a hopeful minority. His conviction is put to the test over and over again, but his confidence is unshaken. And at no time does he rise to greater heights of spiritual perception than when Hezekiah sends the messengers to him. Sennacherib, that predatory and ruthless dictator, whose war tread had humbled so many nations, is almost at the gates of Jerusalem, yet the eyes of the prophet are upon One whom he had beheld years before. That vision of the King "high and lifted up," had never faded, and now as the somber shadow of Assyria falls athwart the nation, the prophet sees a greater ruler than ruthless Sennacherib—he sees One whose power upholds the heavens, and as His ambassador, he steadies the hearts of his distracted people.

The world of Isaiah's day was divided between two great powers: Assyria in the north and Egypt in the south. Between the hammer and the anvil of these great despotisms was a group of smaller nations trying to take shelter under the wings of first one, then the other. Despite the protest of the prophet, Israel allied herself with Assyria, and Hezekiah, king of Judah, had joined with Egypt. The results were disastrous. The Assyrian army defeated Egypt and her weaker allies, and this left Judah at the mercy of the foe. All her cities had been broken down except Jerusalem, and now the conqueror was but thirty-five miles from the capital. Defense seemed impossible. A delegation was sent to ask for terms. And with what result? Sennacherib demanded all the wealth of ivory, silver, and gold—in fact, everything that was worth while in the palace and the Temple; all came into his greedy hands. Still he was not satisfied. He demanded nothing less than the surrender of the city.

As we set the scene again, we see Rabshakeh, that boastful pedant, that ruthless officer of the Assyrian army, who has come in the name of the conqueror to demand the complete surrender of Judah. He is a perfect symbol of material self-sufficiency. Hear his strident, mocking words as he struts before the wall—a blatant, flaming force. He taunts the people. They are but a handful and their wealth is gone. He cries, "Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" His courage is drawn from the vision of burning crops, from blackened, smoking cities, from fleeing refugees and mutilated captives. Such scenes of carnage are the songs of Assyrian success. With the nations destroyed and the armies cut to pieces, what can Judah hope for? (Read Isaiah 36:19, 20.)

#### **A Remnant to Be Left**

It truly is a desperate hour. But over against this defiant foe we see the calm, confident figure of Isaiah. While all hearts are quailing in fear, this man of vision turns their eyes from the king of Assyria to the King of heaven. In spite

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of the dismal outlook, in spite of the terrible oncoming tempest, a remnant will be left, he declares. "Do not despair nor be afraid, but trust to the living God." This is his message. Then to give added assurance, he pictures God dealing with this dictator as one would deal with a horse or an ox. God will put a bit in this dictator's mouth and a ring through his nose and turn him about. Thus will He deliver His people—all of which must have sounded incredible, even fantastic.

But what happened? The story is thrilling. Those 200,000 soldiers, poised and waiting only for the command to attack, were suddenly seized with consternation, for the angel of the Lord went forth and destroyed 185,000 of them, and the stragglers that remained made a hurried escape from the land of death. Judah was invaded, but not utterly destroyed. A remnant was left.

There was no mistaking the message of this man of God. But back of his confident ministry was an experience into which he had entered in the very beginning of his prophetic call. He had seen the Lord, he had heard the songs of the seraphim, he had gazed upon the throne high and lifted up. His eyes had beheld the King robed in light and glory. He had looked on things that it was impossible for Rabshakeh to see. His vision was not restricted to the horizons of his day. With spiritual perception he looked down through the centuries to the final scenes of earth's history, when in the closing drama God's final remnant would be victorious.

#### **These Things Written for Our Admonition**

Why were these things written? Let us set the scene again, but on a vaster stage. Not only one nation but the whole world seems to stand in defiance of the living God. Many a modern Rabshakeh struts in disdain, hurling anathemas at the church. Having put confidence in purely material things, these Rabshakehs ridicule religion as a vestige of bygone days. "What can come from your abstract ideas?" they say. "It's dollars and cents that count. These are the causative factors in world progress. And who is this God that will deliver?" But as

in the olden time God has His remnant—a chosen few, a mighty minority—through whom He will carry out His purpose. And the lesson of history is that no matter how distracting the situation or how formidable the adversary, God's work has never been completely destroyed. On the contrary, it has risen to its greatest power in days of somber tragedy.

It is not difficult for us to detect the arrogant materialistic spirit of Rabshakeh, but do we measure up to the issues? Have we as leaders the spiritual perception of an Isaiah? It is not the size of the remnant, not the bigness of the organization, not the efficiency of the machinery; no, these are not the things with which God accomplishes His mightiest work. It is rather the spirit of that minority that assures victory. That remnant may be a mere group of scattered outcasts, unlettered, unknown, unwanted, but through them God will fulfill His purpose.

Isaiah was not the only one who wrote about the remnant. Amos, Micah, Zephaniah, all used the same word, but not all in the same way. When Amos wrote, for instance, he was describing the scenes after the destruction of Samaria. He pictured that invasion in graphic language. He likened those that escaped to the fragments of a lamb that had been taken from the jaws of a lion. There was nothing left but the lifeless remnant of the slaughter. But Isaiah's remnant was different. It was a living, vital thing, like a green shoot springing from a tree that had been cut down, not as large as the parent tree, but a living, growing plant. In fact, he wove his philosophy into his very family life, for he named his eldest son Shear-Jashub, which means "a remnant shall return." Thus constantly before him was a symbol of his faith that towered high above the wrecks of his day.

How pitifully small was that remnant! How hopelessly unjustified seemed the prophet's vision! So it has ever been. Fifty years after the cross only one tenth of one per cent of the Roman Empire was Christian. Yet the hope of the future was bound up with that small but strong minority. It was that one tenth of one per cent that conquered, not the ninety-

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nine and nine-tenths per cent, although against that remnant was hurled all the irresistible might of the empire. It is spiritual vitality that counts.

It has always been the signal glory of God that He has been able to do His greatest work in hours of greatest crisis, and has accomplished it by insignificant minorities. And with such a minority He will climax His work on the earth. A faithful remnant will defy the united power of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. There will be battle, but "the Lord will be the hope of his people." Joel 3:16. This is the vision that dominated both the Old and the New Testament writers. Take Elisha, for instance. In the midst of another crisis his eyes discovered that the hosts of God were mightier than the enemy. "Open the young man's eyes!" was the prophet's prayer.

"Lo, to faith's enlightened sight  
All the mountains flamed with light.  
Hell is nigh but God is nigher,  
Circling us with hosts of fire."

### The Prophets Were Evangelists

Those prophets of Israel were really the preachers, the evangelists of their day. They were a dynamic group of men, all intensely individualistic. Some were rugged and blunt, others spoke the language of poetry. Some were truly men of genius, others were not so gifted. But each saw clearly the purpose of God for His people. They knew they were God-sent men. And while they lived in days of national and international upheaval, they stood as the messengers of Heaven declaring that only "righteousness exalteth a nation." They heard the clash of great despotisms battling for power. They beheld empires falling to pieces. And although they courageously pointed out the sins of the rulers and the people, yet they revealed the way of salvation. The messages they gave to the world were not only timely; they were timeless. Those truths they uttered are just as gripping today as when they were first spoken.

They were not men of the cloister, not spiritual hermits; they lived where crossed the crowded ways of life. They were acquainted with the needs of the multitudes. And although they often spoke with fiery earnestness, hurling their messages like thunderbolts against the wickedness of their day, yet above the denunciation of iniquity could always be heard the pleadings of the voice of love. They were sure of the truth that God had given them, and they had the courage to proclaim it. With clear insight they held the plumb line of the divine will against the crooked structures of men and nations; and although they did not hesitate to expose political and spiritual corruption, yet they were the only ones who could offer any sure hope. Above the black clouds they discerned the sun of God's love shining in benediction. They foretold a brighter day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." In the highest sense of the word they were truly evangelists.

When we come to the New Testament we recognize a change in the pattern. The Old Testament evangelist was concerned mainly for his own people. He was sent to call his nation back to God. But the New Testament evangelists were commissioned to carry the gospel to *all* the world. Every man, woman, and child, irrespective of color, race, or rank, came within their evangelistic orbit. And how gloriously they fulfilled their commission! The rider on the white horse in Revelation 6 was a fitting symbol of the apostolic church. As he rode forth in majesty, conquering and to conquer, the arrows of truth, barbed with love, pierced the heart of the unbelieving world, and the King's enemies, captured by His grace, were made citizens of His kingdom. We must recapture that vision, and experience that power, if we would accomplish our task of world evangelism.

### Our Great Peril

No people ever faced a greater challenge than do the messengers of the Advent hope. The problems are legion, yet despite all the difficulties the words of the Master are

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being fulfilled; the gospel today is reaching the very ends of the earth. In a few places it is going with power. Some believers can be found in every land of earth, and it is impossible to say just how far the message has actually spread. While we rejoice in all this, we must beware lest, with our rapidly increasing membership, and the accompanying sense of security it brings, we settle down now to become another denomination—a movement perhaps, in some senses of the word—but so concerned about carrying out our precise programs and having everything bend to a particular pattern that we lose sight of our original objective. Enlarging and strengthening our organization, building up our material securities, assuring ourselves that all is on a firm financial footing and that our institutions are really representative, backed up by ample cash reserves, are all good; but if we fail to accomplish our God-given task of world evangelism, then we, of all people, are surely the most pathetic. Unthinkable, you say? Perhaps, but far from impossible. While lengthening our material cords, let us be sure there is a compensating strengthening of our spiritual stakes.

### **Responsibility of the Advent Church**

The Lord called this movement into existence for a very specific task. We are to give the message of grace to every nation, every city, every town, every village, every home, and every individual in every part of the world. And this must be accomplished in a single generation and in the most difficult times—a colossal task indeed, and one that requires that every asset be channeled into the cause of aggressive evangelism. Every minister in our ranks, every department in the organization, every teacher in our schools, every dollar in our treasuries, must be evangelistic.

Ours is the greatest task of the ages. No other people has ever faced such responsibility. Recognizing that God has called us to finish His work in this very generation, let us ask ourselves the question: Are we sure we are doing His work in the way that will bring the greatest results? Could we

know that probation would close before the next General Conference session—of course we cannot know that, but if we could, if we really had the assurance that by the middle of that year our ministry would be at an end, our Bibles would be closed, and the Holy Spirit would have been withdrawn—would it not drive us to restudy our methods to discover whether we are actually doing the work of God in the way that will bring the greatest success? Then why not let us study the program just as if we knew we had but a year or two in which to work. Let me make it even more personal. Brother, have you ever asked yourself this question: When my lifework is ended and I see the record, will I have any sad regrets that I did not do more to warn the wicked and turn these hearts from sin to righteousness?

An old warrior in the leadership of our work in Australia was on his deathbed, and looking back across the years. I had known him all my life, and at the time he passed to his rest I was preaching in London. My mother called to see him, and he began to ask her about me, and then he left this parting word with her for me. "Tell Roy," he said, "to spend all the time he possibly can talking directly to lost men and women about their souls. All too much of my life has been spent in committees, in board meetings, and in other kinds of work. How I wish I had spent more time preaching the message of grace!" Those words I have never forgotten. We all need to spend more time giving the message of grace to lost men and women.

Too often in our evangelism we hear the expression "the honest in heart," as if they were the only ones the Lord wanted to save. But His love takes in the *dishonest* in heart, even those who hate His holy name. He is not willing that *any* should perish. And so He sends His message of love and forgiveness to the whole world. What a privilege it is to be the carriers of that message!

Looking back over the way the Lord has led us, we see much to encourage us. This year marks the centenary of our Sabbath school work. Celebrating our centenaries has its

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place and brings some real inspiration. It is good to remind ourselves that for a hundred years we have been studying our Sabbath school lessons, that for a hundred years truth-filled books have been coming from our presses, that during a whole century we have been sowing the seeds of truth by tracts and periodicals. We say it is wonderful, and it is. But I wonder whether God is congratulating us as much as we are congratulating ourselves. Facing these things realistically, we do not find it difficult to find cause for some discouragement. Who among our pioneers ever dreamed that in 1952 the heralds of the Advent truth would still be in this sin-cursed earth? Why are we still here? We all know the answer.

To garnish the sepulchers of the prophets, to rejoice in all the evidences of our growth and present strength, is not sufficient. Other denominations have traveled, and still are traveling, that road. Our primary work, our only work, is to carry the gospel to all the world, and to preach it with such power that men and women will sense by our very earnestness that we are God sent, that we are men with a message. The conviction that the Lord is coming soon was so real to our pioneers that the very urgency of their demeanor pressed that conviction upon their fellows.

In Revelation, chapter seven, John pictured the rise of this message. He likened it to the first streaks of dawn, which waxes brighter and yet brighter until the whole earth is bathed in the glory of the sunlight. So will the clear rays of the Sun of Righteousness illumine the whole world and the earth will be ablaze with the glory of God. (Rev. 18:1.) And as the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, bringing light and blessing to all, so this message is to reach out and embrace all, bringing the claims of God to every soul on earth.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Broader Plans to Be Laid**

Did ever a people face such a responsibility? Many years ago this counsel came to us from the messenger of the Lord:

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 68.

"A great work is to be accomplished; broader plans must be laid; a voice must go forth to arouse the nations."<sup>6</sup> Has that ever been accomplished? Where are the nations today that are actually being stirred by our message? True, we are preaching to most countries, and we are gathering out a few people, but where can it be said that any particular nation is being *aroused* by the voice of the Lord's messengers?

John the Baptist was a type of the Advent movement. When he preached, multitudes came to hear him. His message condemned sin in all its forms. He touched upon political, social, and economic corruption. He faced the real issues of his day, and there was such a power in his ministry that the hearts of all classes were stirred. His work was short in point of time, but it was mighty in its effect. And what he did is what we are to do.

The Scripture says, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching," and preaching is our main business. Preaching and salvation are related throughout the Bible, as cause and effect. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Whatever else a minister is called to do, his major work is preaching, and preaching to the unsaved. Are we placing the emphasis where it rightly belongs? Ministers are generally a hard-working group—in fact, some are breaking under their load. But each of us might well ask himself: Am I trying to do such a multitude of things that it is impossible for me to do what God expects me to do?

As evangelists, teachers, executives, and promoters we can all be so overburdened with other things that our time is absorbed and we are diverted from our main work. God pictures us as a preaching people. The everlasting gospel is to be *preached*. But all too often ministers are so burdened with other types of work that it seems impossible to do that for which they are ordained. Today a minister has to be an organizer, an executive, a financier, a promoter, a specialist in religious education, and on top of it all a pastor, endeavor-

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<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 187.

ing to care for all the needs of the flock, including being judge in the court of domestic relations. How, then, can he be a soul winner?

This same problem confronted the apostles. They were staggering beneath the load of multitudinous tasks. But they reached a very wise decision. "It is not reason," they said, "that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. . . . We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:2-4. So they chose others, laymen, and appointed them to care for the detailed business of the church, but the preachers went on preaching. The result was marvelous. "The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Verse 7.

Why are these things not being repeated today? Where is that great company of ministers that should be taking their places with us as heralds of the Advent message? Is it because we lack the courage to put into effect the full apostolic program? Are we majoring on minor tasks? If we were honest with ourselves, we would admit that the things which absorb so much of our time are more congenial, sometimes more spectacular, and they certainly do not cost the anxiety of soul that preaching does. It is always easier to put our emphasis on programs than to expound the Word of God. Could that be a reason why we are inclined to neglect preaching? Yet there is nothing the world needs so much today as the right kind of preaching, for it is still by preaching that God undertakes to save them that believe. (1 Cor. 1:21.)

#### **Preaching Is Still God's Plan for Evangelism**

In God's plan preaching is the minister's main business. There are many ways of spreading the gospel today, and we hail with joy every God-given agency that helps us proclaim the good news. Radio, television, literature, medical work—all these are wonderful handmaids of the preacher. They must not and cannot take the place of his public ministry.

Speaking about the relationship existing between medical missionary work and the gospel ministry, the messenger of the Lord says:

"It has been presented to me that every department of the work is to be united in one great whole. The work of God is to prepare a people to stand before the Son of man at His coming, and this work should be a unit. . . .

"The medical missionary work has never been presented to me in any other way than as bearing the same relation to the work as a whole as the arm does to the body. The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth and the carrying forward of the work for sick and well. This is the body, the medical missionary work is the arm, and Christ is the head over all."<sup>7</sup>

"If ever we permit departmentalism to be a substitute for real evangelism we will fail in the accomplishment of God's purpose," declared W. H. Branson years ago in a workers' meeting.

It is the firsthand gripping of men's souls by appeals in public and personal evangelism that really brings them face to face with the claims of God. Every means possible must be utilized, but we must be careful that we do not accept these aids because they are easier. The entire program of the church is important, but our main emphasis must always be the preaching and teaching of the Word. A Protestant leader facetiously reminded his fellow ministers recently that "God managed for 1700 years without a Sunday school, important as that is, and He managed 1850 years without a Boy Scout. But He has never been able to manage without a preacher."

Although every department of our work is necessary for the building up of the whole, yet the main objective of the ministry must always be, wherever possible, the public preaching of the gospel. There is sometimes a willingness to leave this work to laymen, while the minister keeps the machinery of the church well oiled and functioning properly. But are we not duty bound under God to *preach*? And everyone who has health and strength should find some way of carrying out his God-ordained work. Although every minister will natu-

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 237.

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rally encourage and train the laymen for their work, he does his strongest work, however, when he rallies his members and leads them out in a program of public evangelism. When the light goes out in the pulpit it soon goes out in the world.

### Jesus Was a Preacher

The Master set us a wonderful example. We read that after having "made an end of commanding his twelve disciples," that is, having outlined their work for them, He "departed thence . . . to preach in their cities." Matt. 11:1. Jesus was a great evangelist. He drew thousands to Him by His preaching power. True He was a great teacher and a wonderful personal worker, but it was His public evangelism that stirred the country.

### Paul the Preacher

And Paul, the great organizer, was also a powerful preacher. He was a great executive; the burden of all the churches rested upon him, but in spite of that, he was all the time pushing out into new territory, raising up churches in new sections, visiting the old churches, appointing elders and training workers, getting leaders together for counsel, showing them how to carry on the work, planning a larger program for them; then he was off again in some other direction to preach. And his preaching was not just once a week, but every day, as we find him in Ephesus. He says, "I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God. . . . Unto me, . . . is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles." Eph. 3:7, 8. And nothing will help a minister so much to keep his vital experience with God as the preaching of "the unsearchable riches of Christ" to the Gentiles.

Let us go with this great leader and see him in action. Here he is in Ephesus, spending three months unfolding the gospel in the synagogue. And now, because of the opposition of the Jews, he is moving into the school of Tyrannus. This is his evangelistic center. Here he trains his workers and every

day conducts Bible classes, until after two years the influence of his ministry has spread so far that all Asia has heard the word, and the enemies of truth are desperate. To follow this great evangelist in his preaching program is to catch the inspiration of a great life. Now he moves on, evangelizing city after city. Sometimes he is among friends, but often in the hands of bitter enemies, yet all the while preaching. When the church can support him he rejoices because it enables him to do a larger work. But if there is no appropriation, he goes on as a self-supporting preacher. Evangelism is his very life. See him clinging to a broken spar in the mid-Mediterranean. Now he is washed up on some unfamiliar shore, only to begin all over again preaching.

That spirit he infuses into his associate workers. No wonder they have turned the world upside down! They capitalize on every circumstance and turn defeat into victory. Every move is an evangelistic move. The fact that the hearts of men in all walks of life are open for new ideas provides a unique opportunity for these evangelists, and they come with news which kindles hope in the hearts of a disillusioned generation. Realizing that they hold the answer to the problems of the day, they hasten to proclaim it anywhere, any time, and by any means, in season and out of season.

By comparison, however, the world of that day was small. News traveled slowly, being exchanged by travelers who tramped the highways. Some was picked up from the gossip of the women who came to draw water in the late afternoon. Yet even by these slow methods the message of salvation spread to all the then-known world.

#### **Ours Is a Greater Task Than Faced the Apostles**

How different is the task that faces us! Those parochial customs have given place to an unparalleled expansion. Men today look out on large horizons. They become impatient with small thinking, and the preacher of today must move in the atmosphere of great issues. The happenings of this hour are portentous. A future, vast in magnitude, looms before

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the eyes of every nation. Therefore the stupendous scope of our mission is bewildering. It should fill our perspective and overwhelm our senses. Our vision must be lifted up to grasp the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of God's great program for this cataclysmic age.

Scott's first expedition to the South Pole was unsuccessful, but his discoveries made success possible at a later time. Till then, no man knew the extent of that great unexplored land of the Antarctic. Strange and varied were the emotions evoked by the first vision of that vast unknown. One member of the expedition tells his impressions as he stood looking over that great white silence, that vista of awful loveliness. As he surveyed range after range of white serrated peaks glistening in the land of far distances, his soul was gripped, and beholding this scene, he confessed it was too grand, too remote to comprehend. "Yet it was so compelling," he said, "that it shut out everything I had ever seen before."

During this Bible Conference we have been surveying the vastness of God's last message to the world. We have seen the Lord high and lifted up. We have been contemplating the serene grandeur of His unchanging purpose. We have felt His presence as we have beheld His glory. But it is not sufficient for us to have seen Him; we must help others to see Him. Service for God is always two dimensional—the vertical and the horizontal. As our vertical vision is raised, our horizontal service is widened. Having caught the inspiration, we now hasten back to the fields of sacrificial service. It is the height of our vision that determines the breadth of our endeavor. Let us go back to our conferences, our communities, and our churches, and seek the lost. Some may be next door. It is strange, but true, that often it seems easier to travel one thousand miles to attend such a meeting as this than it is to go one mile or even one block to visit a family and unfold the Word of truth that will kindle in their hearts the vision of our returning Lord.

Having been in the mountain with God, we now descend to the plain, where men wrestle and work. There we will meet

the powers of evil that are grappling for the souls of men. We must plead to God for that grace to relate the vision of the mountain to the stark realities of life. If we want to build tabernacles, let us erect them in the valleys, where needy men work and weep. Evangelism is our basic task and our only task. Having caught the apostolic vision, let us move forward under apostolic power.

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## The Cost of Evangelism

We are reconciled to God not by an *idea* but by an *event*, and that event followed a night of horror and insult, a mock trial and an unjust scourging. Then for three hours that could have been measured by a clock, nerves and flesh were wrenched in the final agony of a crucifixion when even the face of the sun was veiled from the shame of its dying Author. It cost all that and more to redeem us.

It required another's life, the shedding of another's blood to bring us back into filial relation with the Father.

That sacrifice was the climax to three years of slander and rejection. But it was also the culmination and ratification of an eternal purpose made before the world was. From the day that Adam sinned, on down through all the millenniums of human history, events had been shaping themselves to this focal point.

Yesterday we studied the *setting* for world evangelism; today we shall ponder the *cost* of evangelism, for sacrifice lies at the very heart of the gospel. The cost of our redemption to God is beyond our power to compute. Peter says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

Now let us think of the subject under three headings:

1. The cost to God Himself.
2. The cost to God's messenger.
3. The cost to the church.

At the mention of the word "cost" the thought of money comes to our mind. But some things in evangelism are bigger than cash. A cynical politician recently remarked, "Things have come to a pretty pass if religion is to be allowed to interfere with private life." It is deeply significant that a national leader in this enlightened age could know so little about real religion. It is easy to talk about religion, even about the Christian religion, and yet know nothing of it by experience. At Calvary many stood afar off beholding the things that were done. But the Scripture says they "smote their breasts, and returned." Luke 23:48. They returned to their old ways, to their old customs, to their old sins. The death of Jesus made no impact on their lives. They went back to the old habits because they did not want to be disturbed. They resented having their private lives interfered with.

When Jesus preached, He stirred men's souls. He intended His messages to interfere with private life. Only in that way could He redirect men's thinking. This the religious leaders of His day resented. That is why they rejected Him. The rich young ruler who turned away from Him became a symbol of his nation. But religion to be worth anything must have its effect in real life. It is easy, even today, to stand emotionally at the salute when someone tells the story of the cross, and then go back to the old habits and the old ambitions. But real Christianity touches personality, it interferes with private life, and that is what makes it real. Even God Himself had to interrupt His work to save a lost race. Creation itself was stayed while the element of sacrifice was geared into the divine program. When the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, the cost of it was burned into the heart of the Eternal. The ransom price was indeed high.

Christ did not come just to introduce another religion.

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There was plenty of religion in the pagan world when Jesus appeared, but those religions were largely systems of unrelated ideas. When Christianity came it was not something built around a few new ideas, not just a fresh philosophy. It was life in action.

When God entered human history He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He took His full part in the life of His time. He entered real life. We read He was born a king. That announcement touched off the most explosive problem of the day. Already there were two rival royalties represented in Palestine. This our Lord well knew. But He had come to rule in the hearts of men. Watch Him as He steers His way through the whirlpool of human greed, passion, fear, and pride. It was in the experience of real life that sin made its havoc. So it had to be in real life that God wrought out our salvation. His ministry, His death, His resurrection, His ascension—these all occurred in the realm of real life. That is the only way that salvation could come to us. Having shared our limited life, God is now able to offer us His eternal life. And the life that He imparts is His crucified, risen, ascended, and glorified life—that is the message we must bring home to the hearts of our hearers.

#### The Cost to God's Messenger

As preachers we cannot bring to the world anything that we ourselves do not possess. Salvation must be a real experience with us if we would bring it to the people. *Self* with *self-worship* is just as big a threat to the minister as to the lay member, and wherever it appears it must be crucified. No other person in this world is in greater danger of self-assertion than the minister. The very nature of our work places us in the center of things, and the natural heart loves the spotlight. The tendency is to think of ourselves as the center of the circle of existence and everything else and everybody else as out on the circumference. As human beings we tend to evaluate a situation in relation to ourselves. What will it profit me? is the big question. We may be tempted

even to choose our friends on the basis of the advantages that will accrue to us through their association, and even build our boards and choose our committee personnel in relation to personal preference. More than that, we can even treat God that way and regard Him chiefly as One who is able to look after our affairs, to keep things running smoothly for us. We accept or reject a call or a transfer of work as we evaluate it in respect to personal consideration. Position, prestige, power, salary, comforts, furlough—these are the things that influence our decisions. Analyzed, this is the very principle that lies behind all the hatred, greed, lust, and treachery in the world. Self-centeredness is man's chief sin. No man whose interests are centered in himself can be either happy or holy. Neither can he be of any service to God or man. It was to lift man away from that self-centeredness and bring him into the true relationship of the universe that God died in Christ. It was to alter the center of our lives that He paid such a price.

#### The Jews Looked for a Messiah

When Christ came and preached, many of the Jews fully believed that He was going to bring in the kingdom of God, for no man ever spake as He spake. They were thrilled at the prospect that Christ would end all the disbelief of the rest of the world and reveal again that God had chosen Israel to be His special people. They longed for someone to come and rid them of all foreign rulers and make them the supreme power in the world. When Jesus came He did indeed proclaim the kingdom of God. He revealed its invincible opposition to evil, but He began with the evil that He saw in His own people, the evil that was part of the very nature of the kingdom's first subjects. Failing to understand His message, they rejected Him. As a nation the Jews were the finest spiritual product of the ancient world. But, like many today, although they wanted to be delivered from the evil outside, they resisted being changed from the evil inside. Their hope was that God would destroy all evil *except that which was*

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*in them.* In fact, it was a tremendous shock when it was revealed that they needed any cleansing from sin themselves. When Jesus spoke about truth making them *free*, they shouted in self-confidence, "We be Abraham's seed"! John 8:33. They resented the implication of His words. As a nation they felt they should be the center of things and all other people on the circumference. Racial and religious pride can deceive as verily as lust and riches. Those religious leaders longed for power, fame, wealth, and ease. Why? That they might rule the world. *Power is the most corrupting of all temptations.*

Think you that it was not a temptation when those people wanted to put power in the hands of Jesus, when they wanted to take Him forcibly and make Him King? No man ever met a more subtle temptation. But what did He do with it? He took it all—the longing for power, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life—and deliberately, mercilessly, ruthlessly crucified it. At a *later* time, when, amid the shouts and acclamations of the excited populace, He rode into Jerusalem as their anticipated king, He still did not accept the honor. Why? Because the kingdom of God could not be brought in that way. *If* He were going to alter the center of man's affections, it must be done through sacrifice. The simple record is that when He had entered the Temple and looked around on the things, "he went out into Bethany with the twelve." Mark 11:11.

The root of all sin is self-regardingness, or self-centeredness. The great truth is that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification. He rose to become goodness in us. When we enter into a new relationship through Christ, the center of our life's affections is changed. *No longer* are we in the center of the circle; God becomes the center, and we ourselves, along with everything else, become just part of the circumference. To know the way of God more perfectly, we as workers must enter into that relationship with God. Then life becomes different, and as we go out to preach the gospel of the kingdom we will then lift men away from

their self-centeredness and help them to make Christ the center around which their lives, their affections, their successes, revolve. Any religion that does not lead men to experience this has missed the mark altogether. A man may claim to be a Christian, even an Adventist, but unless self is crucified and God is made the center of his life, then he is not a real Christian, for the Christian religion most definitely interferes with our private lives. It is this aspect of Christianity that lifts it far above the realm of ordinary religious philosophies and makes it the only religion worth having.

#### What Occurred at Calvary

Something drastic happened at Calvary, something man had nothing to do with. It came wholly from God. Something had to be done about sin and goodness. And God did it. He acted for us. It is this that makes the story permanently worth telling. But let us pause and ponder that expression "our sins." Christ died not only for sins in general but for *our* sins. I do not have a private salvation. Jesus died not for *my* sins only, not even for my big sins or my many little sins, not even for merely the confessed sins of the good people, nor for *your* sins only, but for the sins of the whole world—the sins of my father, my mother, my uncle, my aunt, my son, my daughter, the sins of my next-door neighbor, the sins of all men and women everywhere—the sins of the people in China, in Russia, in England, in America; the sins of the milling mass that crowd our city streets; not for the lump sum of the world's sin, but rather for sins individually, one by one.

He died for the sin of that jealous man in Texas who shot another man last week; the sin of that workman over there in Baltimore, a man I never knew, but who yesterday took pay for work he did not do; the sin of that wealthy man in London who defrauded another wealthy man in Paris on a particular business deal; the sin of the farmer, the miner, the builder; the sin of the charwoman, the railroad engineer; the sin of the newspaper editor; the sin of that boy who struck

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another lad just because he wanted to be in the center of things; the sins of Napoleon, of George Washington, of Henry VIII; the sins of Luther, Wycliffe, Ambrose; the sins of the saints of all the ages; Nero's sins, Pilate's sins, Moses' sins, Abraham's sins, even the sins of Enoch, right back to the very morning of the world. He died for all the sins that were ever committed from the beginning of history right on down until now, and on until sin shall be no more and the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. (See Hab. 2:14.)

That is a staggering truth. No wonder it rocked the Roman world! This mighty concept was etched into the mind and heart of those first Christian evangelists as they went forth to declare it to every class, party, sect, and nation. John declares, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2. Notice how Paul emphasizes this truth in Romans 5:10. Two expressions here are important. *We were* reconciled. (That is past.) *We shall be saved*. (That is future, and it also embraces the present.) Reconciliation is an act on God's part, for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. Acceptance is an act on man's part, and both these make salvation effective.

"Christ has for sin atonement made,  
What a wonderful Saviour!  
We are redeemed! the price is paid!  
What a wonderful Saviour!"

God has paid the price in order that He might bring us back to fellowship with Himself. Brief reference was made at this conference to the story of a man who was supposed to have said, "I was saved two thousand years ago, but it is only two years ago that I found out." This was stated to be wrong. And it is both theologically and factually. What the man actually said was, "I was redeemed nineteen hundred years ago, but it is only two years ago that I found out." That was altogether different. He was redeemed—that is, the price was paid nineteen hundred years ago, but

it was only two years ago that he had found it out. And the tragedy is that so many never find it out.

That which the apostles declared to the world was not merely a grand intellectual concept; it was a living, personal experience. They knew the power of the message they proclaimed, for their own self-centered and personal ambitions had been crucified. They themselves were free. They had become the living embodiment of the truth they preached. They faced the most bitter opposition, but gloried in their tribulations. They did not appeal to public opinion, but they went straight to the heart of the human problem. They did not begin on the philosophical level and talk about the teachings of Christ, that they were true and that it would be very good for the minds and personalities of the people if they would study those teachings without prejudice. They did not say that the death of Christ was a pitiable mistake on the part of certain authorities and that something ought to be done about it.

No, these were not their claims. Notice Peter on the day of Pentecost. He charged the death of Jesus to the rulers, revealing it as a dastardly crime; but, he further declared, it was "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." It was a plan of God. But more, His resurrection was the climax of that divine plan. The grave could not hold Him, and now at the right hand of God, Jesus is both Lord and Christ. There was not a word from start to finish concerning the *teachings* of Jesus. These truths are emphasized in other portions of the Scripture. No, it was not His teachings; it was He Himself, His person, His office, His Lordship, that Peter emphasized. It was Christ's new relationship to all men that gave authority to His teachings. This was the dominating, driving center of apostolic evangelism.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," is the truth that quivers and flames behind every sermon of those first evangelists. And what was the effect of that preaching? Three thousand who gladly received Peter's message were baptized.

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### The Scope of Apostolic Preaching

The message they proclaimed embraced not only the present but the future. It included everybody from Adam to the very last child born. It could not apply to anybody unless it applied to everybody. God has no special group that He has selected for salvation. He did not call me and exclude others. He did not call others and exclude me. He calls all men. I might be the worst sinner in the world, but I am included still in the eternal purpose of God.

Now, when those apostles preached that message, the religious leaders of that day opposed it. Why? Because it pointed out their sins. But to those who did accept it, it was the power of God unto salvation, whether they were Greeks or Jews, barbarians or Scythians, bond or free. There was power in their message because behind it there was this dominating experience. Christ's disciples knew they had been crucified with Him. Personal ambition, the desire to be first, had been crushed.

When He sent those first evangelists with His message He said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John 20:21. He was not talking so much about a *method* as about an attitude.

Although we naturally apply Isaiah 53 to the Lord Jesus, yet the principles in that chapter apply equally to us. The picture of the suffering servant of Jehovah is so tremendous in its contrast with the previous chapters of Isaiah that many have thought there must be two Isaiahs. In the earlier chapters in the book we see a forceful power banishing the wicked and proclaiming the edicts of a righteous God. But this fifty-third chapter is a tremendous contrast. It is not the stem of Jesse that is bursting forth in fruitfulness and strength, gathering the nations unto itself, as we read earlier in the book, but a lowly root that grows slowly and tenuously out of the dry and sterile soil. And then follow those litanies of sorrow that represent the very limit of sacrifice. He whose visage was "marred more than any man" was now "despised

and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. On Him was laid the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, afflicted, rejected, betrayed. He was put to grief, and in the travail of that hour of agony He poured out His soul unto death.

A more perfect picture of our Saviour could not be given. But "the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." If we would bring men into peace and obedient relationship with God, we too must enter into His travail and know something of His sorrow. In the path of every real evangelist stands a cross, but from that Calvary springs forth the new life of power.

#### The Cost to Paul

Study the lives of the spiritual leaders of the past, and you are arrested by the same truth. I was "in labours more abundant," says the apostle, "in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." 2 Cor. 11:23-27. It reads just like an encyclopedia of tragedies. And these were not to cease until that day outside the city of Rome when his aching head rolled from his tired body.

The mighty victories in the program of those first evangelists cost something altogether beyond our poor powers to calculate. And the higher the office they carried in the church, the greater seemed their role of suffering. Are we experiencing anything like that today? Or has civilization developed

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to that place where we no longer expect to face such experiences? But more important—has our organization been so perfected and our security so well established that faith and personal sacrifice are scarcely any longer vital factors? If the form of the cost has changed with the years, the fact of the cost certainly remains.

In the light of these observations I ask myself, Am I willing to pay the price of evangelism? Brother, are you willing? All true evangelism is costly, but when we avoid that personal cost we elude the secret of power.

The cross was, in a strange way, identified with our Lord's Saviourhood. It was hard for the disciples to realize this at first, but when they returned from the scene of the ascension and began to restudy their evangelistic program, they did so in the light of that cross, and it was then they made some startling discoveries—discoveries we today need to make. They began to understand something of what Jesus had in mind when He said, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:26-28. Those words began to have new meaning for them, and they sought to enter into the experience of their Lord. True success cannot be measured by how far one goes up in the world, not even by the position one might hold in the church, for there was Jesus, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Judge of all the earth, going down, down, down to die at last a felon's death.

At Calvary two great spiritual forces met in hand-to-hand combat. The cross was a place of terrific conflict. Here we find God at His best and man at his worst. The battle raged on, and then God met the issue by a mighty manifesto of inexhaustible love. Across the gulf that separated Christ from His crucifiers, He threw a bridge of reconciliation. That was God's answer to the dreadful deed. He could have reached up and grasped the sword of the omnipotent God and tumbled those persecutors into perdition. With a word He could

have crushed them, but instead He speaks a word of pardon, full, free, and eternal.

It is not sufficient that we study the cross in the light of history; we must understand it in the light of experience, because in that scene we are not spectators—we are participants. It was our sins that crucified Him. It was our sins that held Him to the tree. Truly the Roman soldiers drove the nails, but it was our sins that held Him fast. And in that sacrifice He paid the penalty for the sins and shames of all the ages. He bore the iniquity of us all.

Caiaphas declared it was better for one man to die rather than that the whole nation should perish. Thus he tried to justify judicial murder. But the Scripture says that Christ died for our sins, not merely to help Caiaphas out of a difficulty. His was a substitutionary death. The words of the high priest and the words of God sound very much alike, but between the earthly meaning and the heavenly meaning is a chasm, wide, deep, and awful. Hurling insult at the suffering Saviour, those religious leaders said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Mark 15:31. Truer words were never spoken. The slogan of the railers becomes the maxim of the truth. And no man who is seeking to save himself can at the same time be saving others.

Let us emphasize it again that in the background of every true crusade for God there looms a cross, not as a decoration or a reward, but as an instrument of suffering and death. For us to be evangelists in the apostolic sense is no light thing. It may cost us our reputation, our comfort, or even our lives. But only he who is willing to pay the price can expect to reap the harvest. It is he who goes forth and weeps who comes again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Ps. 126:6.)

#### **A Burden for Souls**

The great apostle speaks of his converts as having been "begotten" in his bonds. Let the intensity of that metaphor take hold upon us. Every worker in God's cause should know

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what it means to bear the burden of souls. Our spiritual fathers pleaded for that burden. They looked upon it as the gift of God. They prayed for anxious hearts. Then carelessness and indifference alarmed them. They sought to enter their Gethsemanes. They rebuked themselves if they discerned that they were putting tiny interests above the one true interest of all ministry—the winning of men for God. They longed for the pangs of travail, knowing that travail was the only way that men could be born into the kingdom of Christ. That kind of evangelistic intensity, that passion for souls, must take hold of each of us, irrespective of the particular type of work we are called to do. Only then will God be able to finish His work through us. Slogans, sales talk, and self-congratulation are powerless to finish His work.

We need something of the spirit that moved Moody. He took his concordance one day and studied all the verses that contain the word *grace*. As he read those verses and permitted the Spirit of God to open his mind to the majesty of that revelation, it seemed too much. He got down on his knees, and soon he was prostrate on the floor of his study, shedding tears of joy that God so loved sinners. But he must do more than weep; he must help others to know of God's grace. So, rising, he hastily put on his coat and started down the street. The first man he met he stopped, and placing his hand on his shoulder, said with an earnestness born out of that new soul experience, "Friend, do you know what the grace of God is?"

Fanaticism, you say? Perhaps. But it was that kind of Spirit-urged evangelism that enabled him to reach one hundred million people with his message, and there were no radios in those days. On the day of Pentecost even the apostles were charged with being drunk. But they moved the world. The world will always be moved when the church is moved. For this revelation of the sons of God the world is waiting and groaning, said Paul. (Rom. 8:19, 22, 23.) We must individually become partakers with Christ in His anxious search for the lost. If we would follow His steps, we must go to more

than the carpenter's shop, or the Temple, or the seaside, or the marriage feast; we must be willing to ascend the hill of suffering and be accounted fools for His sake. Self and self-interest must be sacrificed.

#### The Law of the Abundant Life

It is sometimes said that self-preservation is the first law of life. But what life? Certainly not the Christian life, and certainly not the evangelist's life. For not until self has been crucified are we able to enter into that abundant life that our Lord so clearly revealed to us. The self-preservation idea is that which destroys the very spirit of service. Not self-preservation but self-investment lies at the basis of real evangelism. Prestige, position, power, and place make no appeal to one who is a true follower of Him who knew not where to lay His head. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15. It is impossible for the natural man to comprehend this truth, for he is urged forward by the *love of power*. On the contrary, the crucified man is inspired by the *power of love*. An egotist may elbow his way to the front, and having attained his aims, then begin to lord it over his fellows; but this is the very antithesis of the spirit of Christ. Divine love revealed itself by stepping aside and making way for others. "There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for self, to seek the highest place." But in the kingdom of Christ "the principle of preference and supremacy has no place. *The only greatness is the greatness of humility*. The only distinction is found in devotion to the service of others."<sup>8</sup> (Italics supplied.) To walk with our God, we must be willing to humble ourselves.

Science has lavished upon us her inventions. We live in a labor-saving age, and the cry of the church is that we might match the spirit of the age. Rose-water religions are found on every hand. It is easy to know them by the place they

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<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 650.

give to the cross. Drenched in sentiment, they are dry of sacrifice. To them the cross is but an emblem of mistaken virtue. If it has any place at all, it is merely a decoration, something to be suspended from the neck of vanity, or to adorn the steeple of a church, for it has no place in personal experience.

But the cross must be more than sentiment; it is an ugly beam that is thrust up in the midst of a man's pleasures or even his successes. And when it appears it sounds the death knell of personal ambition and vainglory. No man can give the impression that he is clever, and at the same time reveal that Christ is all in all to him. If we have the mind of Jesus, we will constantly remind ourselves that He performed no miracle on His own behalf, pulled no wires, worked no schemes to better His position. "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

Any man who ever did anything great for God in evangelism has known the bitter experience of a crucifixion. Moses suffered affliction while he bore the reproach of Christ, Isaiah knew the agonies of being rejected of men, Jeremiah suffered the tortures of a dungeon, Paul was accounted mad for Christ, and the Lord Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself of no reputation.

Are we willing to be made of no reputation? A few years ago one who had been an evangelist confessed that in recent times he had made no public invitations for fear of embarrassing the finer people of his church. He had become too much of a coward to risk apparent failure in the presence of certain of his congregation. What if no one responded? To stand in the pulpit appearing a defeated man would be terrible. At an earlier period in his ministry he would have expected to do just that, but now, like the man in the parable, he was burying his treasure in a napkin because he was afraid. Perhaps some of us are like that. We are not hostile to public evangelism, but all too many are afraid of it. It might cost us our reputation. So, rather than run the risk of ridicule, we just avoid it.

### Unity Essential

Lord Beaverbrook, British statesman, once said, "I would rather be an evangelist than a cabinet minister or millionaire, because the evangelist is the man who has the greatest capacity for doing good." And that is true. But his capacity for doing good is in proportion to the sacrifice he makes. The evangelist himself, however, is not the only one who must sacrifice. The church itself has a vital responsibility.

We read that on the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up "with the eleven." That is really significant. It reveals a unity of mind and purpose that ensures success. When an evangelist day after day and night after night battles with the enemy of souls for those under his care, he needs all the spiritual support we can give him. "Those who are engaged in the difficult and trying work in the cities should receive every encouragement possible. Let them not be subjected to unkind criticism from their brethren."<sup>9</sup> That counsel would not have been given had there not been some occasion for it. It is so easy to become critical of one another, but of all the different types of workers in God's cause none is making a more valuable contribution of service than the public and personal soul winner.

Evangelism is always hard, but it is also rewarding—the most rewarding of all work for God. It is rewarding to the worker himself. We remember the promise that "they that turn many to righteousness [shall shine] as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. 12:3.

The greatest financial asset we have is a good, faithful, tithe-paying membership. If we look at it from a purely mercenary angle, successful evangelism pays. When an evangelist raises up a church of fifty or a hundred or two hundred members, then these new recruits soon become a vital part of the organization. They begin to support the cause by their tithe, and they continue right on as supporters of the cause year after year until their earthly work is done. Not only

<sup>9</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 72.

are they paying tithe and giving of their offerings, but they give freely of their service. Therefore, if we look at it in the most mercenary way as far as the financial support of the work is concerned, that worker or that group of workers who, under God, in firsthand combat with the enemy brings these dear people to decision and organizes them into a church, is second to none in importance to this cause. And if there is any group among us who should be encouraged and strengthened and inspired, it is the public and personal evangelists, who keep building the constituency.

Years ago we were told that in the cities, "where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by no ordinary efforts. Ministers of God's appointment will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes."<sup>10</sup> It calls for sacrifice and diligent service if we would arouse the interest of the multitude. It costs a great deal these days to conduct evangelistic work in our large cities. Not only the conference but the evangelist himself is often obliged to lay out large sums of money to provide for this work that other workers are not called upon to meet. To do a strong work, one must have the right kind of equipment. And all too often the conference is not able to help very much in this way, so the evangelist himself has to assemble his own equipment, and this is often considerable.

But greater than all these material needs is the need of us as leaders to surround these front-line workers with our prayers and our confidence. The apostle Paul wrote this simple request: "Brethren, pray for us." He coveted the prayers of the church more than anything else. And those of our workers, who today stand at the very front of the battle, and who are meeting the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, need our prayers. "Do the work of an evangelist," cries the apostle. And this we must do, both as conferences and as individuals. Whatever it costs in money or personal

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<sup>10</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 109.

sacrifice, we must unseal the lips of everyone who can go forth and tell the story of redemption.

### A Guard of the Sepulcher

"I was a Roman soldier in my prime;  
Now age is on me and the yoke of time.  
I saw your Risen Christ, for I am he  
Who reached the hyssop to Him on the tree;  
And I am one of two who watched beside  
The Sepulcher of Him we crucified.  
All that last night I watched with sleepless eyes;  
Great stars arose and crept across the skies.  
The world was all too still for mortal rest.  
For pitiless thoughts were busy in my breast.  
The night was long, so long, it seemed at last  
I had grown old and a long life had passed.  
Far off the hills of Moab, touched with light,  
Were swimming in the hollow of the night.  
I saw Jerusalem all wrapped in cloud,  
Stretched like a dead thing folded in a shroud.

"Once in the pauses of our whispered talk  
I heard a something on the garden walk.  
Perhaps it was a crisp leaf lightly stirred—  
Perhaps the dream-note of a waking bird.  
Then suddenly an angel burning white  
Came down with earthquake in the breaking light,  
And rolled the great stone from the Sepulcher,  
Mixing the morning with a scent of myrrh.  
And lo, the Dead had risen with the day;  
The Man of Mystery had gone His way!

"Years have I wandered carrying my shame;  
Now let the Tooth of Time eat out my name.  
For we, who all the Wonder might have told,  
Kept silence, for our mouths were stopped with gold."

—EDWIN MARKHAM.

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The church moves onward to victory on the feet of evangelism. Moreover, we are about to enter the greatest era of evangelism in all history. There will be an ingathering of

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souls beyond anything we have yet seen. The manifestation of spiritual power in the former rain that marked the opening of the Christian crusade is to be eclipsed by an even greater outpouring of the latter rain. That thought has inspired us through all our history. We have talked about it, but talking about it is not enough; we each must enter into the experience of it. Not in any competitive sense should we gird ourselves for service, for competition is the very antithesis of the gospel. In the church of Jesus Christ there is no competition. We are all doing one work. And we are all members one of another. Every department in our church organization is important, but that importance is not something bound up with itself but rather because it is part of the whole. It may be the Radio Department or the Medical Department, the Publishing Department or the Educational Department that does the sowing, and then some other department will do the watering, but it is *God alone* who can give the increase. And "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." Let us draw inspiration from whatever success the Lord is pleased to give us—through the labors of any department or any worker. Just as we individually must know the experience of being crucified, so we as groups need to enter into that experience. Every department needs to die to self-glory. And if someone or some group is doing a particularly strong work, let us thank God, take courage, and "rejoice with them that rejoice." (This is not always easy to do.) Not by slogans, or by budgets, but by the outpouring of the Spirit will this work be finished. But God can never anoint a worker who has the least spirit of pride or self-assertion. Pride is the greatest sin, whereas humility is the greatest virtue. These words are well known to us:

"As the time comes for it [the message of the third angel] to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 699, 700.

That statement was not written to discount the importance of a thorough training or to slight our literary institutions, but only to show that God can, by His Spirit, do something that outward training and literary institutions cannot do. For too many years philosophers, teachers, sages, learned men, have claimed that in mere knowledge and understanding is the answer to the riddle of the universe. But soon God is going to demonstrate what He can do through a humble and outwardly insignificant people. The remnant church will do a mighty work for God, not because they are small and insignificant, but in spite of it.

### The Prophetic Vision

The prophets of old discerned this grand work afar off. They caught the vision and traced wonderful descriptions of things yet to come when multitudes will step out into the light in a single day. Heavenly intelligences will combine with human agencies, and the church will indeed arise and shine, throwing all her sanctified energy into the contest. "The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit."<sup>12</sup>

But it cost the apostles something to receive the Holy Spirit. *Before* Pentecost they were very much concerned about the particular place they were going to have, whether they would get the credit for what they were doing. But *after* Pentecost that whole picture changed. The book of Acts is the most inspiring literature in the world. It is called the Acts of the Apostles, but it is really the acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. When they were willing to pay the price God gave them the power.

We read the story and our hearts are thrilled, but had we been with them and been through it all, we might well have wondered at times just how things were going. The forces of opposition were tremendous. All but one suffered martyrdom.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 692.

We call them heroes and they were, but one of the characteristics of a hero is that he never chases the spotlight; what he does, he does almost unconsciously. No hero ever stops to ask himself, "How much publicity will I get from this, and will it help my prestige?" In fact, he is usually completely unaware of the importance of what he is doing until somebody begins to laud it as a great deed. Only then is he conscious of its significance. And often he is as much surprised as anybody. In the great climax of His work God will use men and women, institutions and departments that are willing to be nothing, that Christ might be all and in all. "A great work is to be accomplished. . . . We need the courage of heroes and the faith of martyrs."<sup>18</sup>

#### Following the Lamb

Of the 144,000 we read, "They . . . follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Rev. 14:4. That has great meaning for us in the future. It will be wonderful to follow the Lamb through all His mighty universe, to behold the glories of His marvelous creation. But if we would follow the Lamb then, we must learn to follow Him *now*. We must go with Him to Gethsemane, to Calvary. We must follow Him in self-surrender and sacrifice. The first time our Lord is called "the Lamb" in the book of Revelation, He is pictured as having been slain or in the act of being slain. He is not revealed as a lamb in unblemished beauty and innocence, but as a lamb in the actual experience of being sacrificed. What a symbol for One who created all things! But under this symbol Christ reaches forth and takes the book from the One seated on the throne. As He does so, first the living creatures, then the elders, then angels, and then the whole universe bow in worship and adoration crying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"!

This is one of the sublimest pictures in all the Bible. Only the Lamb of God could break the binding seals and open

<sup>18</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 187.

the fast-closed book. There would have been no opened book had not the Lamb been there. It is the Man from the cross and not the man from the classroom; the dying Saviour not the prudent sage that brings the revelation of God to men. No wonder every creature in heaven and earth and all that are under the earth join in a great paean of praise. Death made our redemption possible. And only through our death to self can we bring that revelation to men. It cost Heaven everything to redeem us, and it will cost us everything to have a part in bringing that redemptive work to the world. To us comes the call, "Arise; shine, for thy light is come." But how can we shine? John the Baptist was "a *burning* and a *shining* light." John 5:35. He shone because he burned. Burning is always the price of shining. Only those who are willing to be consumed can become the light of God to the world.

When the whole church will arise and shine, then the "Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60:3. Not just a few great preachers but a whole preaching church is what God is waiting for—men and women who, filled with the love of the Lord, will hasten to carry the good news to their neighbors, their friends, and even their enemies.

When Jesus sent forth those first evangelists, He told them to begin their work in Jerusalem, in the very camp of the enemy. It was a real challenge. We can almost hear Peter say, "Lord, you surely do not mean that we must stay in Jerusalem and preach in the very place where they murdered you?"

"Yes," says Jesus, "go to those men and give them My gospel. You hunt up that man who scourged Me, Peter, and tell him I have a place for him in My kingdom. Andrew, find that man who made the crown of thorns to place on My brow. Tell him that in My kingdom a crown awaits him, and there are no thorns in it. Matthew, search for that man who struck Me with the reed, driving those cruel thorns into My brow. Tell him I have a scepter to place in his hand, and he can be a ruler with Me in My kingdom. James, find that

soldier who drove the spear into My side. Make him understand that there is a nearer way to My heart than that. Tell him I have freely forgiven him, and that he too can enter with glory into My kingdom, if he will only accept My grace. But, brethren, be sure to tell them in love, for love is the power by which you will conquer." Yes, love is the real power of evangelism. But love is always costly.

And as we today hasten out amid the bewilderment of the international scene of our time, we too are to tell sinners the simple story of His love. Evangelistic power can spring only from the ashes of a consumed self-glory. When the glory of the Lord is seen upon His people, the Gentiles will come to the light of His truth.

Carlyle tells of a certain insect in the South Sea Islands which when wounded, gives off in its agony a kind of light. The natives sometimes thrust these insects through with a spear and hold them above their heads to light their way through the jungles. Truth might be impaled upon a spear and held up to ignominy, the messengers of the Lord might be called to suffer, but in the agony of that dark hour, amid the jungles of confused thinking, the light of God will break forth to illumine the world.

"The world is against us," declared one with undue concern. But was there ever a time when the world was on our side? The world that clamored for the blood of our Lord and hanged Him on a tree will never be the friend of His servant. The dragon had determined to destroy the remnant church. All the armies of hell are mobilized for the final battle. But He who preserved a faithful remnant in the days of Isaiah will do it again in the climax of human history. Let us gird ourselves for the battle, and if suffering is the price of shining, then God help us to go forth bearing His reproach as we meet the challenge of world evangelism.

## The Climax of World Evangelism

Many years ago a brilliant young minister with his congregation was captured and led away into exile. He was a war casualty, and as he made his long trek to the concentration camp he passed through a valley where years before a battle had been fought. The armies had hastily withdrawn without taking time to bury their dead. The scene was ghastly. As far as the eye could see the valley was white with human bones—a thoroughly depressing scene indeed, but no more depressing than that which this young preacher faced when he reached his destination. A congregation of captives presented a pretty hopeless situation. What could he do to help? Were they not all exiles in an alien land? Well, he prayed, and as he prayed he mused on the scene of death in the valley through which he had passed. Then out of the silence the Spirit of God spoke, summoning him to action.

You know the story, and you know the man. It was Ezekiel. Those bones he saw represented the whole house of Israel. There they were, scattered in the open valley and very dry. Could anything be done with them? Well, he could have gathered them together into heaps; he might have polished them; he might have even organized them; but God told him to do something altogether different, and God's remedy is always best. What he was told to do was about the last thing anyone would ever think of doing. He was told to preach to those bones.

Let us read the words in Ezekiel 37:3-6: "Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. . . . Behold, . . . I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

And Ezekiel says, "I prophesied as I was commanded." Verse 7. In other words, he preached the message God gave him, and there was a noise. It is a hopeful sign when one even hears a noise, but there was more than a noise. There was a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

The people must be brought together in proper relationship. Organization is important. But that is only the beginning. The prophet watches as the bones begin to be covered with flesh, then skin. Now they are men again. By that time most of us would have stopped with a feeling of justifiable pride. That was surely miracle enough. But that was not God's full message. The Lord wants more than a dead church. So the prophet is commanded again: Prophesy again and say, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." Verse 9. He speaks, and, lo, "breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." Verse 10.

How dramatically the situation was changed! Of course, it was the power of God, but it was the power of preaching. That desert of death was transformed into a parade ground for the living army of the Lord. Only a picture, you say? True, but a picture of reality. And though this scripture has its primary application to the literal resurrection at the second Advent, yet its spiritual lesson is nonetheless real and important. Through the centuries apostasy and sin have too often left the church little more than a valley of dry bones. Yet whenever the power of God has been proclaimed by Spirit-filled men, revival and reformation have resulted. Was ever a valley more thickly strewn with the bones of a bankrupt faith than that in which Peter stood up to preach on the day of Pentecost? Only a few days earlier, the leaders of the nation

had crucified the Lord of glory; yet as the wind of God swept across that withered residue there again was a noise and a moving, and three thousand stood up in one day to praise the Life-giver. The message of truth was preached that day in the power of the Spirit as tongues of fire from the throne of God leaped upon messengers. But soon those three thousand converts were eclipsed as five thousand joined the marching hosts of God. Then we read that multitudes began to pour into the church, so many that the statisticians lost count.

Now let us scan the highway of the centuries. Europe is enveloped in darkness and superstition. The light of truth has well-nigh been extinguished, but, lo! a new day is breaking. Not by a program, not by mere organization, but through the preaching of the Word of God. Luther and the other great Reformers begin to proclaim the life-giving message; and again the bones come together; again the army of the Lord stands to its feet and begins to march.

The centuries pass and the spiritual life of England is a valley of dry bones. Another preacher appears, and the day of resurrection comes again to the church of God—a church that has a name that it lives, but in reality is dead. John Wesley and his associates herald a positive, hopeful message. In the words of the ancient prophet, he declares, "Ye shall live!" And what happens? Skepticism and rationalism that have robbed Christianity of its vital message are soon shorn of their power. Mysticism and ritualism that have well-nigh swallowed up what is left of religion no longer appeal to the people, and the corruptions so natural to the unsanctified heart give way before the advance of the truth of God. Immorality and vice, which for years have been stalking unabashed through the land, are arrested. And London, where every sixth shop is said to be a saloon, is responding to the clear, simple call of God.

The Wesleys speak with authority, but always hopefully. In the words of Ezekiel, they could say, "The hand of the Lord was upon me." In fact, that is their equipment, and their only equipment, as it must be the equipment of every

true preacher. Every spokesman for God must know that the hand of the Lord is upon him.

See those early Methodists mounting their horses and setting out on their great preaching missions. Watch them as they literally stir the country. Icicles of indifference are melted in the warm rays of the Sun of Righteousness. The Lord has truly come with healing in His wings. The winter-stripped trees in the garden of the Lord begin to put on verdant foliage, the flowers of grace are blooming again, and the human heart leaps in the glad consciousness that God is again visiting His people. The spiritually dead once more stand upon their feet, an exceedingly great host, as civilization moves into a new day.

### Our Modern Valley

And now another birth hour in history has struck. But we face greater issues today than were ever faced by the Wesleys or Luther. The movements we see are those that will bring the climax of the ages. As in every such hour, there is a longing in the hearts of men for reality. Men are cringing in fear as iron hands threaten the freedom of the world. They cry out for deliverance. If ever the church needed a positive, heartening, inspiring message, it needs such a message today. But what do we find? In all too many Christian churches the very structure of the Christian faith is riddled with modernism, intellectualism, and science falsely so called. The remains of a dead or dying Christianity are strewn everywhere. Embittered, desperate, and cynical, many are saying, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts." Eze. 37:11. Unable to face the future, they long for the dawn of hope.

God's method for meeting their need is still the same. He will do it by preaching. When we see the confidence that God has in preaching, it should lead us to renew our confidence in this all-important work. Men today are in trouble. They need comfort, but they need more than comfort. They need to awaken to a sense of the impending judgments of God.

The Lord is calling us to tell our boasted civilization that it is about to be swept away in the seven last plagues. Great cities, the centers of commerce, amusement, and idolatry, are about to fall under the scourge of divine retribution.

If Jesus wept over Jerusalem, knowing the unpreparedness of her people and what was to befall that city, what should be our attitude as we behold the great modern centers of our day where sin stalks crude and cruel? It was the indifference of His professed people that broke the Saviour's heart. Can we be indifferent in this great hour?

Listen to these words!

"My heart is filled with anguish when I think of the tame messages borne by some of our ministers, when they have a message of life and death to bear. The ministers are asleep; the lay members are asleep; and a world is perishing in sin. May God help His people to arouse and walk and work as men and women on the borders of the eternal world. Soon an awful surprise is coming upon the inhabitants of the world. Suddenly, with power and great glory, Christ will come."<sup>14</sup>

Is it possible for us to spend our time discussing matters of little importance? Should we not be studying ways of doing a larger and speedier work for God? Listen again!

"Men are needed who move under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The sermons preached by some of our ministers will have to be much more powerful than they are now. . . . The message of truth is to be proclaimed by lips touched with a live coal from the divine altar." "Wake up, wake up, my brethren and sisters, and enter the fields." "There is a work to be done in foreign fields, but there is a work to be done in America that is just as important. . . . A special message is now to be borne, a message that will pierce the spiritual darkness and convict and convert souls. . . . We must now be terribly in earnest. We have not a moment to spend in criticism and accusation."<sup>15</sup>

"O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry."<sup>16</sup>

But how can we meet the challenge of these great cities? About a century ago the pioneers of this movement began to lay their plans for world evangelism. None realized the

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.

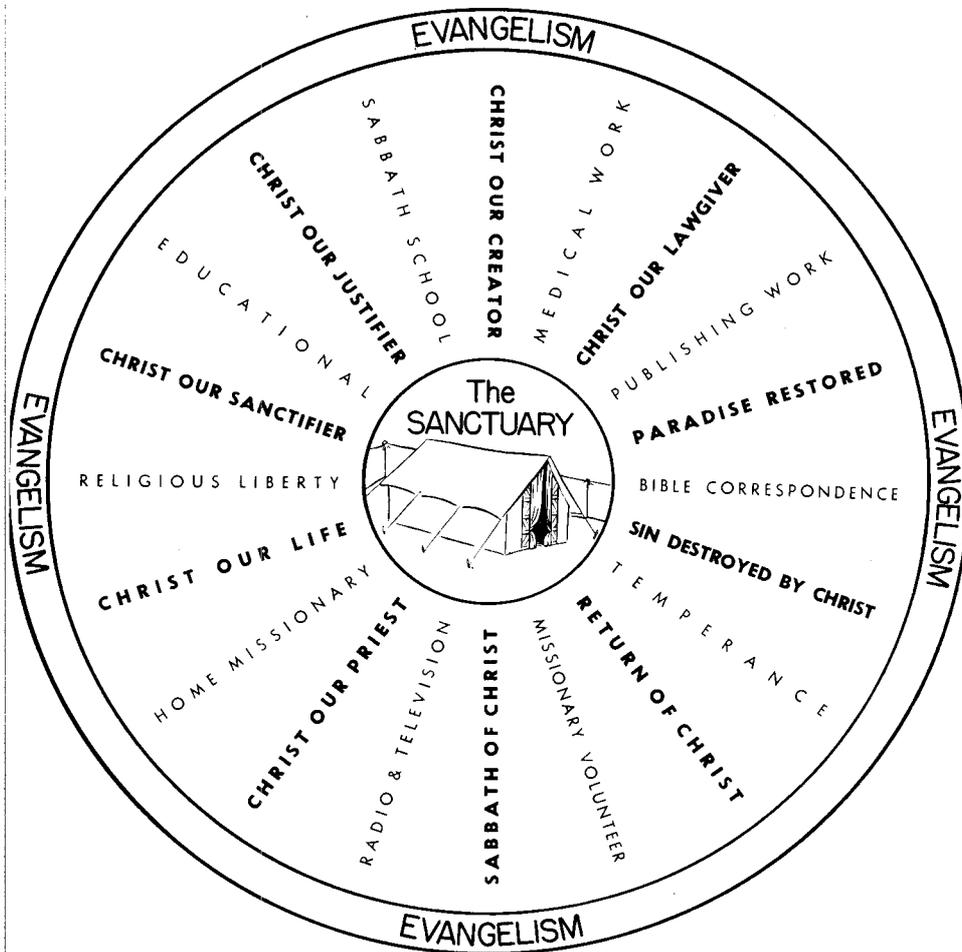
<sup>16</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 29.

immensity of the task, but they *did know* that the hand of the Lord was upon them. The religious world was being torn by conflicting ideas. Evolution was appealing to the intellects of men and threatening to undermine the whole structure of Biblical understanding. To those more ritualistically inclined the Tractarian movement was making its appeal. Fanaticism, such as that manifested in the doctrines and practices of the Shakers and the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, were attracting other groups.

The historic background out of which this message arose is colorful. Elder Nichol and Elder Froom have each presented some of these issues, and we have been stimulated. We need to understand the problems our pioneers faced.

Those were great days when our message began. Soon after the pioneers began to herald the Advent message in the setting of the sanctuary and the judgment, it was borne in upon them that their great task could not be done by the mere calling together of great mass meetings. They must build up. So, little by little, the great structure of this movement began to take shape. Bone came to his bone. Mighty truths that had been lost for ages began to shine from the Word of God, and those truths that had united the believers and separated them from the popular churches were brought together and related each to the other. It was no small undertaking to unite these great doctrines and mold them into a message. But it was done, and the result is a system of theology that in its unity and scope is a wonder to behold. What other Christian group possesses the scintillating glory of this message? Prophecy and precept unite in a clarity that is amazing.

Think of the truth of the Godhead and the atonement, of righteousness by faith, of the sanctuary and the judgment, or of the nature of man and the resurrection. See how it all relates to the second Advent, the millennium, and the final home of the saved. Notice the place of the law of God in the life of the Christian and the truth concerning the Sabbath. Then take the message of healthful living and Christian standards, sanctification, and stewardship. See how the



great prophecies take their place in the great message God has committed to us. But to relate all these mighty truths and to bring them together required much prayerful study.

### The Wheel of Evangelism

I sometimes envision these great truths as spokes in a wheel. Let the sanctuary truth become the hub of the wheel where all the great doctrines are integrated. Now place this

wheel on an axle, for no wheel can generate power unless it is on an axle. Let us think of the axle as representing Christ and the great doctrine of righteousness by faith. That message must be central in everything we preach. I know we realize that especially as we read such statements as this:

“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. . . . I present before you the great, grand movement of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption,—the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.”<sup>37</sup>

A wheel without an axle is only a hoop, a plaything for boys; but as we put it on an axle it becomes at once a thing of power. But more. Let the rim that, supported by the spokes, holds the wheel together represent our great program of evangelism. And now what do we see here? God’s full message is now able to be carried to the ends of the earth. But one thing more—the wheel needs to be guided. And that called for some central counsel and organization, and so the conference organization came into being. And with that growth the various departments began to develop—first the publishing work, then the Sabbath school work. Later on our home missionary and Missionary Volunteer activities came into being. Then others began to form part of the organized work.

Eleven years after the first General Conference session it became evident that God was leading His people into a very definite foreign mission program. And the message has spread since the departure of our first foreign missionary! Today our workers can be found in almost every country and island of the globe. And wherever they have gone they have carried the pattern of the organization. Every department of our work is vital to the whole, and every section of our great program has been God led. In more recent years we have been thrilled as we have seen the development of the radio work spreading out into all the world. More recently the television has come to make its wonderful and unique contribution to the preaching of this truth. We thank God for

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<sup>37</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

the many doors opened by our medical work. Then our great temperance program is beginning to sweep around the world. No, there is no organization in the world just like this movement. Considering it all, we might easily become self-satisfied.

But let us not look only at what we have done. It is what yet remains to be done that staggers us. In some places our work has made strong development. In a few cities we are very well established with many churches and large institutions. But this is not sufficient. God plans that this message should reach into every corner of the globe. We thank God for the big lights, but the world will be illumined by many little jets of light. God calls us to enlarge our thinking. This counsel might apply to us today:

"We are altogether too narrow in our plans. We need to be broader minded. . . . His work is to go forward in cities and towns and villages. . . . We must get away from our smallness and make larger plans. There must be a wider reaching forth to work for those who are nigh and those who are afar off."<sup>18</sup>

Notice these words, "cities and towns and villages." "Jesus did not neglect the villages. . . . 'He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.'"<sup>19</sup>

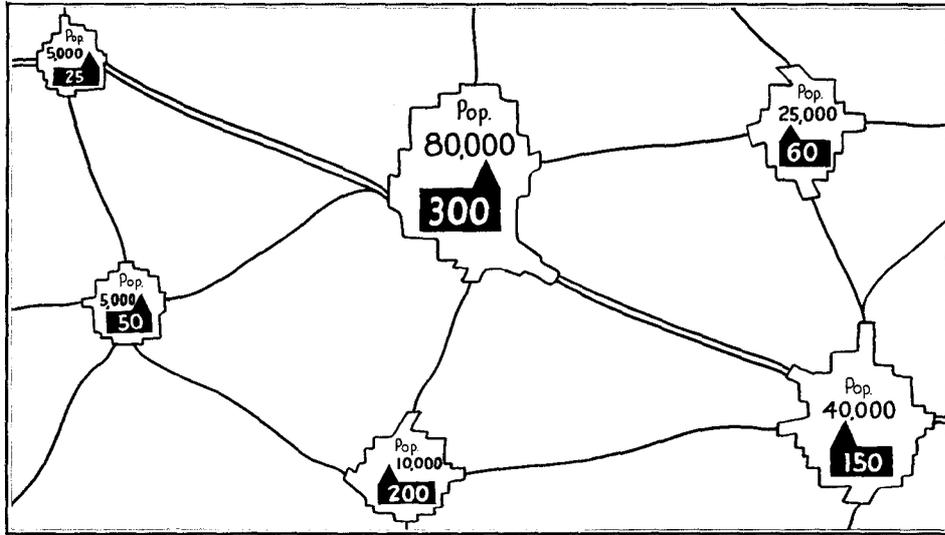
#### City and Village Evangelism

By comparison that was a slow-moving age. But the results of their work were marvelous. The Scripture gives in simplicity the pattern of our Saviour's work. We read, "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." Matt. 9:35.

This is the work to be done in our day. Not only every city but every village is to hear the glad news of our Saviour's soon coming. The message must go to the byways as well as the highways.

<sup>18</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.



A District Pastor's Territory

Let us take a glance at a scene that is familiar in the homeland, at least. The conference committee sends a pastor into a district. Three or four churches are placed under his care. There are a number of cities and towns in the area, and one of them immediately becomes a center for his work. The conference office itself may be there. About twenty-five miles distant is another city, and about forty miles away in the other direction is still another, and eighty miles farther west is quite a large city of seventy thousand. Now with four churches to care for, and a total membership of 350, and with all the goals to be reached and all the sick to be visited and all the domestic problems to be solved, then add to this the oversight of two church schools and maybe a youth camp, and this man faces quite a program. He could well spend all his time just visiting those members and keeping things running. But that would not evangelize his district. In that district not only are there the three or four cities in which we already have churches, but there are a number of other small cities and towns, and many little villages tucked away

in the valleys where people have heard little or nothing of the message. Some of these little settlements may have only two hundred or five hundred people. Not far from two of these churches there is a town of two thousand and another with five thousand inhabitants. Then hundreds of farmers are scattered between those towns. Now, how can all these people be reached with the message?

Well, we hope they all have radios and that they tune in to our programs. And we hope many of them will enroll in the Bible correspondence courses. Then, of course, our faithful colporteurs might sometime go to some of these homes with papers. Yet these towns and villages need more than just an occasional visit of a colporteur. Some plan must be devised to bring the truth more definitely to them. All of those little settlements should hear the voice of the living messenger. It is obvious that the pastor cannot do it all, but he can organize and inspire his church members to go out into those thousands of homes—not just to leave a radio log or a tract, but to undertake a definite program of visitation. Many of those people are longing for someone to lead them to the throne of grace in prayer. And many will respond to regular Bible studies if classes were organized. Remember Jesus visited *all* the towns and villages. He preached to the people and healed the sick. And we must do that if we would follow His steps. From these little settlements many of our strongest members will come if we can only organize ourselves to evangelize them. In a village of but five hundred we might find four or five or perhaps a dozen people who will become interested and ultimately take their stand for the truth. But too often these little pockets of civilization are just passed by.

In a town of five thousand the pastor himself might well begin public meetings. Of course, he does not have any other conference workers with him, but by training and organizing some of his good, strong laymen from the nearest churches, he can build up an evangelistic team. What about the expense? Well, halls in these smaller places are not usually

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expensive, and I have found that the churches are glad to meet all the expenses above the offerings. When a church begins to feel the urge to do something great for God, the members can always find a way. Those whose interest has been aroused through radio or by the colporteur can well become the nucleus for an audience, and soon there may be twenty or thirty people studying the message and planning to be baptized. In a year or so a small church can be organized. Thus the old church becomes the mother of this infant church. In fact, it should be the ambition of every church to be the mother of at least one other church. And we have all found that in these out-of-the-way places people are often easier to impress.

"The people who live in the country places are often more easily reached than those who dwell in the thickly populated cities. . . . When the truth takes hold of the hearts of the simplehearted, and the Spirit of God works upon their minds, leading them to respond to the proclamation of the word, there will be some raised up to help support the cause of God both by their means and their labors."<sup>20</sup>

No minister is really doing a complete work when the pastoring of the existing churches takes up all the time and there is no definite program planned for evangelizing all these little towns and villages within the area. Our evangelistic program must aim to reach every family and every individual in both the homeland and the mission field.

As we face this task of world evangelism, we need to do some down-to-earth, practical thinking. It is good to catch a vision, and that evangelist is wise who hitches his wagon to a star, provided he keeps his wheels on the ground and his axles well oiled. If a five-year program of visitation evangelism could begin in those areas where we already have churches, and if every family in those sections could have an intelligent visit during that five-year period, we would soon see these great unworked areas ablaze with the light of God's truth.

But what is the usual pattern? A pastor is struggling with

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

three or four churches, and weighted down with a tremendous burden of details. He is almost discouraged because he is unable to meet his responsibilities. Before long his work instead of being evangelistic and vital becomes just mechanical.

In the apostolic church things were different. The apostles reached the whole of the then-known world, not by a few high-powered preachers, not even by a highly organized and well-financed program, but by feeling their responsibility to give the message to their friends and their neighbors. Without radios, literature, automobiles, telephones, railroads, or airplanes, those early Christians carried the good news of salvation to all the world in a single generation. While the apostles inspired and guided the program, the details were carried out by well-trained laymen. "Ordain elders in every city," was the counsel of Paul, and those elders were not just to offer prayer in the Sabbath morning service or to preside occasionally at the church officers' meeting; these men became the spiritual leaders of the churches. They were trained to inspire the churches for aggressive evangelism. Many of those local elders died martyrs' deaths, but their churches were aflame with a passion for souls, and men were compelled to take notice of them.

Surely the time has come when our pastors, our conference leaders, our institutional leaders, all of us, should be able to free ourselves from much detail. We have thousands of strong, loyal laymen who will be glad to bear the burdens of the churches so that we ourselves can be free to give much of our time to the definite preaching of the message.

Although metropolitan evangelism is a tremendous challenge, yet these little pockets of civilization must also be reached. Rural evangelism is as much in God's program as city evangelism. The apostles opened up their work in the great centers, making the cities their headquarters. But, following the pattern of their Master, they found ways of getting their message into all the tiny villages. The church members, not the apostles, carried the message to these smaller places.

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“The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.”<sup>21</sup> How well we know those words! But too often we as ministers go on carrying the burdens which our lay members could and would carry.

For a hundred years we have been building up our program and our organization. It is not perfect yet. It is growing all the time. Sometimes we hear someone say with a note of irony, “All that we are doing is adding wheels to the machinery.” Well, thank God for the wheels. We need them all. Not fewer wheels, but more active, soul-winning wheels is what we need. Ezekiel saw the Spirit of God moving in the wheels. It was after he saw the vision of the wheels that he was told to preach to the bones. With his first preaching the bones came together, and the flesh and skin appeared, but all was lifeless. Then he preached again, and something more dynamic occurred. The Lord said, “Prophesy . . . and say to the wind [or the Spirit], . . . Come from the four winds [or from the very ends of the earth], O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” When the Spirit came they lived.

#### The Work of Elisha

We speak of the Elijah message, and rejoice in having a part in it. What an interesting character Elijah was, a truly volcanic personality! Not only did he reprove error, but he organized or reorganized Israel. He certainly was a great leader. Associated with him was Elisha, a younger man and quite a different type. Elisha was more of a pastoral prophet, but he too was a wonderful man of God. We get just a little peep into his character as we read a simple but moving story in Second Kings. A little family of some standing in the community lived in a home hard by the road; and as this prophet Elisha passed by that home day after day, the mother observed him, and she summed up his character in these

<sup>21</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 352.

words: "I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually." As he carried out his daily routine duties, his life was a sermon. He was not so spectacular as Elijah, but there was a depth to his character that was apparent to all.

At the time that Elijah was taken away this younger man, Elisha, was called to assume the responsibilities of leadership. Sensing that he was about to enter upon a larger sphere of service, he sought for divine enduement. He prayed that a double portion of the Spirit of God might rest upon him. What strange emotions must have surged through the hearts of those two men as they came to the last few days of their association! No doubt Elijah gave much instruction to the younger man. Then the day came for their separation. They visited briefly with the young men of the schools of the prophets, and then they set out together on their last earthly journey. As they came to the rolling waters of the Jordan Elijah stripped off his mantle and smote the river. The waters parted, and they went over on dry ground. As they continued their journey they were in fellowship, when all at once they were interrupted. Suddenly the chariots of God swept down from the skies and Elijah was caught up as it were in a whirlwind. Elisha, seeing it, cried out, "My father! my father!" Then Elijah, as a final gesture of love, flung his mantle from the flaming chariot. As it floated back to earth, Elisha caught it, and it became a token of his divine enduement. Then he left the scene, for he must go back to the schools of the prophets. These younger workers had been awaiting his return. They wondered whether he would be as great as Elijah. As Elisha came to the Jordan, the waters were again rolling at his feet. Just across on the other bank were the young prophets, the preachers from the Bethel school. Sensing the importance of the occasion, and knowing that the Lord had called him to leadership, he took the mantle of Elijah, and rolling it up, smote the waters and cried out with confidence, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" He did not say, "Where is Elijah?" for Elijah had gone, but, "Where is Elijah's God?"

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for only Elijah's God could give the demonstration that was needed. The Lord heard, the waters were parted, and again he went over on dry ground. It was a secondhand mantle, but a firsthand demonstration.

Behind that miracle lay not only the long association with a great leader but the daily consistent life of a holy man. When a man knows he is divinely called, it gives him confidence, but he still needs a personal experience with God. The message we are carrying to the world is not something this present generation has discovered. We inherited it from our spiritual fathers. In that sense it too is a secondhand mantle. But like Elisha we must have a firsthand demonstration of power. And that demonstration must stem from a life of prayer and consecration.

I was reading a statement the other day by John R. Mott. He was recounting the time when D. L. Moody was the inspiration at the annual Bible conference. "Our conferences lasted for twenty-eight days," he says. Then he comments on the difficulty of getting people now to give up even a week end for the study of purely spiritual themes. "We had only one meeting a day, and the rest of the day was spent in small groups, or dedication meetings, or simply in thinking out what we had heard," is the way he describes it. Then he says, "As the spirit of the conference deepened we spent our time in thought and prayer into the watches of the night." "I miss something of that earnest seeking in our modern conferences," he adds. "There are so many meetings, such pressure to get documents written and resolutions passed, such weariness of body and spirit that sometimes human activity seems to have been made a substitute for the working of the Spirit of God. I sometimes wonder how in the Christian world of today anyone finds time to say his prayers. Sometimes I have an uncomfortable feeling that I know the answer."

It sounds all too familiar to us. The remnant church seems to have been ensnared with the spirit of the age. So much of our time seems to be taken up on useful but trivial things. We scarcely have time to pray. What we need is a mighty

visitation of God's power. In these last days of this Bible Conference, with the challenge of world evangelism staring us in the face, let us enter into a new consecration.

Some time ago I heard of a minister who went to take a Turkish bath. The attendant waiting upon him said, "Excuse me, sir, but I think you are a clergyman." The minister seemed a little surprised. There was nothing, at that moment at least, that would make him particularly recognizable. So he said to the attendant, "Why do you ask that?"

"Ah, sir," was the reply, "it is always the knees that give you away."

Oh, that it could be truly said of all of us that our knees betray our habits of prayer! "That man is not at home on his knees," was the tragic but true remark concerning one who for years had been looked upon as leader.

When Elisha crossed over on dry land to the other bank of the river, his crossing became a fitting figure of the passing of one era and the commencement of another. Both Elisha and Elijah were great leaders, but it is hard to compare them. When we think of Elijah we picture a dynamic, forthright reformer who could split the skies with his prayers. But Elisha was different. He was quieter, yet he so inspired his workers and his church members that even the least likely of them began to witness for the truth.

That captive maid away up there in the home of Naaman, one of the enemies of God's people, began to tell about the great God of Israel. Although a little slave, separated doubtless from her loved ones, she nevertheless loved her master and her mistress, and she wanted them to understand something of the love of her God. Naaman stood high in rank. He was next to the king. But there was in his heart an awakening desire to know something about the true God. His leprosy became the occasion of his visit to Israel. But in it all was something bigger than leprosy. He needed to know about God, and it was the testimony of that girl that brought the saving message to his home. Thus the Gentile world began to be reached.

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### A Praying Church

Now let us make the parallel. The true symbol of this message and this organization is Elijah. In fact, this is the Elijah message. How splendidly our pioneers laid the foundations of this movement! But they have all now gone to their rest. Those of us who are left are like Elisha, whose reaching out into the great Gentile world could be a type of the advance of this worldwide message. And like Elisha it is for us to inspire our young men and maidens, who though they be separated from home and dear ones, yet like that little maid, they too carry the news of God's love to all those with whom they associate.

A few years ago up in the Northwest one of our pastors was leading out in a prayer week in his own church. It was not the regular time of the Week of Prayer. There were no readings that had come from the General Conference, but this pastor was burdened for his people. He wanted them to catch a new vision of evangelism, and so he organized this special week of consecration. He told his members that if they could not go out and preach, or visit their neighbors, they could at least pray for the unsaved in their own homes. He laid the burden of prayer upon them all.

One of his members, a young woman, was housemaid in a home of wealth. She could not go out and give Bible studies, but she could pray. And she did. The one for whom she felt the burden of prayer was the mistress in the home where she worked, a lovely woman, but a woman of the world. One night this wealthy woman awakened with a strange feeling of fear. It was already after midnight, but she felt afraid. She could not sleep. She awakened her husband, crying, "Oh, I must have help! I feel terrible!"

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know, but I must have help. Maybe I need a doctor. No, what I need is a minister. Get a minister for me."

The husband tried to calm her, saying, "Well, honey, we

don't know any ministers. This is pretty late at night. Why not try to get some sleep, and I will find a minister for you in the morning?" He tried to console her, and she said she would try to go to sleep.

He dozed off, but in less than an hour she awakened him again. "I can't sleep; I must have help," she said. "Do get a minister for me."

Again he reminded her that they were not religious people. "I don't know where to find a minister," he said. "I don't know any ministers." Then a thought occurred to him. "What about our maid? She is a Christian girl, you know. She belongs to those Adventists. Maybe she would know how to get a minister. Perhaps her own minister will come. Let us go down and talk with her."

So they went down to her room. Of course the maid had retired long before. This was two o'clock in the morning, but they threw their robes around them and walked down to the maid's room. The door was ajar. They heard someone talking. It was the maid; she was praying. They heard words like these: "O God, my mistress is such a good woman. She is so kind. I want to see her in the kingdom. O God, save my mistress!"

As they stood there in the dark, the husband whispered to his wife, "Honey, that's why you can't sleep. This girl is praying for you. You'd better go in there." The wife slipped in and knelt down beside this praying girl, and in a moment their arms were locked around each other, and they wept together. That woman of wealth found the Lord Jesus Christ that night and later found the beauty of His truth.

If every one of our church members would take that burden upon his heart, would pray for his loved ones and his neighbors, pray for his friends and even his enemies, we would soon see such a revival in the church as has never been witnessed since apostolic times. We know the Lord is coming soon, but we need a revival of true godliness to enable us to evangelize the world. We have no time to lose. The forces of the enemy are arrayed against the church. Evil is pressing

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closer and closer. Every soldier in the army of the Lord must sense his individual obligation to God.

### **“Hold the Fort”**

In 1864 near Altoona Pass, in the days of the American Civil War, something happened that became the inspiration for one of the best-loved gospel songs. An important post was being attacked. A million and a half rations were stored there. A garrison of fifteen hundred men was trying to defend this post against six thousand trained troops. One by one the outer breastworks were captured, and the defenders were gradually being driven back. Surrender seemed imminent when all at once one of the officers, anxiously looking for help from somewhere, noticed that on a nearby hill a flag was moving. A signaler was spelling out a message. It read, “Hold the fort, I am coming. W. T. Sherman.” That message so thrilled those tired soldiers that every man redoubled his efforts. Three hours later the general arrived, and they were saved.

In the valley of time the church is waging a terrific warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Could we only lift our eyes to the eternal hills, we would read the words of our triumphant Lord: “Behold, I come quickly!” “Hold the fort, for I am coming.” That is the call to the church of God. And not only must we hold, but we must march on to victory. In this great hour every evangelist, every administrator, every institutional worker, every church member, every boy and girl is to take his place in the greatest evangelism program of all time. God is counting on us to redouble our efforts. The enemy knows that his time is short, and he is building barriers against the progress of the truth of God. We have been called by the Lord to match the powers of evil. In this very time the greatest battle of all the ages is reaching its climax. Wars are won by men, munitions, and maps.

Take a look at this map of the world. Here are four hundred million Indian people. For centuries India's people



The Great World Barriers to Our Message

have been shut away by the barriers of the caste system and pagan philosophy. Down in South America is the great barrier of Roman Catholicism. Over in Europe are the barriers of intellectualism, militarism, and nationalism. Down in the great continent of Africa we find the barriers of heathenism in all its stark and brutal reality. Over in the great country of China a new barrier has arisen to impede our progress giving way before a new internationalism. Other peoples of the world are also being swept into this new concept. But God is able to break through any barrier. In North America we encounter the barrier of commercialism and intellectualism. Other great barriers have been erected in the islands of the sea. But by the miracle-working power of God those obstacles are being swept away, for, God says, "who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together." Isa. 27:4. Divine power will break and burn these barriers. O for the burning flame of the Spirit of God!

When Ezekiel preached the second time his soul cried out for the empowering Spirit, the life-giving breath, and the

Spirit came like the wind. A rising wind begins slowly. Just a little breeze first—a little eddy here and a whirl of dust in the distance. But soon the nearer trees begin to bend in the rising current. Then comes the great gust, and soon the roar of the hurricane is excluding every other noise as it breaks and smashes its way through. Come, O Wind! And come not from just one quarter. But come from the earth's far ends. The church of the living God awaits Thy life-giving breath! Come quickly! O Spirit of God, and move the wheels that a new power may possess our evangelism.

The first wheel that was ever made was doubtless crude, perhaps a piece of round log. But at once it was a revolution in progress, as it was placed under a rude cart. Since then the wheel has gone through many cycles: the wheelbarrow, the ricksha, the horse and buggy, the railroad train, the automobile, the airplane. But despite those many transformations, the wheel itself remains. It is basic.

Just so evangelism has gone through many cycles. Methods have changed with the changing times, but like the wheels evangelism still is basic. And on the wheels of evangelism God is going to finish His work and take His people through to the kingdom. What we need is what Ezekiel saw—"the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels." "Take fire from between the wheels," was the command of God. It is the fire between the wheels that caught the prophet's eye. When the wheels of organization are ablaze with the Spirit of God, when the tongues of fire leap again upon the preachers of His Word, then the world will know that this is God's last message. And those who have hesitated to heed the call will then press in. This will be the climax of evangelism.

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,  
With all Thy quickening powers;  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
In these cold hearts of ours."

—ISAAC WATTS.

**The Place of Prophecy in Our Preaching**

By

A. V. OLSON

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## The Place of Prophecy in Our Preaching

### Part I

In order correctly to evaluate the place prophecy should occupy in our preaching, it is necessary that we discover God's purposes in prophecy. These purposes we find revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. Let us consider some of them.

1. God's purpose in prophecy is to reveal Himself to mankind. Speaking through Moses to the children of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, God said, "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Num. 12:6. This promise God has abundantly fulfilled. When we open the books of the prophets we catch visions of God. There He stands revealed as the beginning of all things, as the very fountain of life and light, of wisdom and power. We behold Him as the creator of the heavens and the earth, the one who "hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." Isa. 40:12. With the prophet Isaiah we see Him in glory and majesty seated upon a throne high and lifted up, calmly ruling the universe. (Isa. 6:1.)

Standing by the side of Moses on Mount Sinai's rugged peaks, we hear the Lord as He passes by proclaim, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in

goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Ex. 34:6, 7.

Again and again as we turn the prophetic page we behold our God as a being of love and tender compassion. We hear Him profess, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3.

In the midst of the raging storm and the darkness we hear His assuring and fatherly voice saying, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isa. 41:10.

With the prophet Daniel we behold our God as the Ancient of days, robed in garments of white, seated on a throne "like the fiery flame," surrounded by a vast multitude of ministering angels as the judgment is set and the books are opened.

Then as we stand with John the revelator on the lonely Isle of Patmos, we see the mighty God casting Satan, his angels, and all his wicked host into the lake of fire, which consumes them and puts an end forever to sin and sorrow, suffering and death. From the ruins of the old we behold our God bringing forth a new earth, clad in Edenic beauty, to be throughout eternal ages the home of the redeemed, with God Himself dwelling in their midst.

If our preaching is to be complete and fruitful, it must present the God of the prophecies to our audiences. We must make Him pass before our hearers in all His loveliness, majesty, and power.

2. The purpose of prophecy is to establish faith in God and in His Word. Speaking to His disciples of old, Jesus said, "I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14:29. No human being can tell what the morrow will bring forth. In the words of the wise men of Babylon, as they stood trembling before the king, "There is none other that can shew it . . . , except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." Dan. 2:11.

God Himself points to the fact that He alone can foretell

the future as evidence that He is God. Here are His own words: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10.

In the prophecies of the Old and the New Testament we have much of the history of the world written in advance. The rise and fall of nations were clearly foretold long before they came on the stage of action. Likewise the birth of kings and their deeds were accurately described decades and even centuries before these men were born. Secular history testifies that these divine predictions have been fulfilled. These facts bear positive witness that there is a God—a God who does know the end from the beginning—and that the Bible is indeed His inspired word.

Speaking of this, Alexander Keith, the well-known writer on prophecy, says:

"Of all the attributes of the God of the universe, his prescience has bewildered and baffled the most all the powers of human perception; and an evidence of the exercise of this perfection in the revelation of what the infinite Mind alone could make known, is the seal of God, which can never be counterfeited, affixed to the truth which it attests. . . . If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine; if they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted; if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man; and if the history itself corresponds with the prediction; then the evidence which the prophecies impart is a sign and a wonder to every age: no clearer testimony or greater assurance of the truth can be given; and if men do not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."<sup>1</sup>

No sincere thinking person who is acquainted with ancient history can read the prophecies of Daniel and note the accuracy with which the prophet foretold the fall of Babylon and the rise and fall in succession of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, without being profoundly impressed with the thought

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Keith, *Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion* (36th ed.), pp. 7, 8.

that back of Daniel stood the eternal and the all-wise God, instructing and guiding him.

One of the most remarkable examples of fulfilled prophecy is found in the history of Babylon and its haughty rulers. This proud city, one of the greatest and most glorious that ever adorned the face of the earth, the center from which all of the then-known world was ruled with an iron rod, the prophets declared would be conquered and laid in ruins.

Long before its downfall Isaiah wrote:

“Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.” Isa. 13:19-21.

Moreover, through the same prophet, a hundred years or more before the conquest took place, God gave the name of the king who would take the city and told how it would be overcome.

“Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. . . . I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.” Isa. 45:1-5.

At a later date Jeremiah predicted the very time when Babylon would be overthrown. He wrote:

“And it shall come to pass, when the seventy years are accomplished [the seventy years of Jewish captivity], that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.” Jer. 25:12.

These divine predictions were literally fulfilled. As these seventy years were drawing to a close during the reign of the weak, voluptuous, and pleasure-loving King Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, “Babylon was besieged by

Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Medes and Persians."<sup>2</sup>

Unable either to scale or to penetrate the mighty walls surrounding the proud city, Cyrus turned out of their course the waters of the Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city, thus making it possible for the army to enter in under the walls. This huge undertaking would, however, have been in vain had the gates in the massive walls lining the two banks of the river been locked, but according to predictions, they were open. Without opposition Cyrus marched his conquering host through these river gates and on toward the palace.

That very night, while this was taking place, King Belshazzar and his friends, his wives, his concubines, and a thousand of his lords were feasting and carousing as though utterly oblivious of any danger. Suddenly their revelry ceased. A sleeveless hand was writing on the palace wall the awful doom, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," which being interpreted means, "Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Dan. 5:25-28.

While the king and his guests were still trembling with fear and terror, the soldiers of Cyrus swept into the banquet hall and slaughtered them. "In that night," says Daniel, "was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." Verse 30.

Cyrus did not at once raze the city of Babylon. It continued to exist for several centuries, but with ever-diminishing glory and power. Again and again it became the prey of ambitious and blood-thirsty kings and generals. Its destruction was progressive. Finally nothing remained of the once-proud and magnificent city but heaps of deserted ruins.

As the decades and centuries rolled by, these ruins became buried under the shifting sands of the desert, but in more recent times man has removed the sand and uncovered the battered ruins. There they stand today in the valley of the

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<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 523.

Euphrates, bearing their silent but mighty and convincing testimony that there is a God in heaven who spoke through ancient prophets.<sup>3</sup>

The history of the children of Israel is a striking example of fulfilled prophecy. While they were on their way from Egypt to Canaan, God made known to them that if they would faithfully obey Him, He would bless them and make them the head of all the nations of earth. On the other hand, He warned them that if they disobeyed and followed the evil ways and practices of the heathen nations around them, they would finally be removed from their beloved land and be scattered into all the kingdoms of earth. Said the prophet Moses:

“The Lord shall scatter thee among all the people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.” Deut. 28:64-67.

These predictions of the hardships and sore trials that would come to the children of Israel if they departed from God we know have been fulfilled to the letter. They have indeed been uprooted and scattered into all the world. The harrowing experiences that have come to them in our own days are vivid reminders of the solemn warning uttered by ancient prophets.

Israel was not the only nation whose fate was told in advance. Through the major and minor prophets, God made known what would happen to all the idolatrous nations around them. History testifies that these prophecies have been fulfilled. On this point there is no room for doubt or quibbling.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed and interesting account of the conquest and final destruction of Babylon, read Keith, *On the Prophecies*, chapter “Babylon.” It is based on the statements of numerous reliable historians.

The testimony of fulfilled prophecy constitutes an evidence that the enemy cannot meet or overthrow. Before it the infidel, the agnostic, and the atheist all stand bewildered, dumfounded, and speechless. Confronted with this unanswerable argument, many an unbeliever has cast away his doubts and has cried out as did the man of old, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Mark 9:24.

We conclude, therefore, that if as ministers we wish to confound those who declare there is no God and who maintain that the Bible is not a divinely inspired book, and if we desire to establish in every honest heart a firm, unwavering faith in God and in His blessed Word, we must give ample room to fulfilled prophecy in our preaching.

3. The purpose of prophecy is to lay a firm foundation for faith in the divinity of Christ. When Jesus overtook the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and found them troubled and perplexed, their faith trembling in the balance, He did not, in His effort to re-establish faith, begin by calling their attention to the miracles He had wrought in their midst, wonderful and convincing though they were, but "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27.

As He did so, faith was rekindled and their hearts burned within them. Referring to this experience Ellen G. White writes:

"It was necessary for them to understand the witness borne to Him by the types and the prophecies of the Old Testament. Upon these their faith must be established. Christ performed no miracle to convince them, but it was His first work to explain the Scriptures. They had looked upon His death as the destruction of all their hopes. Now He showed from the prophets that this was the very strongest evidence for their faith."<sup>4</sup>

When later the apostles went forth to preach Christ they employed this same method. Standing before King Agrippa and his royal retinue, the apostle Paul declared:

"I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 796-799.

none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." Acts 26:22, 23.

Again, when the Roman Jews crowded into his rented lodging in the imperial city, Paul "expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." Acts 28:23.

There is convincing and converting power in sermons that present Christ as the Messiah foreshadowed in the prophetic types and in the prophecies of the Old Testament. It was such a sermon Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. This sermon has gone down in sacred history as the most fruitful sermon that ever came forth from human lips. When we examine this sermon we discover that except for a brief introduction in which he mentions that what they were witnessing was a literal fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, Peter devoted his entire sermon to prove that Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among them "by miracles and wonders and signs," was indeed the Christ foretold by the prophets of their sacred Scriptures. As he piled argument on argument showing how Jesus had met the prophetic predictions, their minds were convinced of the truth. Under the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit conviction gripped their hearts, and by faith three thousand of them accepted Jesus as their Saviour that day.

If we, in these days of skepticism and doubt, are to be successful in our efforts to lead men and women to believe in Jesus as the Sent of God, we must follow the example of Paul and Peter. We must show our hearers that Jesus met the predictions of the prophets in every detail. We must give them a basis for faith in Christ. When we do, faith will be kindled and results will follow. The truth that made the hearts of the men on the Emmaus road burn within them, will also make the hearts of men and women in our day burn within them. The message that brought conviction and con-

version on the day of Pentecost will bring conviction and conversion now.

Through His inspired messenger the Lord has told us plainly:

"It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time. The Saviour is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. It is the light from the prophetic past that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty. The miracles of Christ are proof of His divinity; but a stronger proof that He is the world's Redeemer is found in comparing the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New."<sup>5</sup>

4. The purpose of God in prophecy is to make known in advance His plans and His intentions in His dealings with man. He has assured us that He "will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. That is, He will do nothing that vitally concerns the inhabitants of earth without first revealing it to them through His servants the prophets. This is the way He has dealt with man all down through the ages.

In the days of Noah, when men and women had sunken to the very lowest depths of sin and degradation and the land was continually polluted with their abominations, God sent Noah, His faithful prophet and preacher of righteousness, to them with the startling message that He would destroy the earth with a flood. When they failed to heed the warning, the Flood came as predicted, and swept away all mankind except Noah and his family.

Later, when God had called Abraham to leave his country for Canaan, where he was to become the father of a great nation, He revealed to him that his posterity would go into a strange land where they would become servants and would suffer affliction for a stated period of time and then come out with great substance to re-enter the Promised Land.

Numerous other occasions could be cited showing how God, down through Old and New Testament times, informed

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 799.

His people through the prophets of His plans and purposes for them.

5. The purpose of prophecy is to give light. The apostle Peter declares, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

Glorious is the light that shines from the prophetic page. It is out of the prophecies of the Old and the New Testament that light is thrown for us on the past, the present, and the future.

Says the servant of the Lord:

"In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. . . . In the history of nations the student of God's word may behold the literal fulfillment of divine prophecy. . . .

"To understand that 'righteousness exalteth a nation;' that 'the throne is established by righteousness,' and 'upholden by mercy;' to recognize the outworking of these principles in the manifestation of His power who 'removeth kings, and setteth up kings,'—this is to understand the philosophy of history."<sup>6</sup>

No sooner had the night of sin cast its dark, gloomy shadows across the Garden of Eden than God caused beams of prophetic light to penetrate the darkness to bring new hope and joy to the lost and forlorn pair. Ever since then the prophetic lamp has shone with ever-increasing luster as prophets of God's own choosing have brought new revelations of His plans and purposes for man. Added light has also come as prophets and saints have searched "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11.

<sup>6</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 499-502.

Our age has been especially favored. The accumulated prophetic light of the ages is focused upon us. We have the benefit of the light that shone upon all the generations of the past and of all the light peculiar to our own day. From Enoch, the seventh from Adam, down through the long line of divinely inspired prophets they have spoken of our day. Were it not for this, the present would be dark and mysterious and the future would be darker still. But, thank God, He has not left us in darkness. Through His prophets He has caused great light to shine upon us. By this means He has revealed to us the meaning of things that are past, of things that are now taking place around us, and of things to come.

"The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are to-day in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. . . . To-day the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. . . . The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.

"The Bible and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble, and men's hearts to fail them for fear."<sup>7</sup>

It is the end of the world that is upon us: "We hear the footsteps of an approaching God to punish the world for their iniquity."<sup>8</sup> For the unprepared it is a terrifying picture that the prophets have painted. "A day of darkness and of gloominess." A day when the Lord shall arise "to shake terribly the earth." It is the last act in the great drama of sin. The hour

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 536, 537.

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 11, p. 29.

is about to strike for the complete annihilation of sin and sinners. The author of evil and all his wicked host are to be blotted out in the fires that are soon to cleanse the earth from the miasma of sin and death.

But, thank God, the prophecies not only reveal the fact that our old world is hastening on to its final doom; they also reveal the glorious truth that Christ, our Redeemer and our King, is soon coming to gather His saints and to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace, which shall stand forever. Soon, yes, very soon, according to the prophetic word, will dawn that golden morning which the saints of all ages have longed and prayed for, when we shall enter the Promised Land, where sickness, suffering, and death shall be no more. There we shall see our Saviour face to face and dwell with God forevermore. What a glorious climax to the drama of the ages!

Let us summarize. The purpose of prophecy is (1) to give to mankind a revelation of God, (2) to establish in human hearts an unwavering faith in God and in His Word, (3) to lay a foundation for an abiding, unshakable faith in Christ as the divine Saviour from sin and death, (4) to make known in advance God's plans and purposes in His dealings with man, (5) to throw light on the past, present, and future.

If the foregoing is correct, as I believe it is, then it must be evident to us all that prophecy should occupy an important place in our preaching. I see no other way for us to meet God's purpose in prophecy and His purpose in our preaching. Without the prophetic word we cannot hope to bring to the world as complete a revelation of God as we should. Without this word we will find it well-nigh impossible, in this age of doubt and skepticism, to establish in the hearts of men and women a firm, abiding faith in God, in His Word, and in His Son, Jesus, our divine Lord and Saviour. Moreover, without the blessed word of prophecy, how can we, as ministers, hope to answer the question that is haunting men and women everywhere: "What do these things mean?" As the shadows of the long dark night of sin

are thickening around us, filling men's hearts with anguish and evil forebodings, how can we throw light for them on the present and the future without the prophetic lamp?

We must ever bear in mind that God has raised up the Advent movement for the express purpose of proclaiming a prophetic message to the world. We are here at this late hour to expound the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. We are here to give voice to the messages of the prophets—messages of vital concern to every soul on earth.

While we are thus stressing the importance of giving prophecy a large place in our preaching, it may not be out of place to sound a note of warning against the danger of yielding to the temptation of indulging in fanciful, private interpretations or personal predictions. Consciously or unconsciously many of us may have erred on this point.

Years ago I overheard one of our ministers, who had frequently written articles for the newspapers of his city on the Turkish question, say to a group of workers, "I will never write another article on this subject for the public press, because every time I tell what the Turk is going to do he makes a fool of me by doing something entirely different." By his erroneous interpretations and his unwarranted predictions, this good brother had created embarrassment both for himself and for the church.

This man has not been the only one to make such mistakes. Well do I recall how during the first world war we were assured, on the basis of a fanciful interpretation of an obscure text, that at the end of the war, when the peace conference would assemble, the pope of Rome would be found sitting at the head of the council table as chairman. But lo, and behold, when the peace conference met there was no pope in the chair. He was not even present. Since the outbreak of the last world war I have heard a number of sermons on "Russia in Prophecy." All of them have been disappointing. They have savored too much of fanciful speculations and interpretations of obscure texts. Some go beyond the bounds of divine revelation when describing the future

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state of the redeemed. On the basis of nothing more than their own vivid imaginations they make some rather fantastic predictions. Such presentations should find no place in our preaching. Our role is not to prophesy, but to expound prophecy. In our eagerness to capture and hold the attention of the people, we should never indulge in fanciful interpretations. Sooner or later the hearers will discover that the interpretations were false; then the preacher will be regarded as a false prophet and the people whom he represents will be discredited.

Against this type of preaching the Lord has cautioned us through His messenger. We read: "There is to be no levity, no trifling, no fanciful interpretation; the minister must speak in sincerity and deep earnestness, as a voice from God expounding the Sacred Scriptures."<sup>9</sup>

There are some who seem to be of the opinion that all prophecy relating to the past is clear and can be easily explained. This is a mistake. There are prophetic passages relating to matters or events that are now in the past that are dim to us for the simple reason that the historical data available regarding the events involved in the prophecy are fragmentary or altogether lacking. For the correct understanding of such prophecies we shall have to wait until the necessary data are available, which in certain cases may not be until we sit at the feet of Jesus in the kingdom to come. Needless to say, prophecies of this character should be given no place in our preaching.

Students of prophecy should also bear in mind the fact that certain prophetic predictions are conditional. This principle is clearly stated in the Word of God:

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice,

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<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 147.

then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jer. 18:7-10.

Sometimes, as in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, the condition is stated. At other times it is not stated. The prediction of Jonah against Nineveh is a good example. Because the people of that wicked city repented, the predicted judgment was not executed.

In the Word of God there are also certain lines of prophecy regarding the application of which there may be divergent views among us. One school of earnest, devoted men may hold tenaciously to one view, whereas another school of equally sincere and conscientious men may hold a different view. Feeling convinced that they are right in their conclusions, both sides will feel a strong urge to press their views upon the church and possibly upon the world. Should this be done, it would endanger the peace and harmony of the church. It could lead to strife and confusion. As ministers in the cause of God, we have no right to engage in the presentation of views on the prophecies—or on any other subject—that will cause divisions and conflicts in the church.

Years ago, when able and well-meaning men among us were creating misunderstanding, conflicts, and sorrow by vigorously proclaiming their opposing views on "the daily," the Lord sent very clear and positive instruction for both sides to lay down their arms and to stop the agitation. From a letter addressed "To My Brethren in the Ministry," we quote as follows:

"I have words to speak to . . . all who have been active in urging their views in regard to the meaning of 'the daily' of Daniel 8. This is not to be made a test question, and the agitation that has resulted from its being treated as such has been very unfortunate. . . . The light given me is that nothing should be done to increase the agitation upon this question. Let it not be brought into our discourses, and dwelt upon as a matter of great importance. . . . The subject of 'the daily' should not call forth such movements as have been made. As a result of the way this subject has been handled by men on both sides of the question, controversy has arisen and confusion has resulted. . . . While the present condition of difference of opinion regarding this subject exists,

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let it not be made prominent. Let all contention cease. At such a time silence is eloquence.”<sup>10</sup>

At another time, when agitation over “who is to compose the one hundred and forty-four thousand” was causing considerable disturbance and conflict, Mrs. White wrote:

“It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand?”<sup>11</sup>

From the foregoing quotations we must not conclude that no more thought or study is to be given to prophecies that for the present may seem dim and hard to understand. Neither does it necessarily mean that the time will never come when they can be presented in public. If in the providence of God light breaks through the mists removing the differences of opinions that have existed, thus uniting hearts and minds, there will be no reason for further silence. As the messenger of the Lord has said:

“Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God.”<sup>12</sup>

When we think our search has been rewarded with new light, we should not rush into the pulpit to publish it abroad. God’s plan is for us to take our findings first to God-fearing men of experience.

“The only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety.’”<sup>13</sup>

When a brother minister or layman comes to us with what to him seems to be new light, let us not treat him as a heretic. Instead, we should sit down with him and with brethren of

<sup>10</sup> E. G. White letter 62, 1910.

<sup>11</sup> E. G. White manuscript 26, 1901.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34.

<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 293.

experience and prayerfully consider the matter. It may be our brother has found a ray that if followed will lead us to an effulgence of glorious light and truth. This is the way our pioneers worked. It was thus they built up much of the wonderful system of prophetic truth that we hold so dear today.

Notice the following lines from the pen of Mrs. White:

"In 1844, when anything came to our attention that we did not understand, we kneeled down and asked God to help us take the right position; and then we were able to come to a right understanding and see eye to eye. There was no dissention, no enmity, no evil-surmising, no misjudging of our brethren. . . . We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance."<sup>14</sup>

All who undertake this deeper and more thorough study of the prophecies, the same as of any other Bible subject, must do so with an open mind. They must be ready and willing to accept any new light that God reveals to them, be it in the form of additional evidence in support of a prophetic doctrine already known and cherished or the revelation of an entirely new topic. This does not mean that the former light and truth must be abandoned. All truth springs from God. It is as eternal and abiding as God. New light does not eclipse or extinguish the old. It simply merges with the old, thus producing a greater, more powerful, and more glorious light.

Prophetic doctrines that are firmly established on the eternal rock of Bible truth can never be moved or overthrown. The prophecies regarding the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the restoration of Paradise lost, for instance, the same as the doctrines concerning the existence of God, the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, life only in Christ, et cetera, are not to be tampered with.

<sup>14</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 302.

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This includes the threefold message. "I was shown three steps," writes Mrs. White, "the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages.'" <sup>15</sup>

Although we must hold firmly to all the light that God has revealed to us and always be ready to accept new revelations from Him, we must not conclude that we shall never have to abandon any views that we may have held regarding some prophetic passage. The entrance of new light may reveal that we have held views that were not in harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures. If so, we must be willing to surrender these views. Error, though hoary with age, is error still and should be rejected. This thought is clearly stated in the following lines from the inspired pen:

"Some have feared that if in even a single point they acknowledge themselves in error, other minds would be led to doubt the whole theory of truth. Therefore they have felt that investigation should not be permitted; that it would tend to dissension and disunion. But if such is to be the result of investigation, the sooner it comes the better. If there are those whose faith in God's word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We can not hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but one who is infallible—He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life." <sup>16</sup>

Although it is eternally true that we must ever keep our hearts and minds open for the reception of new light and truth, it is equally true that we must give no place in our preaching to human speculations, fanciful interpretations, and self-made predictions. As men chosen by God to proclaim His last warning message to the world, we must, as previously pointed out, keep our preaching free from these things.

Another danger to be guarded against is the idea now current in many quarters that unfulfilled prophecy must find no place in modern preaching. This is a grave mistake. It is an effort on the part of Satan to rob preaching of one of its

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 258.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 105.

most glorious functions; namely, that of revealing to mankind some of the vital things which the future holds in store.

The fundamental Christian doctrines of the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, the millennium, the destruction of sin, the restoration of Paradise lost, et cetera, are all founded on unfulfilled prophecy. These doctrines have been the hope and the joy of God's people in ages past. They are still the blessed hope of the saints today. The realization of all that is vouchsafed to us in the gospel is dependent on the accomplishment of prophecies yet unfulfilled. The elimination of these prophetic doctrines would deprive the gospel message of much of its charm and power. It would leave it meaningless; for without the resurrection and Paradise restored, the sacrifice on the cross will have been in vain. Instead of eliminating these unfulfilled prophecies from our preaching, we must proclaim them with greater power and conviction than ever before.

There are also other unfulfilled prophecies we must present if we are to give the third angel's message to the world in its fullness. There is, for instance, the prophecy of Revelation 13 regarding the parts that certain powers are still to play in the final scenes of this world's history, with special emphasis on the enforcement of the mark of the beast. Such unfulfilled prophecies must be given the place in our preaching that their importance demands. What we are to avoid is the descent into the realm of speculative prophetic preaching.

Our business is to preach the Word. To a world groping in darkness we are to bring the light of the "more sure word of prophecy." This is the only thing that can reveal the meaning of what is taking place in the world today and throw light on the future. It is the only thing that can bring hope to a despairing world.

If we are to meet the mind of God in our preaching, we must present the captivating prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, which take us from one milepost to another down through history to the very close of time. We must let our audiences stand with the prophets as they draw back the

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curtain, that we may behold the final scenes in the great conflict between the forces of good and evil. We must let them catch the entrancing vision of the glories and the bliss that are in store for the redeemed in the earth made new.

Prophecy, then, must find a large and prominent place in our preaching. It is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Rev. 1:1. This revelation we have been solemnly charged to proclaim to the world.

Writes the servant of the Lord:

"The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed, be left untouched. If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. . . . Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, 'the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star.'"<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

## The Place of Prophecy in Our Preaching

### Part II

The Advent movement is a prophetic movement. It is in the world today in fulfillment of prophecy. From his exile on the lonely Isle of Patmos the aged apostle and prophet John, looking down through the stream of time, saw a mighty movement represented by three angels announcing to the inhabitants of earth the startling fact that the hour of God's judgment had come.

According to the prophecy of Daniel, chapters 8 and 9, we all know that the hour fixed in the divine timetable for this judgment to begin was the year 1844. When the appointed hour was about to strike, God moved upon men in different parts of the world to sound the alarm. Hundreds of preachers in America, England, and other parts of the world cried "with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Rev. 14:7. When the preachers were forbidden by the authorities, as was the case in Sweden, to sound forth this message, God moved upon children to proclaim it.

The proclamation of this stirring message produced a profound impression. Tens of thousands of people cried unto God for mercy. They believed that the "hour of his judgment" meant the coming of Christ in glory to gather His saints and to take vengeance on the unprepared. They were mistaken in their understanding of the event but right in regard to the time. Though they knew it not, they were, in

the providence of the Almighty, fulfilling prophecy when they proclaimed with power, "The hour of his judgment is come." Speaking of this, Mrs. White says: "Those who proclaimed this warning gave the right message at the right time."<sup>18</sup>

When the Saviour did not come at the time expected, the disappointment was keen. Many abandoned their faith, and others were carried away by fanaticism; some, however, refused to surrender their faith in God and His Word. They knew that the Lord had been with them. A prayerful restudy of the prophecies confirmed them in their belief that the long prophetic period of Daniel 8:14 ended in 1844. Then as they cried unto the Lord for a clearer understanding of His Word, God in His mercy led them to see and understand that the predicted event to take place in 1844 was not the second coming of Christ to this earth, but the beginning of the investigative judgment in the sanctuary above.

Now in the light shining from the sanctuary, the three angels' message of Revelation and many kindred Bible doctrines became clear to their inquiring minds. A whole system of truth took shape before their wondering eyes. Gradually it dawned upon them that God had revealed to them His last warning message for a world soon to perish at the second coming of Christ.

The conviction now gripped their hearts and souls that God had called them to give this solemn message to the world. Obedient to their heavenly calling, they entered upon their task. Though few in numbers, poor, hated, and despised, they pressed forward, trusting in God. As they advanced, their numbers increased. Soon the movement became an organized body known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, frequently and affectionately spoken of as the Advent movement.

Under the blessing of God this movement has made marvelous progress. In a comparatively few short years it has spread from land to land and from continent to continent, so that today it is found in nearly every country in the world and in many scores of islands in the seven seas.

<sup>18</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 352.

A great work has already been accomplished, but "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." The movement is to expand into every nook and corner of our old world. To "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6) it is to go. It is to continue its operations until the earth is lightened with the glory of the Lord. Then it will culminate in the coming of Christ to gather the harvest of the earth.

Such is the picture of the Advent movement given us by the revelator. It is indeed a prophetic movement. It is in the world today in fulfillment of prophecy. Not only is the Advent movement a prophetic movement, but it also has a prophetic message. The same prophet who foretold the rise and progress of the movement also foretold the message that it would carry to the world. This message is clearly stated in the prophecy of John. It is generally known as the threefold message of Revelation, or, for convenience, the third angel's message.

This is a special message for a special time. It is the last message that will ever come from our merciful and long-suffering God to the inhabitants of this world, for it culminates in the coming of the Lord. When it has reached every soul on earth, Christ, our great high priest, will lay off His priestly garments and close the door of probation forever. No more then will His gentle voice be heard pleading with sinners to repent. The destiny of every human soul will then have been settled, and the verdict will go forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22:11.

This prophetic message, which is to be carried to the world by a prophetic movement, is destined for a prophetic time or age. As already indicated, it is the last message that God will send to this world; consequently, it is destined for the period spoken of in the Bible as "the last days" (Acts 2:17), "the day of his preparation" (Nahum 2:3), "the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4), et cetera.

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No period in the entire history of the world has received so much attention by the prophets as this period. Practically all the prophets from Enoch to John have prophesied concerning it. Most of the prophecies of Jesus recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke relate to this time.

From our study of the prophecies we know that we are living in this prophetic period. The prophecies of Daniel lead us step by step through the turbulent history of the world to our own time. The events foretold by both Old and New Testament prophets for the last days are now taking place all around us. There is no room for a shadow of doubt. We are living in the last days. Writes the messenger of the Lord:

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude."<sup>19</sup>

Somber indeed is the picture which the ancient seers have painted of our age. It is "a day of darkness and of gloominess" (Joel 2:3); a time of great upheavals in nature—earthquakes, storms and tidal waves; a time of war and bloodshed, of famine and pestilence; a time of bitter conflict between capital and labor; a time of apostasy and corruption, of immorality and vice, of drunkenness and degradation; a time when men's hearts fail them for fear and for looking after the things that are coming upon the earth. (See Matthew 24; Luke 21; James 5:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

This prophetic picture of our day is not overdrawn. The reality beggars description. Human language seems inadequate to describe accurately the situation the world finds itself in today.

That we are living in a time of crisis is recognized by thinking men and women all over the world. The titles alone

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<sup>19</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 11.

of books, pamphlets, and magazine articles are revealing. Notice a few of them: *The Coming Crisis*, *World Crisis and World Corruption*, *The End of European History*, *Nearing the Abyss*, *The Annihilation of Man*, *Time for Decision*, *Persuade or Perish*, *Minutes to Midnight*, *Five Minutes to Twelve*.

Wilbur M. Smith writes:

"Today the world, the unbelieving world, unites in testifying that we are in an hour of dire crisis—not only an hour of possible, impending calamities; but it would seem, on the very verge of the eclipse of civilization and the destruction of humanity. . . . Many believe it (the crisis) is so critical that they insist civilization is doomed and we are at the end of this age."<sup>20</sup>

From a book by Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Man and Society in Calamity*, Wilbur Smith quotes the following striking paragraph:

"We live amidst one of the greatest crises in human history. Not only war, famine, pestilence, and revolution, but a legion of other calamities are also rampant over the whole world. All values are unsettled. All norms are broken. Humanity has become a distorted image of its own noble self. The crisis is omnipresent and involves almost the whole of culture and society from top to bottom. It is manifest in the fine arts and science, in philosophy and religion, in ethics and law. It permeates the forms of social, economic, and political organizations and the entire way of living and thinking. There is every reason to expect that the disastrous effects of such calamities will fall upon us in a much more intensive and extensive scale during this catastrophic age of ours."<sup>21</sup>

Throughout the world there is a growing feeling that what the world needs now is a prophet—an Elijah or a John the Baptist. We often see this thought expressed in books and papers. These expressions come from men filling important positions in different walks of life. We have space here only for a few sample quotations.

"There is beginning to arise in the church a call for the prophet as distinguished from the preacher. There are faithful, zealous, intelligent preachers, but few if any of them function as the hoped for

<sup>20</sup> Wilbur M. Smith, *World Crisis and the Prophetic Scriptures*, pp. 13-16.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 17.

prophet must do, if he comes with the mighty upheaving message for which a troubled age awaits. Will he come?"<sup>22</sup>

"Excepting a sprinkling of scattered individuals, nobody finds in Christianity today a knowledge or a faith that is 'clear enough to be a beacon' for our social navigation, or 'sharp enough to cut a way for us through the tangled confusion of the present,' or vital enough to provide 'a program of action through which we can claim the future as our own.'"<sup>23</sup>

"We are asked to turn to the Church for our enlightenment, but when we do so we find that the voice of the Church is not inspired. The voice of the Church today, we find, is the echo of our own voices, and the result of experience, already manifest, is disillusionment. . . .

"The way out is the sound of a voice, not our voice, but a voice coming from something not ourselves, in the existence of which we cannot disbelieve."<sup>24</sup>

"Never have Christian pastors experienced such soul-searching as they now undergo in uttering the Christian message. Testimonies of the clergy are heard on every hand in which the bravest and most devout confess their inability to reach a decision which they can proclaim with assurance that it reflects the mind of Christ. These are indeed times that try men's souls—and none so much as the souls of God's prophets. The church's leadership has a profound sense of needing to be led. The hungry sheep look up to hungrier shepherds. . . . The Christian is now a total community of confused minds, of hearts waiting for a sure word of God, of leaders whose voices are hushed until the live coal of prophecy touches their lips."<sup>25</sup>

"Our civilization is greatly in need of a prophet. In bygone times, God has spoken through men. Would that he could find the human instrument through whom he could speak again."<sup>26</sup>

The anguished cry of all these writers is for a voice, a prophetic voice, that can declare the meaning of the things that now haunt men's souls and that can point the way out of this wilderness of despair.

This voice God has promised to send at this very time. "Behold," He says, "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Mal. 4:5.

We understand that this does not mean that God will

<sup>22</sup> Editorial, *Biblical Review*, April, 1922, p. 275.

<sup>23</sup> Hugh Stevenson Tigner, *Our Prodigal Son Culture*, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> *Fortune*, January, 1940, p. 27.

<sup>25</sup> *The Christian Century*, Jan. 22, 1941, p. 111.

<sup>26</sup> *The Watchman-Examiner*, Feb. 27, 1941, p. 201.

send the man Elijah, but rather the Elijah message. Just as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) to prepare the way for the first coming of Christ, so a mighty movement is to sweep over the world in these last days in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ. This can be none other than the movement represented by the three angels of Revelation 14; for this, according to the prophet, is God's final effort to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of man in power and great glory to redeem His people. This thought is embodied in the following lines from the inspired pen:

"Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent."<sup>27</sup>

"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that of John is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord has given messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all give heed to the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners. . . . Repent 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ's soon-appearing, we have a message to bear,—'Prepare to meet thy God.' We are to lift up the standard and bear the third angel's message. Our message must be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was in peril, the truth did not languish upon his lips. And our work in this age must be as faithfully done."<sup>28</sup>

It is clear, then, that as John the Baptist was the predicted voice in the wilderness of Judea (Isa. 40:3 and Matt. 3:1-3) to prepare the way for the first advent of Christ, so the Advent movement is the voice of prophecy in the present wilderness of sin, uncertainty, and fear, to prepare the way for the second coming of our Lord.

Though couched in few and simple words, the prophetic message which the remnant church has been charged to carry

<sup>27</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 62.

<sup>28</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 1, 1906, p. 7.

to the world is comprehensive in its scope. It includes all the divine light and truth of ages past plus the special light for these closing days. It is not a new gospel; it has no new remedy or panacea for sin; but thank God, it has the old gospel, the everlasting gospel, the only gospel that can save from sin and death. It points the world to Calvary's cross. It presents Jesus, the divine Son of God, as the sinner's only hope.

There is a very definite reason why God has ordained that special emphasis is to be placed upon the everlasting gospel in these last days. It is because the enemy has succeeded in introducing a false gospel—a gospel without a divine sacrifice. From pulpit and press the world is being told that Jesus, who died on the cross, was not the Son of God but the son of Joseph, and that He was no more divine than other men. They no longer believe in the efficacy of His shed blood.

In his recent treatise on *The Growing Super-Church*, James DeForest Murch writes: "It is a well-known fact that many NCC [National Council of Churches] members do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God in the full theological sense of the term."<sup>29</sup>

He quotes the well-known Baptist preacher Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick as saying, "Of course I do not believe in the Virgin Birth or in that old-fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement; and do not know any intelligent Christian minister who does."<sup>30</sup>

In the same pamphlet Dr. McConnell is quoted as follows:

"Critics point out to us that in the early days of the church it was quite common even for popular thought to deify a man. On that memorable occasion in Paul's missionary journey through south Galatia when multitudes called Barnabas Zeus and Paul Mercury, they were acting true to that idea of their time which conceived of gods as capable of appearing in human form and found it easy to believe that man could become a god. Is not this tendency to deify Jesus more heathen than Christian? Are we not most truly Christian when we cut loose from a heathen propensity and take Jesus simply for the character he was and for the ideal he is?"<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> James DeForest Murch, *The Growing Super-Church*, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

This is rank heresy, and it is spreading like a poison gas throughout the Christian world. It is sapping the church of its vitality and its spiritual power. To counteract this deadly and destructive heresy God has raised up the Advent movement to proclaim with power and conviction the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. He is to be made the center and the circumference of our prophetic message to the world.

The threefold message of Revelation 14 opens with a trumpet call from heaven to the people of every land and tongue to "fear God, . . . and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." What message could be more appropriate for our day than this? It comes at a time when the Bible doctrine of creation is being set aside for the false theory of evolution. This bewitching theory threatens to undermine the very foundations of the Christian faith. The church is already honeycombed with its teaching.

Referring to this situation, Alfred M. Rehwinkel writes:

"The world as it is today is said to be the result of a slow process of evolution which has been going on for millions and billions of years and will continue onward and upward through endless time. This is the accepted view of our age. The writers of our science textbooks propound this theory as truth. The youth of today is brought up on this theory in school and in college. The press, radio, and current literature popularize it, and the uncritical public accepts it as true. Anyone daring to question this theory is considered an obscurantist or a fanatic."<sup>32</sup>

This anti-Biblical theory is also being taught in theological schools, in the religious press, and from the pulpits of the land. As already stated, the religious world, as well as the nonreligious, is being saturated with it. This doctrine of evolution has had a profound influence upon men's attitude toward some of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. For one thing, it has changed their concept of sin. This is admitted by Dr. John A. Hutchinson, Federal Council historian. He is quoted as saying, "The concept of sin has received impor-

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<sup>32</sup> Alfred M. Rehwinkel, *The Flood*, p. 257.

tant qualifications at the hands of evolutionary and scientific thought.'"<sup>33</sup>

It cannot be otherwise. When men no longer regard God as their Creator they naturally feel under no obligation to Him. They glibly deny the divine authorship of the law of God and do not consider themselves bound by its precepts. It is claimed that "it is unscientific and absurd to imagine that God ever turned stone-mason and chiseled commandments on a rock.'"<sup>34</sup>

Some years ago Harold Bolce spent two whole years visiting "class-rooms from Cambridge to California" to discover what is being taught in our higher institutions of learning. On the completion of this thorough investigation he wrote several articles for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* setting forth his findings. As an introduction to these articles the editor of the journal wrote:

"What Mr. Bolce sets down here is of the most astounding character. Out of the curricula of American colleges a dynamic movement is upheaving ancient foundations and promising a way for revolutionary thought and life. Those who are not in close touch with the great colleges of the country will be astonished to learn the creeds being fostered by the faculties of our great universities. In hundreds of class-rooms it is being taught daily that the decalogue is no more sacred than a syllabus; that the home as an institution is doomed; that there are no absolute evils; that immorality is simply an act in contravention to society's accepted standards; . . . that the change from one religion to another is like getting a new hat; that moral precepts are passing shibboleths; that conceptions of right and wrong are as unstable as styles of dress; . . . and that there can be and are holier alliances without the marriage bond than within it. These are some of the revolutionary and sensational teachings submitted with academic warrant to the minds of hundreds of thousands of students in the United States. It is time that the public realized what is being taught to youth of this country. 'The social question of to-day,' said Disraeli, 'is only a zephyr which rustles the leaves but will soon become a hurricane.' It is a dull ear that cannot hear the mutterings of the coming storm."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *The Growing Super-Church*, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, May, 1909, p. 670.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 665.

We do not hold that the widespread teaching of evolution is alone responsible for the alarming condition described in the above quotation, but we do hold that it is one of the chief contributing factors. How could it be otherwise? If Satan can convince men that God did not create them, it is easy to lead them to the conclusion that they are under no obligation to observe the moral laws and precepts that He has established to govern their lives. If God is not their Creator, it is reasoned, He is not their sovereign, and therefore has no right to usurp authority over them or to legislate for them.

One of the chief reasons for the existence of the Advent movement is the great need to expose the dangers of the evolution doctrine and to turn men everywhere away from its deceptions and delusions to worship the Creator of the heavens and the earth. With great earnestness we must appeal to the people of our day, as did the prophet Elijah of old to the people of his day, to follow the true and living God. This constitutes an important part of our prophetic message.

One of the most startling features of the third angel's message, as has already been pointed out, is the solemn truth that the investigative judgment is now in session in the courts of heaven and that the cases of all living will soon be called in review. This astounding fact must now be sounded forth in trumpet tones. Men and women everywhere must be informed that the judgment hour foretold by ancient prophets has struck and that it is high time they have an advocate to plead their cases.

Another feature of our prophetic message that must be given prominence in our preaching is the announcement that Babylon is fallen. With a mighty voice we are to proclaim to the world that "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. . . . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:2-4.

The message of the third angel, in this series of three, is a bugle call from heaven for a reformation and a solemn warning against the worship of the beast and his image. It is

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a prophetic voice calling honest souls to turn away from every apostate movement and from all false religions to serve the true and living God. It is a call to forsake the commandments of men, to "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." It is a call back to "paths to dwell in," a call for the restoration of the breach and for the Sabbath reform foretold by Isaiah the prophet.

The warning of this angel against the worship of the beast and his image is the most startling, the most terrifying warning ever given to the inhabitants of earth. The antediluvians were threatened with sudden destruction by a flood of water, but here is a threat of slow and excruciating suffering and death in a lake of fire and brimstone. Those who fail to heed the warning are to "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation." Rev. 14:10.

This prophetic message of doom we must give to the world. No one must be left in ignorance. All must hear the warning. But with the warning must go the appeal to flee from the wrath to come. While lifting up the trumpet of doom we must also lift high the cross of Calvary, in order that every honest soul may be drawn unto Him who said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32.

This threefold message is the special message that God has charged His remnant church to carry to the world. It is a prophetic message to be carried by a prophetic movement to the people of a prophetic age. In order to give it in all its fullness to the world, we must of necessity give prophecy a prominent place in our preaching.

As ministers in the Advent movement we must never forget that we have been brought into existence for the express purpose of proclaiming to the world a prophetic message. If we fail to give prophecy the prominence in our sermons and writings that its importance demands, we shall be untrue to our trust.

Shorn of its prophetic element our message would be

weak and insipid. For want of the prophetic voice, many a Christian pulpit today lacks vision and power. The same will be true of ours if we fail to let the prophets speak.

Before the first world war we were often branded as alarmists, calamity howlers, and warmongers because we declared that which the prophets had foretold would soon come upon the world. They scoffed at the idea of the predicted sorrows to overtake the rich. They declared that man had become too enlightened, too civilized, and too wise ever again to plunge the world into bloodshed and war. They preached peace and safety; they assured us that we were entering into the millennium.

All this has changed now. They have lived to see the rich in many lands dispossessed of their wealth and completely liquidated. They have seen the world racked and ruined by the most extensive and the most devastating wars ever fought on our globe. The things foretold by the prophets they have seen fulfilled round about them. Baffled and alarmed by what they see coming upon the earth, many now come to us to learn what these things mean. This is as it should be. The world must know that there is a people with a message that throws light on both the present and the future.

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchman and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

"The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them."<sup>88</sup>

"We are under obligation to declare faithfully the whole counsel of God. We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and made us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with

<sup>88</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 19, 20.

pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God.”<sup>37</sup>

For a number of reasons our message is unpopular. It calls for a complete separation from the world with its pleasures, its vices, and its ambitions. It sets its followers apart as peculiar, because of their modesty in dress and their temperate habits in eating and drinking. It also marks them as strange because of observing a different Sabbath from the rest of the professed Christian world.

Notwithstanding these unpopular features of our message, it is making an impact on the world. It is attracting the attention of multitudes and winning many converts. One of the outstanding reasons for this is to be found in its prophetic setting. There is power in the prophetic word—it grips and holds the hearts of men. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit it brings men to their knees before God. Its value in our work can never be overestimated. Through His inspired messenger the Lord has repeatedly urged upon us the necessity of presenting the prophecies. Notice these paragraphs:

“Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’

“The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is presented to me again and again as something that is to be brought to the attention of all. We are to-day living in the time when the predictions of this chapter are fulfilling. Let our ministers and teachers explain these prophecies to those whom they instruct. Let them leave out of their discourses matters of minor consequence, and present the truths that will decide the destiny of souls.”<sup>38</sup>

“We are to proclaim to the world the great and solemn truths of Revelation. Into the very designs and principles of the church of God these truths are to enter.”<sup>39</sup>

“The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues.”<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 470.

<sup>38</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 148.

<sup>39</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 196.

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 117.

"We are living in the close of this earth's history. . . . Prophecy is fulfilling. Soon Christ will come with power and great glory. We have no time to lose. Let the message sound forth in earnest words of warning. . . . Let there be no indifference in this matter. The Lord calls for workers who are filled with an earnest, decided purpose. Tell the people to be instant in season and out of season. With the words of life upon your lips go forth to tell men and women that the end of all things is at hand.

"Let us keep our souls in the love of God. The note of warning must be given. The truth must not languish upon our lips. We must rouse people to immediate preparation. . . . Let every teacher present an open door before all who will come to Jesus, repenting of their sins."<sup>41</sup>

"The time has come when the message of Christ's soon coming is to sound throughout the world."<sup>42</sup>

"Sound an alarm through the land. Tell the people that the day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly."<sup>43</sup>

With this agree the words of the ancient prophets. Joel cries: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1.

Isaiah says, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa. 40:3. "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." Verse 10.

While proclaiming in trumpet tones the prophecies foretelling the judgments soon to fall upon the inhabitants of this old sinful world, we must not neglect the brighter side of the picture. Remember, we are not simply preachers of doom, we are, above all else, preachers of hope and promise. We have the most glorious, the most thrilling, and the most inspiring message ever given to mortal man. While others are declaring that God has forsaken the world and that the human race is about to annihilate itself by its own uncontrollable devices

<sup>41</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 217.

<sup>42</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 24.

<sup>43</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 12, 1914, p. 22.

and inventions, we can assure men on the strength of the prophetic word that God is still on His throne, and that "a divine hand is on the wheel"; that seedtime and harvest will continue; that multitudes of human beings will live, move, and have their being on this earth until the day when the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.

Notwithstanding the sorrow that is coming upon the earth and the persecution that will be the lot of God's people, we are to preach with confidence and great assurance the marvelous triumphs foretold by the prophets for the remnant church.

The grand and glorious climax to our message is the assurance of the prophets that the event which has been the hope and the comfort of God's children in ages past is now about to take place. With a shout of triumph we are to publish to the world that Jesus is coming—coming soon to burst the fetters of the tomb and set His captives free, coming to gather His loved ones of every land and clime, to reign with Him throughout the endless ages of eternity.

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God." Joel 2:23. "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh!" Luke 21:28.

Wonderful indeed are the scrolls of the prophets. There, as nowhere else, God stands revealed to His earthborn children. There we catch visions of His glory and majesty, of His wisdom and power, of His love and loveliness. There we behold Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth and as the One who upholds and rules the vast universe.

As we walk with the prophets along the corridor of the centuries and discover, as revealed through the sacred pages of their inspired writings, the accuracy with which they foretold the events of history, there is laid for our faith in God and in His Word a foundation that Satan with all his sophistry cannot destroy. Again we wend our way with Cleopas and his friend on the Emmaus road and hear the Master expound all the things written in Moses and the prophets concerning Himself, and our hearts burn within us and we are led to exclaim with the disciples of old, "We believe and are

sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:69.

Moreover, as we sit quietly with the prophets and listen to their utterances of divine wisdom, we begin to understand the meaning of the dark and terrifying things that are now filling the hearts and souls of men with fear and trembling. Then as they unlock the doors to the future and permit us to view the final scenes in the mighty conflict between the forces of good and evil, our whole being becomes tense. Spellbound, we watch the changing scenes. We almost stop breathing as we see the contending forces march into the final combat, but our spirits revive and our souls rejoice when we see the enemy defeated, crushed and destroyed forever. Then as we behold rising from the ashes of the old a new earth clad in Edenic beauty to be the home of the redeemed throughout the endless ages of eternity, our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude to our God for His wonderful love.

We come away from our interview with the prophets with a radiant hope and a fixed purpose to press on in the battle against sin until the conflict is ended, the victory won, and we stand triumphant with the soldiers of Christ before His throne.

The longer we contemplate the prophecies, the more precious they become. Without them the future would be darker than midnight. All would end at the grave. There would not be a ray of light beyond the tomb. Now, thank God, with the light shining from the prophetic page the future is bright with promise.

As the messengers of God in a prophetic movement with a prophetic message for a prophetic age, we must give prophecy a wide and conspicuous place in our preaching.

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**The Lord Our Righteousness**

By

W. H. BRANSON

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## Imputed Righteousness

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16, 17.

The gospel is a plan laid by God to meet the terrible emergency of sin. Through Adam’s transgression the whole world has become sinful. To this rule there is no exception. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Rom. 5:12.

Sin, therefore, is a universal malady, for “there is none righteous, no, not one. . . . They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” Rom. 3:10-12.

How, then, do men become sinners? We answer, They have inherited a sinful nature from Adam through their parents. “Behold,” says the psalmist, “I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Ps. 51:5.

When Adam, our forefather, sinned, he sold the entire human family under sin. The only nature he could pass on to future posterity was that which he himself possessed. He had become a sinner; therefore, since he was the father of all living, all future generations would inherit his nature.

“Thus by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” Rom. 5:19. So literally is this true that Paul exclaimed,

"I am carnal, sold under sin." "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:14, 18.

### Sin's Wages

Now, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), for "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). Since, therefore, all are sinners by nature, the entire human family is under the death sentence. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.

Does someone ask, Why should sin have such awful results? The answer is that sin is lawlessness. It is rebellion against God and the principles of His kingdom. It is the transgression of His great moral law.

God's law is a perfect standard of righteousness. It is a transcript of His own character, and constitutes the foundation principles of His kingdom. Anything contrary to it is treason against God's kingdom and rebellion against His authority.

The law of God constitutes also the standard of citizenship in God's kingdom. No one will be granted citizenship whose life is out of harmony with this divine standard.

To include sinners in the citizenry of God's kingdom would be to jeopardize its whole future and wreck the universe. Therefore sinners must die.

What can man do about it?

This is the great question. It is the question of the ages. How can we escape the death sentence? What must we do to be saved?

Shall we try to cancel the sentence by changing now and beginning to keep God's law? No, that is impossible, for our minds and hearts are carnal and cannot keep a holy law. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7.

Humanity is weakened by inherited sin as well as by the personal practice of sin and is therefore entirely unable to reach any righteous standard. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4.

But even if this were possible, our keeping of the righteous law in the present and future would not serve to atone for any of the sins of the past when we were living in transgression. That guilt would still cling to the soul and would bring about its destruction.

The law of God sets the standard of righteousness but is powerless to bestow it. It shows the sinner his need of salvation and deliverance, but it cannot do the saving. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

So man, through sin, is entirely undone. He cannot bridge the gulf that sin has made. He is "without strength" and therefore is powerless to make himself holy. He is "filled with all unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:29), and in that state is without hope and "without God in the world." He cannot obey a holy law.

#### A Way of Escape

But God has provided a way of escape. The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." *Therein is the righteousness of God revealed.* Or, in other words, God has, through the gospel, provided righteousness for the sinner that can replace his record of past sins. The gospel makes no provision to recognize man's own efforts to attain to righteousness, but instead it makes available to him the righteousness of Christ.

The gospel provides for the complete exchanging of Christ's righteousness for the sinner's guilt and sin.

"Christ came from the courts of glory to this sin-polluted world and humbled Himself to humanity. He identified Himself with our weaknesses and was tempted in all points like as we are. Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on His own account, for His character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character He offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, pp. 371, 372.

This is the most sublime truth that has ever been revealed. We are told by the Lord's messenger that "one interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other,—Christ our righteousness."<sup>2</sup>

With the making of this marvelous plan, the sinner has had nothing to do. It was born in the heart of a loving and infinite God, and was made effective by the life and death of Jesus Christ, His Son. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2: 8, 9.

Salvation, therefore, is not of works. It is a *gift*. God provides it without our effort and without money or price. We have only to accept it.

Now this plan provides for man to become righteous without having first kept God's law. "The righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . . ; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. 3:21, 22. It would have to be that way. The sinner has not kept the law during his past life. He cannot go back and live those years over and thus change the record. If his past sinful deeds are therefore ever to be canceled, it must be without his having done the deeds of the law during that time.

This difficulty Christ completely overcame.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God 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." Verses 24-26.

What a marvelous arrangement is this! Those who have faith in the shed blood of Christ as having been the penalty for their sin and guilt are now freely justified by God's grace. They experience redemption through Jesus Christ, and Christ's righteousness is declared to take the place of their sins that are past.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted in A. G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness* (1941), p. 94.

"Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love, and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

"Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they can not find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live, and not die.

"God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion. He says, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.'

"'I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.' Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say: 'Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused His love, though the blessings He has given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."' The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: 'When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.'

"But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by His prophet, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.' While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God, is but the tender pleading of His Spirit.

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wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love."<sup>3</sup>

The sinner, to be justified, must have righteousness. Because he has none of his own, righteousness must be provided for him; otherwise God could not declare the sinner just before Him. To meet this need, Christ, who lived upon the earth in human flesh for thirty-three and a half years, offers to credit His own righteousness to the sinner as a substitute for his sins that are past.

This evidently is what Paul meant when he said, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of *the gift of righteousness* shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17.

And this gift of righteousness comes to the sinner by faith. He does nothing to earn it—Jesus did that for him. He cannot demand it, for it is not his. But by faith—taking Christ at His word—he may have it. It is freely offered to him. It becomes his for the taking.

If Christ's righteousness is accepted by the sinner, then God counts that it is his in very fact. Through repentance and confession his past sins are removed, and covered with Christ's righteousness, he stands innocent before God. He is accounted righteous.

Christ's righteousness in which the sinner now stands is a perfect righteousness. When He lived upon the earth in human flesh He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was buffeted by the devil, persecuted by wicked men, and finally slain upon a cross; but through all these experiences He was a conqueror. Never once did He yield to sin. Said He, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Paul declares that He "is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Heb. 7:26.

And this Holy One now offers to cover us with His holiness! This is the most sublime transaction in the history of the universe.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pp. 57-59.

God's messenger has said:

"Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned."<sup>4</sup>

No wonder Martin Luther, the great herald of the doctrine of justification by faith in the sixteenth century, exclaimed, "With what love He [Christ] opens His arms to you, taking all your sins upon Himself and giving thee all His righteousness."

"The world's Redeemer was treated as we deserve to be treated, in order that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins upon His own divine soul, that we might receive His imputed righteousness. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share."<sup>5</sup>

So now the former sinner is free. The exchange is complete. No longer does he stand clothed in the filthy rags of his own miserable failures and sins, but he wears the robe of the King of the universe. He is clothed in the garments of Jesus.

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isa. 61:10.

Again we read from the pen of God's messenger:

"The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken."<sup>6</sup>

Truly this is a precious thought. Men entirely without

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 21, 1893, p. 177.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 161.

personal merit, men devoid of righteousness because they have always lived in sin and transgression, may, by an act of simple faith, have the very righteousness of Christ attributed to them as though they personally have been perfectly righteous all the time. Their every sin is pardoned, their guilt is removed, and they stand clear and innocent before God. They stand complete and whole in the righteousness of Christ their Saviour.

What a wonderful Saviour is Jesus! Said He to the Jews, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

After the sinner has been pardoned, he is free from sin, free from condemnation (see Rom. 8:1), fully justified, stripped of his filthy garments, and clothed with a white robe of righteousness. He is wholly transformed; he is a new creature.

In the sight of heaven the sinner, defiled and lost, has been saved from past guilt and now stands with Jesus and is given full credit for all of Jesus' earthly victories over sin and His righteous deeds in obeying God's law.

Little wonder that "the enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken."

What a pity that as a people we have not in the past always emphasized this truth as we should. Doubtless it was because some did not understand it, and among them were preachers who failed to grasp its full significance, when it should have been the pith and core of every sermon. For Christ sent us to preach the gospel, for the preaching of the cross is the power of God. (See 1 Cor. 1:17, 18.)

#### **The Penalty of Death**

But one may ask, How can God set a sinner free from his guilt and sin, and impute to him the righteousness of Christ when he has not paid the penalty of death? Ah! but the sinner has paid the penalty. He paid the penalty of death in

his substitute, Jesus. When Jesus expired on the cross He tasted death for every man. He bore our sins to the cross, for the Lord had laid on Him the iniquity of us all. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for *our* transgressions. He was bruised for *our* iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:4, 5.

To illustrate: Here is a thief. He is condemned by the law. His wages are death. He has no power to change the sentence. He is lost. The decree has gone forth that "for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." Eze. 33:13.

But now Christ appears on the scene. In Him the sinner finds hope. He casts himself upon His mercy and pleads for help. He acknowledges Christ to be his only Saviour. He confesses his sins to God in the name of Jesus. He is fully repentant. He believes God's promises to save those who believe in Jesus.

Now an astounding thing takes place. The pure and holy Jesus takes upon Himself the full responsibility for the sinner's transgressions. The guilt is now His. He is the sin bearer. It is all laid upon Him, and in exchange He imputes to the sinner His righteousness. A complete exchange is made. Christ assumes all the sinner's liabilities and gives to the sinner all His own assets.

Thus Christ bears away the sin of the world. Before His crucifixion Christ had voluntarily taken upon Himself the responsibility for the sins of all men, and thus He was able to bear them to the cross and pay the full penalty for them. When, therefore, the sinner surrenders and accepts Christ as his Saviour, he and his sins are dated back to the cross, and it is reckoned that when Christ died on Calvary it was in reality the sinner who died, for *Christ was acting only in a vicarious capacity*. Therefore, God counts the death of Jesus the full and specific punishment for this repentant sinner's guilt, and it is reckoned that in Christ he has died and is now justified from all things.

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“Some seem to feel that they must be on probation, and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they can not resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love, and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

“Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God’s promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they can not find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live, and not die.”<sup>7</sup>

“For if we have become one with Him by sharing in His death, we shall also be one with Him by sharing in His resurrection. This we know—that *our old self was nailed to the cross with Him*, in order that our sinful nature might be neutralized, so that we should no longer be the slaves of sin; for he who has died is absolved from his sin. But if *we have died with Christ*, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” Rom. 6:5-8, Weymouth.

Therefore when the sinner accepts Christ as his Saviour, and Christ’s death to have been the punishment for his sins, God counts that he was actually nailed to the cross in Christ. The penalty then has been paid; so the sinner stands absolved (freed) from his sins.

It is because of this mighty truth that God can be just and yet justify the sinner. It is because God is faithful and just that the sinner is forgiven, for He cannot justly inflict *a second time* the punishment that has already been borne. God’s justice is now enlisted on the sinner’s side and He declares him free!

“What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not withhold even His own

<sup>7</sup> *Steps to Christ*, pp. 56, 57.

Son, but gave Him up for all of us, will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:31-33, Weymouth.

Thus the sinner, by coming to Christ and believing in Him for salvation, escapes the penalty for his transgressions through the merits of Jesus' death. Though his sins may have been as scarlet, they become like wool; though they were red like crimson, they are made white as snow. (See Isa. 1:18.) For "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

It is hard for sinners to realize that it is possible for God actually to forgive their sins and set them free. Men become accustomed to the feeling that they are lost and there is no hope or possibility of changing their situation.

The following story told by Dwight L. Moody illustrates how even in this life men are often incredulous when pardon and liberty are freely offered them:

"I was in Ohio a few years ago and preached in the state prison. Eleven hundred convicts sat in front of me. The chaplain said to me, 'Mr. Moody, I want to tell you of a scene which occurred in this room. A few years ago our commissioners went to the governor of the state and got him to promise that he would pardon five men for good behaviour. The governor consented with the understanding that the record was to be kept secret and that at the end of six months the five men highest on the roll should receive a pardon, regardless of who or what they were. At the end of six months the prisoners were brought into the chapel. The commissioners came up and the president stood on the platform. Putting his hand in his pocket he brought out some papers and said, "I hold in my hand pardons for five men."'

"The chaplain told me that he never witnessed anything like it. Every man was as still as death; many were deadly pale and the suspense was awful; it seemed as if every heart had ceased to beat. The commissioner went on to tell them how they had got the pardon. But the chaplain interrupted him. 'Before you make your speech read out the names.'

" 'Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon'—and he held it out but none came forward. He said to the governor, 'Are all the prisoners here?' The governor told him they were all there. Then he said again, 'Reuben Johnson will come and get his pardon. It is signed by the governor. He is a free man.' Not one moved. The chaplain told me

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he looked right down where Reuben was. He had been there nineteen years and men looked around to see the fortunate man who had got his pardon. Finally the chaplain caught his eye and said, 'Reuben, you are the man.' Reuben turned around and looked behind him to see where Reuben was. The chaplain said the second time, 'Reuben, you are the man,' and the second time he looked around, thinking it must be some other Reuben. The chaplain had to say it three times, 'Reuben, come and get your pardon.' At last the old man got up and came along down the hall, trembling from head to foot, and when he got the pardon he looked at it and went back to his seat and buried his face in his hands and wept."

It seemed absolutely incredible to him that the pardon was actually meant for him. He had not deserved it. It came as an act of overflowing grace from the governor of the State, who alone had the power and authority to set him free.

### Righteousness Witnessed by the Law

Before conversion, the law of God, which is the standard of righteousness, brought only condemnation to the sinner. But after he has received the righteousness of Christ he stands again before the law and now it finds no fault in him. What was formerly an instrument of condemnation to him has now become an instrument of commendation, for "now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, *being witnessed by the law and the prophets.*" Rom. 3:21.

The law, which once condemned him, now testifies to his innocence. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed him from all sin. (See 1 John 1:7.)

What has happened to his past sins? God has cast them "into the depths of the sea." He has removed them as far from the sinner "as the east is from the west." He casts them behind His back and remembers them against the sinner no more forever.

His sins are entirely separated from him, and even God, against whose law he had sinned, forgets them. In the righteousness of Christ he stands. Through Him he has been justified. His guilt is gone.

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that

through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things." Acts 13:38, 39.

John the revelator saw in vision the vast host of the redeemed as they shall finally stand before the throne of God in His kingdom, and has left us the following graphic description of this glorious scene:

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, *clothed with white robes*, and palms in their hands. . . . And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, *What are these which are arrayed in white robes?* and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" Rev. 7:9-14.

And all this is absolutely free to the sinner. God not only offers it all as a gift but actually pleads with the sinner to accept it as such. Hear His earnest entreaty: "My son, give me thine heart." Prov. 23:26. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

#### By Faith

But all this can be received only through the exercise of faith. "For by grace are ye saved *through faith.*" Eph. 2:8.

It is only those who believe on Him who are saved. "Without faith it is impossible to please him: 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.

"'Abraham believed God, and this was credited to him as righteousness.' (Gen. xv.6.) But in the case of a man who works, pay is not reckoned as a favour but as something due; whereas in the case of a man who in place of working believes in Him who acquits the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness." Rom. 4:3-5. Weymouth.

Again the apostle speaks of—

"a righteousness of God conditional on faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. No distinction is made; for all alike have sinned, and

consciously fall short of the glory of God, but are acquitted freely by His grace through the ransom given in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation *available to faith in virtue of His blood*. It was to demonstrate God's justice, in view of the condoning by His forbearance of sins previously committed—that is to demonstrate His justice at the present time, that He may be shown to be just Himself, and the justifier of the man who believes in Jesus." Rom. 3:21-26, Weymouth.

For says the apostle, "We deem that a man is accounted righteous by faith, apart from fulfilment of the Law." Verse 28, Weymouth.

"This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power. . . .

"From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.' The sick man might have said, 'Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.' But no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he *willed* to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

"In like manner you are a sinner. You can not atone for your past sins, you can not change your heart, and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You *believe* that promise. You confess your sins, and give yourself to God. You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfil His word to you. If you believe the promise,—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed,—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It *is* so if you believe it.

"Do not wait to *feel* that you are made whole, but say, 'I believe it; it *is* so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.'" <sup>8</sup>

"The wondering crowd that pressed close about Christ realized no accession of vital power. But when the suffering woman put forth her hand to touch Him, believing that she would be made whole, she felt the healing virtue. So in spiritual things. To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul-hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 55.

nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Saviour of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe *about* Christ; we must believe *in* Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.

"After healing the woman, Jesus desired her to acknowledge the blessing she had received. The gifts which the gospel offers, are not to be secured by stealth or enjoyed in secret. So the Lord calls upon us for confession of His goodness. 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.'"<sup>9</sup>

This, then, is righteousness by faith. It is imputed righteousness. It was not ours by right, but it becomes ours by God's grace when we accept it by faith.

Only the Christian religion provides such a plan of salvation as that! All other religions leave man to lift himself from the mire of sin by his own efforts. Christ Jesus came down from heaven and lifted us up to God. Therefore, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. What a Saviour!

Today the Lord says to us:

"With everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee. I will take your sins and give you My peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove."<sup>10</sup>

O brethren, hear the message of God. Even "your remorse for sin I will remove."

What unbounding love!

Then we are free, made free by God's Son and therefore free *indeed*. (See John 8:36.)

"Standing then acquitted as a result of faith, *let us enjoy peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 519, 520.

The story is told of a man who, while traveling in the great Sahara Desert, found that his supply of water was exhausted. He was overcome by thirst, and was on the verge of utter despair.

As he attempted to struggle on a little further in the apparently vain hope of relief, he suddenly noticed by the side of the path a sign which said:

“Ten paces to the east, O traveler, you will find the treasure of paradise.”

Quickly he took the ten steps, dug into the loose sand, and found a spring of clear water. His life was spared.

Just so the treasure of eternal life and heaven is near us—perhaps less than ten paces away. God is not very far from any one of us.

In the light of eternity's joys there is so little to give up. Shall we not just now take the few necessary steps to enable us to drink of the water of life freely? Christ beckons us to come. He entreats us to believe. How can we stay away?

## Imparted Righteousness

“If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more* being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Rom. 5:10.

The same God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to the repentant sinner now actually imparts it to the Christian.

Christ now desires to identify Himself so closely with the believer that His very own life will be lived in and through the Christian.

Thus we must *become* saved, and thus we must *keep* saved, by *Christ's life*.

Let us read Paul's words, as they appear in Weymouth's New Testament in Modern Speech: “For if while we were hostile we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, the more certainly, after being reconciled, we shall obtain salvation through Christ's life.”

A pardoned sinner does not have within himself the power to live a life of righteousness. He is still without strength. He is utterly dependent upon God to keep him saved. Now, as before, he is powerless to obey God's holy law. The fact that his past sin and guilt have been removed does not give him the requisite power to reproduce the life of Christ in his person. The demands of the law are much too high for him to reach. This is why Jesus warned His disciples, “Without me ye can do nothing.” If left to himself, then, the pardoned

sinner must soon lapse right back into sin. By trusting in God he will grow in grace and strength, but he never will be able to walk alone. He is still and, while time lasts, ever shall be utterly dependent upon Christ. Herein lies the most profound truth of the ages, setting forth the astounding fact that Christ, who lived on earth thirty-three and a half years in human flesh in order to work out a righteousness which He could impute to repentant sinners, now offers to take up His abode by faith in the heart of the converted sinner and impart His very life to His justified child, living it once again in human flesh, through him.

Paul calls this a mystery—the mystery of the ages. It is the mystery of godliness.

“Even the mystery which 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. 1:26-29.

#### “Christ in You the Hope of Glory”

This, then, is the hidden mystery that now stands revealed. This is God's secret plan to save men. It can be understood only by those who experience it. And it can be experienced only by those who accept by faith the presence of the Lord Jesus into the soul. When Christ is in one He lives His life through that one's flesh, and thus His own righteousness becomes a part of one's very life. *Thus we are saved entirely by His life.*

What marvelous condescension! What infinite love is here revealed! What an astonishing plan by which to save men! It could have originated only in the heart of a God of infinite love and mercy.

#### God's Promises to the Believer

Let us ponder here a few of God's great and precious promises to the believers, made by Jesus while upon earth.

"I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*" John 14:18.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode* with him." "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that *he may abide with you* for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for *he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*" Verses 23, 16, 17.

Thus it is the Holy Spirit that ministers the very life of Jesus to the soul. Christ personally is in heaven, but the divine Comforter is in the world and has been given charge of the church.

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their [the disciples'] interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high."<sup>11</sup>

He it is that, in the name of Jesus, dwells in the heart. "Know ye not," asks the apostle, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" 1 Cor. 6:19.

But the Comforter was to come in the name of Jesus. He was to glorify Christ. He was to speak for Christ, and His presence in the life of the child of God would be equivalent to the very presence of Jesus. Thus Jesus could say to His disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*" "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him, and *make our abode* with him." (See John 14:16-26; 16:7-14.)

To this agrees the message of Paul when he says:

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all

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<sup>11</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 669.

saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. 3:17-19.

"We are abiding in Christ by a living faith. He is abiding in our hearts by our individual appropriating of faith. We have the companionship of the divine presence, and as we realize this presence, our thoughts are brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. Our spiritual exercises are in accordance with the vividness of our sense of this companionship. Enoch walked with God in this way; and Christ is dwelling in our hearts by faith when we will consider what He is to us, and what a work He has wrought out for us in the plan of redemption. . . . I want to impress upon your mind that you may have a divine companion with you, if you will, always."<sup>12</sup>

### The Results

And what is to be the result of the abiding presence of Christ in the human heart and life? He is to *work* in us, doing the will of God through us. "It is God which worketh in you." Phil. 2:13. By Christ's living and working in us we shall "be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. 3:19.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, *according to the power that worketh in us.*" Verse 20.

He is able to do "exceeding abundantly." We can do nothing, but He is mighty to save. His omnipotence is united with our humanity, and our success in producing righteousness is in accordance with "the power that worketh in us." Since that power is now Christ, our lives will reflect His virtues and beauty. *He is able.*

Thus God makes known to us "the riches of the glory of this mystery." It is "Christ in you"—Christ working in you—this is your hope of glory. (See Col. 1:27.) Continues the apostle:

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Col. 1:28, 29.

<sup>12</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 388.

Our success, therefore, in attaining to perfection of character is according to who is at work. If we endeavor in our human weakness to produce a life of perfection and obedience, we shall fail. But if Christ is working in us "mightily," we shall succeed. He will make it possible for us to be presented "perfect in Christ."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24.

Let us add one more testimony regarding this marvelous experience.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect in every good work* to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Heb. 13:20, 21.

Perfection, then, is possible for us. The God who demonstrated His power by bringing Jesus from the dead can also make you perfect—perfect in every good work to do His will. How is this accomplished? It is by Christ working within us. He does within us and through us the things that are well-pleasing in God's sight.

Thus we receive His righteousness. It still does not come by our own works but by Christ's works within us. We are not saved by what we do for God but by what He does for us and through us.

#### A Transformation

This experience brings an entire transformation of life. We become partakers of the divine nature, and the virtues of Christ take the place of the works of the flesh.

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3, 4.

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"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>13</sup>

Men may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness; that power is Christ.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ 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. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. 2:20, 21.

That altogether new life is, therefore, the life of Jesus in the soul. This is putting off "the old man" of human sinfulness and putting on "the new man," which is Christ and His righteousness. Now the very image of the Creator appears in the life of one who formerly was a sinner but now is a child of God and is under the full control of Christ Jesus. Thus Christ becomes all and in all.

We are told that when Jesus lived here in the flesh He did not yield to temptation "even by a thought." He did not consent to sin. So it may be with us.

"Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character."<sup>14</sup>

And again we read:

"I am the Vine; ye are the branches," Christ said to His disciples. Though He was about to be removed from them, their spiritual union with Him was to be unchanged. The connection of the branch with the vine, He said, represents the relation you are to sustain to Me. The scion is engrafted into the living vine, and fiber by fiber, vein by vein, it grows into the vine-stock. The life of the vine becomes the life of

<sup>13</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

the branch. So the soul dead in trespasses and sins receives life through connection with Christ. By faith in Him as a personal Saviour the union is formed. The sinner unites his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fulness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might. Then he has the mind of Christ. The humanity of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. Thus through the agency of the Holy Spirit man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is accepted in the Beloved.

"This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, 'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.'" <sup>15</sup>

This is deliverance. And to this agree the words of Paul when he said, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. 6:14. The sinner is under the condemnation of the law, whereas the believing Christian is in harmony with the law and is therefore under grace. And the promise of God goes further. We are assured that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:9.

That "seed" is Christ. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. 3:16. So long as Christ remains in full control, sin is not committed, since He is not a sinner.

"When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see, creates a new being in the image of God." <sup>16</sup>

Thus Jesus is able to save to the uttermost. (See Heb. 7:25.) With Christ in control there is victory, for God "giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57. We are "kept by the power of God through faith." 1 Peter 1:5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 675, 676.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 173.

### The Fruits of Righteousness

What, then, will be the fruit of Christ's righteousness when it is imparted to our lives by His indwelling presence through His Holy Spirit?

We reply, It will be perfect conformity to the law and will of God. Through Christ it has become possible for the righteousness of the law to be "fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:4.

"We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith. 'Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.' Here is the true test. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law."<sup>17</sup>

The Christian must, of course, seek to know the full will of God. Willing ignorance is no excuse for transgression. He must also desire in his heart to be fully conformed to Christ's image and that his life be brought into harmony with the expressed will of God in every particular.

But his dependence for bringing this about must be in the power of Christ working in him—not in himself.

For example, as a result of studying the Word of God some new ray of light shines forth. Some duty is revealed that had not been seen or understood before. What now shall be the attitude of the Christian toward this new revelation of God's will?

Clearly it is his duty to walk in the light, but he should not undertake this in his own strength. He should come to God in prayer and declare his desire to follow the light by obeying every command of God but confess his inability to do so alone. Then he should appeal for the Spirit of God to impart to him the necessary power. Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is able to make one perfect in every good work to do His will, provided one seeks His help and divine strength.

<sup>17</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 66.

“Without me ye can do nothing” is as true today as when Christ announced this great truth, but it is also true of us today, as it was of Paul, that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Our attitude toward every new ray of light from the Word should be, “Yes, I believe; yes, I must obey. My life must be in all things like His. Lord, make me so. Enable me to walk in this new light, to keep this additional truth, and to render perfect obedience.” Then the Christian, trusting in the power of Christ, should immediately make the effort to obey.

When Jesus bade the paralytic walk, he, believing in Christ’s power, stretched forth his legs and began to walk. He willed to walk, he had appealed to Christ for help, and Christ had said, “Take up thy bed, and walk.” For thirty-eight years he had not walked, but now he believed that Christ had enabled him to do what before had been impossible. When, therefore, he made the effort, Christ supplied the needed strength, and he walked. Christ had made him whole.

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart-work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.”<sup>18</sup>

“The power of evil is so identified with human nature that no man can overcome except by union with Christ. Through this union we receive moral and spiritual power. If we have the Spirit of Christ, we shall bring forth the fruit of righteousness.”<sup>19</sup>

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” Gal. 5:16. Why? Because “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is

<sup>18</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 13, 1887, p. 769.

no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Verses 22-24.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Matt. 7:16-18.

The changing of the tree produces a change of fruit. The old tree, the sinner, could not produce commandment keeping because of his great weakness. Christ, the new tree, living His life in the believing saint, by His great power can obey every command of God to perfection, and thereby He produces in us the beautiful fruits of righteousness. Thus "their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," and it is a perfect righteousness. (See Isa. 54:17.)

"By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah."<sup>20</sup>

This will not lead to Pharisaism or a holier-than-thou attitude on the part of the receiver. Far from it.

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power."<sup>21</sup>

Paul was never nearer to Christ than when he was led to exclaim that he was chief of sinners.

It is not in our perfection that we are to trust but in the perfection of Jesus. His life and nature are to be imparted to us so that we stand clothed in His righteousness rather than in our own filthy rags.

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312.

<sup>21</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

"Where then is there room for boasting? It is shut out." Rom. 3:27, Weymouth.

"For it is by grace that you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves. It is God's gift, and is not on the ground of merit—so that it may be impossible for any one to boast." Eph. 2:8, 9, Weymouth.

### Why Israel Failed

It was on this very point that the Jewish nation stumbled and failed. They saw the righteousness that was demanded by the law given to them at Mount Sinai, and they sought to attain to it. Very meticulous were they in trying to obey to the very letter. In fact, they often went beyond the law's requirements and busied themselves in a round of ceremonies that became irksome and a real yoke of bondage.

Though they were sinful, they did not realize it, and at Mount Sinai they said to Moses, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient."

This was a fateful promise. Of them the apostle Paul said:

"They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Rom. 10:2, 3.

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, 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; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. 9:30-33.

Because they sought it not by faith, they failed. They stumbled at Christ, the "stumblingstone." Had they received Him into their hearts, He would have strengthened them and produced acceptable commandment keeping in their lives, but they rejected Him and set about the task of producing a righteousness of their own. This was not acceptable to God, and He was forced to reject them as a nation. In rejecting Christ they had rejected salvation.

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What a tragedy that men so little realize their utter dependence upon Christ! How pitiful to see so many trying to justify themselves before God! Recently there appeared in a popular magazine an article from a noted Jewish rabbi in which he set forth the three basic tenets of the Jewish faith. He listed these as:

1. The love of learning.
2. The worship of God.
3. Good deeds.

He further stated that Jews reject the principle of incarnation—God becoming flesh. God is purely spiritual to them. “Judaism,” he declared, “also rejects the principle of vicarious atonement—the idea of salvation through Christ. We believe that every man is responsible for his own salvation; that no one can serve as an intermediary between God and man even in a symbolic sense.”

Poor deluded humanity! Only one way of escape from sin and eternal death is available, and that they will not accept! So it may be with us.

“Except your righteousness,” said Jesus, “shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 5:20. Only faith righteousness can assure us entrance through the pearly gates of the Holy City.

“The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.”<sup>22</sup>

The first was worked out *for* us. The second is worked out *in* us.

“In the religion of Christ there is a regenerating influence that transforms the entire being, lifting man above every debasing, groveling vice, and raising the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. Linked to the Infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of the evil one have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ’s righteousness.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895, p. 353.

<sup>23</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 51, 52.

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ, becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies, is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. . . . The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome."<sup>24</sup>

"When Christ is in the heart it will be so softened and subdued by love for God and man that fretting, faultfinding, and contention will not exist there. The religion of Christ in the heart will gain for its possessor a complete victory over those passions that are seeking for the mastery."<sup>25</sup>

Thus the life of Christ's "trusting disciple will be like His, a series of uninterrupted victories, not seen to be such here, but recognized as such in the great hereafter."<sup>26</sup>

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:18, 19.

"In ignorance I thought  
 (In silly fear, and foolishness and dread)  
 God doth remember all the sins I wrought,  
 And doth forget how needy is my lot,  
 But lo, instead,  
 When I His message read,  
 I found it was my needs on which He thought,  
 My sins that He, because of Christ, forgot."

What a salvation! Our iniquities pardoned and subdued, our sins cast into the depths of the sea, and the righteousness of Christ shining forth from the life. No wonder the angel

<sup>24</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 323, 324.

<sup>25</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 610.

<sup>26</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 679.

announced to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16.

Brethren, can it be that any here have not yet tasted the sweets of the imparted righteousness of Christ? Is it possible that any of us are still living under the old covenant, trying to "do and live" instead of daily trusting Jesus to do for and in us so that we may live?

Let us remember that this blessing comes only by faith. "For by grace are ye saved *through* faith." Faith is the connecting link that puts one in contact with Christ Jesus. Jesus saves.

If your faith is in Him, it is a saving faith, but if it is in your own merit or personal attainment, you are lost.

Does someone say, "I see this great truth concerning imparted righteousness, and I long for it in my heart, but my faith is too small"? I answer, No, you are wrong. It is not a *big* faith that you need. Yours is big enough to put you in touch with Christ, if you will only use it. God has given to every man a measure of faith, sufficiently great to bring him into contact with the power of omnipotence.

True, your faith may be only as a grain of mustard seed, but it will grow by exercise. Do not wait for a stronger faith to claim the righteousness of Christ. *Do it now*. It is yours if you reach up the hand of faith and grasp it.

## **Acceptance of the Righteousness of Christ by Faith Will Bring the Finishing of the Work of the Gospel**

“After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:1-4.

Here is a description of God’s final and mightiest work upon earth. The work of the other angel of Revelation 18 joins the work of the third angel of Revelation 14, causing the message to swell into a loud cry. The earth will be lightened with his glory. He will have great power. He is to cry “mightily with a strong voice” that will resound throughout the nations. Under his voice the people of God will be called to throw off the sins of Babylon and be prepared to stand through the plagues.

During the work of this angel, the mighty power of God will rest upon the church. It will truly arise and shine among the nations, and will relay to men the most powerful appeal to turn from sin to God that has ever emanated from the throne. This will bring the final cleavage between those who are to be saved and those who are to be lost.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It is the promised baptism of God’s power without measure.

It will be as much greater than Pentecost as the times demand a more potent message.

### What Will Bring the Latter Rain?

But what will bring the latter rain in its fullness? When will the power of the angel of Revelation 18 be seen?

I hear many answers.

People are writing to me every few days telling me what the church must do to receive the fullness of the Spirit's power. A number have said that we should place greater emphasis on the health phase of our message, because that is the point in which we are lacking. And I am sure this should be done.

Others say the hindering cause is the spirit of worldliness, pride, and vanity in the church today. And no doubt there is much truth in this.

Some point to the spirit of rivalry, criticism, and fault-finding among God's people, and I am sure this is definitely a hindrance to the infilling of the Spirit of God.

And there have been still other suggestions as to what should be done to prepare the church for the greatly needed and desired latter rain. But I am sure that reformation on any or all of these points would not bring the promised blessing. Such a reformation is greatly needed. But merely trying to correct these things would, I believe, be like trying to kill a noxious tree by plucking off some of its leaves or fruit. It would be an attempt at reformation without real revival.

The work has to go much deeper. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree.

*The Holy Spirit will come in the fullness of power when the church of God lays hold by faith of the righteousness of Christ as a living, personal experience.*

"This message [the loud cry] seemed to be an addition to the third message, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel's message in 1844."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 277.

No external work of ours will bring this mighty heavenly boon.

We have been too long trying to establish our own righteousness and condition ourselves for this promised blessing.

Many of God's people today are like the Jews of Christ's time, ignorant of the righteousness of God. The Jews did not recognize any need of Christ or His righteousness. Were they not the literal descendants of Abraham, and did they not strictly keep the 613 requirements of the Talmud? What more could be needed? They rejected Jesus' offer to free them from the bondage of sin. They trusted explicitly in their own righteousness.

So now, many trust in their own personal efforts to reach the required state of perfection in order to receive the gift of the Spirit, but in such effort they accomplish little.

God must do a work for us in the heart. He must produce His righteousness in our lives and thus bring to us complete deliverance from our weaknesses and failures. Many who have been in the church for years have not yet learned the difference between trying to save themselves and letting God save them through the operation of Christ dwelling in the heart.

In 1889, the year after the memorable Minneapolis Conference, the messenger of God wrote:

"There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject [justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ] that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare."<sup>28</sup>

On this subject she also wrote:

"Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin."<sup>29</sup>

"There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness."<sup>30</sup>

"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

<sup>28</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Sept. 3, 1889, p. 545.

<sup>29</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing.”<sup>31</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.’”<sup>32</sup>

“When Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten. Love to Christ will be the spring of action. Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With earnest desire they yield all. . . . A profession of Christ without this deep love, is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery.”<sup>33</sup>

Many have not as yet learned the difference between personal effort to do God’s will and yielding the heart and life to the full control of Christ, trusting Him to reproduce His righteousness in them.

“He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin.”<sup>34</sup>

#### Our Great Need

At this very moment, then, the outstanding need of the church is to lay fast hold of the righteousness of Christ. There is no other righteousness. What is the chaff to the wheat?

This righteousness will not come as a result of our piling up a record of good deeds or changing this or that habit or

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>32</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

<sup>33</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 49.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

practice. It will come by receiving Christ in the fullness of His power into our very heart of hearts and permitting Him to bring our entire life into conformity to God's will. This, and this alone, will bring the abundance of the Spirit's power upon the church in the form of the latter rain.

This will bring the finishing of the work of God upon the earth, since it will prepare the way for the mighty cry of the angel of Revelation 18:1-4.

After the session of the General Conference in Minneapolis, already referred to, the Lord's messenger, writing of that experience, said:

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."<sup>35</sup>

At that meeting strong messages were given by some of the ministers on "Justification by Faith" and "The Righteousness of Christ." It was there emphasized that the one great need of the church and of its individual members was to accept this righteousness by simple faith and appropriate it to the heart and life.

It was a clarion call to a closer fellowship with Christ and a richer, fuller experience in the things of God. It was a call to sanctification and holiness through the power of the indwelling Christ. Some, with joy, accepted the great truth of justification by faith and opened their hearts for the abiding presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit. With rejoicing they claimed by faith the righteousness of God as a glorious substitute for their own weaknesses and failures.

But not all entered in. Some doubted the message and some even opposed it. This division caused a degree of confusion and darkness and prevented the fullness of blessing from coming to the church at that time. Those, however, who did lay hold of this new experience went back to the churches with the message of complete salvation through the righteousness of Christ, and in the *Review and Herald* of

<sup>35</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 22, 1892, p. 722.

March 5, 1889, the year following, Mrs. White reported that great revivals were taking place wherever the message was presented.

### **This Is the Third Angel's Message**

A question arose in the minds of some as to the relation of the message of righteousness by faith, as presented at the 1888 Conference, to the preaching of the third angel's message of Revelation 14. They wrote to Mrs. White about this. In her reply she said:

"Several have written to me, enquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"<sup>36</sup>

The truthfulness of that statement is evident. The burden of Revelation 14 is the preaching of "the everlasting gospel." That is what the three angels are to proclaim to the nations, kindreds, and tongues of earth.

True, the gospel here is clothed in a new setting. A new urgency is given to the importance of men everywhere receiving it. That urgency is set forth in the cry, "The hour of his judgment is come." Time is short, probation is closing, Jesus is coming to reap earth's harvest. Therefore men must hasten to accept the gospel, lest they be too late.

But it is "the everlasting gospel"—the good news concerning what Christ has done and still desires to do for men. It points the way of salvation through His merits alone. It is the same message of righteousness through Christ as was preached by Jesus, Peter, Paul, and all God's ministers since sin came into the world.

Besides the gospel of Christ there is no other means of salvation. Paul points out that to the Jew and to the Greek the plan is the same. Everyone that believeth must believe in the same Christ. "I am not ashamed," declares the apostle, "of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1, 1890, p. 193.

revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:16, 17.

Here Paul places emphasis upon the fact that in the gospel "is the righteousness of God revealed." Since the threefold message of Revelation 14 is a gospel message, bringing Christ to the nations, the doctrine of justification by faith and righteousness through Christ is the heart and essence of that message.

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people. . . . This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted 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. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure."<sup>37</sup>

Brethren, here is something of importance to the church. "The Lord . . . sent a most precious message to His people." When? In 1888 at the General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

It was a message of justification through faith. The people were urged to receive the righteousness of Christ. This is the third angel's message which is to be proclaimed to the world. Its preaching will be attended by the power of the Holy Spirit in large measure.

In the light of these stirring statements we must expect that this mighty message of righteousness by faith, which came so definitely to the church in 1888, *will become dominant in the personal experience of the leaders and members of the remnant church and in their preaching as the message swells to a loud cry.* This is already many years overdue. In

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<sup>37</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

1888 the loud cry had already begun. It should have been finished long since. We have been marking time. Does someone ask why? We have the answer: "The doctrine of justification by faith has been lost sight of by many who have professed to believe the third angel's message."<sup>38</sup>

And many are still forgetting. Sixty-four years after this message of God's righteousness came to us we are still very quiet about it. Neither in our personal experience nor in our preaching do we give this doctrine much prominence, and yet we should be shouting it from the housetops. We should be rejoicing in it as a glorious reality in our own souls. This is what God expects, and this is what must be before His work can be finished in power.

In giving emphasis to the great urgency of this matter, Ellen G. White, in 1888, sent the following message to the churches:

"Spiritual death has come upon the people that should be manifesting life and zeal, purity and consecration, by the most earnest devotion to the cause of truth. The facts concerning the real condition of the professed people of God, speak more loudly than their profession, and make it evident that some power has cut the cable that anchored them to the Eternal Rock, and that they are drifting away to sea, without chart or compass."<sup>39</sup>

Brethren, here is a terrible warning! *Some power has cut the cable* that anchors to the eternal Rock.

Through attempting to reach a standard of righteousness by personal effort we have neglected to lay hold, by faith, on the righteousness of Christ.

Modernism has largely swept away the foundation of righteousness by faith in Christ and has left the Christian churches without an anchor. *God forbid that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should drift with the rest.* Someone must cast out an anchor that will hold. Who should it be but the remnant church that is preaching the soon coming of Jesus?

Brethren, the way to the finishing of God's work is through the power of Christ's righteousness.

<sup>38</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 13, 1889, p. 514.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, July 24, 1888, p. 465.

The reception of this righteousness will bring the baptism of power and the loud cry of the message of the third angel. And this alone will cure the feebleness of the Laodicean church. This is the everlasting gospel that must be preached to the nations. We must arise now and in the strength of God proclaim it to the world. The night is falling. We dare delay no longer.

#### Laodicea's Sickness

In His message to the church of Laodicea, God charges it with sickness. It boasts of its spiritual health, but God declares it to be sick almost unto death. Let us look again at His earnest entreaty to His remnant people:

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3:14-20.

"I know thy works." What is wrong with their works?

They are self-righteous. They boast of riches. They are increased with goods. They have a perfect system of truth. They have a marvelous organization. They have the marks of the remnant church. They excel in giving to advance the cause of truth. What more could be needed? That is as it appears to them.

But when God places His evaluation on the condition of the church He declares its members to be wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. And their greatest peril is in the fact that they are ignorant of their true condition. "And *knowest*

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*not.*" They are contented, self-assured, and satisfied at the very time when they are in gravest danger of being spewed out of the mouth of God.

True, they have works. They are eager, energetic, and faithful in the work of the church, but the works of many are works of self-righteousness. They are destitute of real righteousness—the righteousness of Christ.

They need gold tried in the fire—purity of character. They need the "white raiment" of Christ's righteousness. They need eyesalve—heavenly wisdom and understanding.

Brethren, we claim to be the church of Laodicea. If this is true, then this is God's message to us here and now, even while we are in this great Bible Conference. It comes fresh today to each worker, to each individual believer.

"Behold," says Jesus, "I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, . . . I will come in." Verse 20. This is what we need. We need Christ *inside*, not standing outside knocking. We need the things He can bring into our lives. We need the Holy Ghost, who is waiting to fill the yielded heart with the fullness of power.

"If *any man hear my voice* [if your heart hears His call], and open the door, I will come in." It is just as simple as that.

Brother, will you be that man? Will you do it now as you sit there in your seat? He stands there now. He pleads, oh, so earnestly. He desires to bring to you the full riches of His power, grace, and glory. But you must open the door. You must ask Him in. He awaits only your invitation. Even now He reaches for the hand of faith in you, bidding it lay fast hold on the righteousness of God. He wants to come in now.

And you who were not privileged to attend this Bible Conference, but who are reading this report, the message is also to you. To your heart also Jesus is calling. Will not you also respond to His loving entreaty and open your heart's door to Him, that He may clothe you with the righteousness of God?

This call is to all the church, but especially to God's ministers. This fact was set forth by David when he said,

"Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy." Ps. 132:9.

Of all people in the world, God's priests should be clothed with Christ's righteousness. When they are, there will be great rejoicing in the church. The saints will shout for joy and will follow the example of their spiritual leaders.

"All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness."<sup>40</sup>

Brethren, we must personally experience this mighty blessing before we can take it to our churches. We must believe in it. We must enter into its blessedness.

Then we must take it to our conference workers' meetings and enlist our workers' cooperation in taking it to our people in all the churches. We must encourage our evangelists to preach it to the people. The cry of Christ's saving grace and power must be sounded to the ends of the earth.

Mighty miracles of grace will follow.

Revival will come to our churches.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit will come upon God's people in the fullness of power, and the work will be finished. "For he will finish the work, and *cut it short in righteousness*: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:28.

"You will meet with those who will say, 'You are too much excited over this matter. You are too much in earnest. You should not be reaching for the righteousness of Christ, and making so much of that. You should preach the law.' As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth."<sup>41</sup>

### Heaven Is Ready

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81.

<sup>41</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890, p. 146.

some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mightily, with a strong voice. . . . The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message, as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to fearlessly proclaim the third angel's message."<sup>42</sup>

So this is God's way and this is His plan for His church.

It is for us now to act. His call has been long and loud. He has been long-suffering lo these years. He has waited for us to get ready to receive the fullness of His blessing and power. Now the decision rests with us.

God's message through the prophet Hosea is, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 10:12.

To a large degree the church failed to build on the foundation laid at the 1888 General Conference. Much has been lost as a result. We are years behind where we should have been in spiritual growth. Long ere this we should have been in the Promised Land.

But the message of righteousness by faith given in the 1888 Conference has been repeated here. Practically every speaker from the first day onward has laid great stress upon this all-important doctrine, and there was no prearranged plan that he should do so. It was spontaneous on the part of the speakers. No doubt they were impelled by the Spirit of God to do so. Truly this one subject has, in this conference "swallowed up every other."

And this great truth has been given here in this 1952 Bible Conference with far greater power than it was given in the 1888 Conference because those who have spoken here have had the advantage of much added light shining forth

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<sup>42</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 277.

from hundreds of pronouncements on this subject in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy which those who spoke back there did not have.

The light of justification and righteousness by faith shines upon us today more clearly than it ever shone before upon any people.

No longer will the question be, "What was the attitude of our workers and people toward the message of righteousness by faith that was given in 1888? What did they do about it?" From now on the great question must be, "What did we do with the light on righteousness by faith as proclaimed in the 1952 Bible Conference?"

Brethren, what shall be our response?

The reception of the righteousness of Christ by faith will bring the Holy Ghost down from heaven. This will result in the very foundations of the world being shaken by the preaching of the Advent message.

We are engaged in an effort to double our church membership in a four-year period from January 1, 1950, to December 31, 1953. Some have reckoned such a goal to be preposterous. But is it? When the first Pentecost came the church doubled its numbers in one day.

The reception of the righteousness of Christ by the church today will bring the second Pentecost. Revelation 18:1-3 will be fulfilled. Thousands will be converted in a day as the message of salvation through Christ swells to a loud and mighty cry. With such power in the message, who shall *say* that a four-year period is too short a time in which to double the number of those who are brought into the church of God?

This question of receiving the righteousness of Christ in its fullness is therefore the most important consideration before the church today.

It is the most important consideration before each one of us.

Who, then, are there among us who will without further delay reach out the hand of faith and grasp this mighty gift? It is ours for the asking and taking if we only believe.

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When this takes place the very skies will pour down righteousness and the earth will open up and cause righteousness and salvation to spring up together. (See Isa. 45:8.) "But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Amos 5:24.

There are leaders here from all our world divisions. Brethren, it is within your power to carry this message of justification and righteousness by faith back to the very ends of the earth. You can instruct every Seventh-day Adventist worker in this doctrine. You can encourage the brethren, in turn, to set it before the churches. You can sound throughout your divisions an appeal for our people everywhere to lay hold of this mighty experience.

Let us arise and shine in the glory of the righteousness of our God. "If the people receive it fully, his [Satan's] power will be broken."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 161.

**The Holy Spirit and the Latter Rain**

By

LOUIS K. DICKSON

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## **The Holy Spirit**

The church has now reached the time when all uncertainty concerning the Holy Spirit and His ministry must be dissipated. This is in a very real sense the time when in the purposes of God this mighty third person of the Godhead must be known, understood, and possessed in all His fullness. Nothing less than this will measure up to the divine plan for the remnant church.

We should then move into the study of this great subject with eagerness, confidence, and perfect devotion, that we may intelligently seek with all our hearts the fulfillment of the promises God has made to us who are sincere followers of truth and righteousness.

### **Personality of the Holy Spirit**

No attempt to understand the Holy Spirit's ministry would be logical or successful without first of all discovering the revealed truth concerning His personality and relationship to the Triune Godhead. We are forced to humbly acknowledge our inability to exhaustively understand the personality of the Holy Spirit because of the fact that we are finite and He is infinite, we are human and He is divine. Our comprehension is faulty and our understanding is darkened by sin and its degenerating results, and thus we are confined to what divine revelation has seen fit to disclose to us concerning the personality of this great person, the Holy Ghost.

Human terms are limited to human understanding and comprehension, and therefore any description of the Holy Spirit in finite terms must of necessity fall short of a perfect and conclusive description. Clear definition, however, can be given the personality of this great and holy being by remaining within the realm of what we may understand as human beings. Certain capacities constitute proof of personality, such as being vexed (Isa. 63:10), grieved (Eph. 4:30), pleased (Acts 15:28), and being able to speak (Matt. 10:20; Acts 13:2; 1 Tim. 4:1), hear (John 16:13), convict (John 16:8), impart (Rom. 5:5), transform (2 Cor. 3:18), teach (John 14:26), guide (John 16:13), console (Acts 9:31), testify (John 15:26), and bestow spiritual gifts severally to every man according to His own will (1 Cor. 12:11)—all of which are mentioned in the Bible in relationship to the Holy Spirit. A person is a being who can be heard, trusted, followed, turned away from, and influenced by. These foregoing capabilities on the part of the Holy Spirit prove He is a personal being rather than merely a powerful influence, and should be conclusive evidence to our minds.

The nature of the Holy Spirit cannot be comprehended or known fully by man, yet the fact of His personality is made clear by the inspired writers, and His ministry to man is clearly made known. This ministry includes testifying of Christ (John 15:26), guiding the church (John 16:13), bringing to memory the words of Christ (John 14:26), instructing in the truth (John 14:26), giving power in prayer (Rom. 8:26), revealing the future (John 16:13), and giving power for witnessing and winning souls to God (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit is spoken of under the pronoun "he" about twenty times, the pronoun "him" three times, and the pronoun "whom" three times. Most of these expressions are found in John 14, 15, 16. The name "Comforter," along with the afore-mentioned pronouns, is used in connection with the Holy Spirit and is in every case in the masculine form.

Again, Jesus' own words concerning Himself made plain the fact that the Holy Spirit is a real being when He said:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18, 19.

To the disciples He said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26. And again He told them, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, *he* shall testify of me." John 15:26. In none of the utterances of Jesus does He imply that the Spirit is merely an influence.

The deityship of the Holy Spirit is established by both the Old and the New Testament. He is called by attributes that can only refer to Deity alone. In Hebrews 9:14 He is called the "eternal Spirit"; in 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11 He is credited with the attribute of omniscience; in Acts 1:8 with omnipotence; and in Psalms 139:7, 12 with omnipresence.

The Holy Spirit is linked with acts of creation in Genesis 1:2 and Psalms 104:30; with the power to give life in Luke 1:35 and Matthew 1:18; with miracle-working power in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; with resurrection power in Romans 8:11; with the new birth in Titus 3:5 and John 3:5; with inspiration in 2 Peter 1:20, 21; and with the work of sanctification in 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

He is called by many different names, among which are "the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15); "the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2, 9); "the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29); "the Spirit of truth" (John 14:17); the "Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13); "the spirit of wisdom" (Isa. 11:2); "the spirit of knowledge" (Isa. 11:2).

Other names are given to this mighty third person of the Godhead; namely, "the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14), "the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:18), "the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:9), "the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. 3:3), the "Comforter"

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(John 14:16), the "Paraclete" (John 14:16, Douay), "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter 1:11), "the Spirit of his Son" (Gal. 4:6), "the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:19).

Certain symbols are used to denote the Holy Spirit, such as water (John 7:37-39), wind (Acts 2:2), fire (Acts 2:3), a dove (John 1:32), oil (Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:9), a seal (Eph. 1:13), "the earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14), and in *Testimonies*, volume 4, page 319, the Spirit is likened to light, salt, and leaven.

To try by human reasoning to go further than the declarations of the Divine Word and the Spirit of prophecy is a mistake, and we shall not attempt to indulge therein. The messenger of the Lord has said:

"The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them; but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden."<sup>1</sup>

The Lord has revealed the fact that the Holy Spirit is "the third person of the Godhead."<sup>2</sup> This third person of the Godhead exerts His influence upon the human soul.

"The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

The two foregoing quotations from the Spirit of prophecy are particularly interesting because of the fact that the Lord reveals both the thought of personality and the thought of influence. In other words, the Holy Spirit is a divine person, a being, whose influence is mighty and enters into the very lives of Christians. We must never use our limited understanding to describe the personality of the Holy Spirit. The following from the pen of inspiration reveals all we need to know of His divine nature:

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 392.

<sup>3</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 805.

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high."<sup>4</sup>

All the Biblical writers who treat upon the Holy Spirit, whether casually, partially, or fully, invariably do so by using terms and forms of expression that do not leave one in doubt that they themselves believed in the personality of the Holy Ghost. How often they spoke of Him in the same terms they used in speaking of the Father or the Son. Insofar as language can escape obscurity, the Scriptures decisively reveal the fact that the third person of the Godhead is a distinct person and that their writers definitely designed to convey that thought.

It should be noted before going further with this study that the Holy Spirit is called the "Comforter" four times in the Authorized Version of the Scriptures. The original word *paraklētos*, appears five times and is translated four times "Comforter" and once "advocate." The various translations give either "Comforter" or "advocate," but the Douay Bible gives "paraclete," as does also the margin of the Revised Version. Paraclete is the Anglicized form of the Greek word *paraklētos*, meaning one called to the aid of another.

One noted writer has this to say of the word *Paraclete*:

"This is the title of a Person. It is indeed one of the incommunicable, untranslated words of Scripture. Neither *Comforter* nor *Advocate* fully expresses its meaning. Both, and even something beyond, would be required to do this. Much would have been gained if no attempt had been made at translation, the word itself becoming the most familiar name of the Spirit."<sup>5</sup>

### Dispensation of the Holy Spirit

Just as in the fullness of time the Saviour of men appeared, so in a definite period marked out the special working of the

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 669.

<sup>5</sup> G. Campbell Morgan, *The Spirit of God* (1938), pp. 26, 27.

Holy Spirit will be manifested. According to the messenger of the Lord we are now in that period. "The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit."<sup>6</sup> The disciples were blessed during His ministry by Christ's own presence and guidance. Just so are we blessed, since Pentecost, by the personal presence and direction of the third person of the Godhead.

Prior to Pentecost He was present upon different occasions, but His fullness of presence was temporary and not constant. He came upon individuals upon certain occasions with great and unusual power in order that they might accomplish God's stated purposes. Thus He blessed Samson with strength far beyond any natural development. (Judges 14:6.) He caused men to become messengers of God, as, for instance, Joshua (Num. 27:18), Gideon (Judges 6:34), Saul (1 Sam. 10:10), and David (1 Sam. 16:13). Upon this point we read from the messenger of the Lord:

"During the patriarchal age, the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fulness. Now, in obedience to the word of the Saviour, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people."<sup>7</sup>

Thus the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times worked upon men and came upon them, but it was left to later times for Him to dwell in and abide with men, as He did with the apostles and others in later than Pentecostal times. The personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is an experience given to the church in what is generally called the Christian dispensation. From Pentecost on to the second Advent of Christ this precious gift of the Spirit is available to the whole church rather than to a few chosen individuals designated for a definite and single act for God. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 3:11) is a promise that was given for a specific dispensation and has never been withdrawn.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was definitely withheld

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<sup>6</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 511.

<sup>7</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37.

during the three and a half years of Christ's earthly ministry. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:39. This baptism was foretold by John the Baptist, but was not received until the specified time, when the disciples, according to Christ's own direction, tarried in Jerusalem following His resurrection, waiting for the fulfillment of His word. Therefore, we see that there was a specified time, or dispensation, of the Holy Spirit, and that period is still with the church today. Not all have received this baptism, but all have the privilege of receiving it by faith through prayer. Paul makes this clear when he says:

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:13, 14.

### The Promise of the Spirit

When the apostle Paul spoke of "the promise of the Spirit through faith" he doubtless was referring specifically to those promises Jesus gave to His disciples just prior to His humiliation. He was fully convinced that the promises made to Abraham could never be fully realized except by and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Christ promised His disciples that He would pray to the Father, and He would send "another Comforter," who would remain with them forever. (John 14:16; see also John 15:26; 16:13, 14.) In verses seventeen and eighteen of chapter 14 it is made plain that His promise to be with them "even unto the end of the world" was to be fulfilled by the presence of the Comforter, who would come to the world as the representative of Christ. It was because of this that Paul prayed in behalf of every believer "that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Eph. 3:16, 17.

"Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter. . . . Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the

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hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them.”<sup>8</sup>

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith,” says Paul in Ephesians 3:17.

“The Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.”<sup>9</sup>

“On the day of Pentecost the promised Comforter descended, and the power from on high was given, and the souls of the believers thrilled with the conscious presence of their ascended Lord.”<sup>10</sup>

It is significant that although the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is the personal representative of Christ, yet He acts with full authority of the Father and the Son, He exercises the fullness of the power of the Trinity. Note the following words from the messenger of the Lord concerning the spiritual battle in which His earthly servants are engaged:

“They are to contend with supernatural forces, but they are assured of supernatural help. All the intelligences of heaven are in this army. And more than angels are in the ranks. The Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord’s host, comes down to direct the battle.”<sup>11</sup>

Again we read:

“The Comforter . . . is the Spirit in all the fulness of the Godhead.”<sup>12</sup>

“Evil had been accumulating for centuries, and could only be restrained and resisted by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.”<sup>13</sup>

The need for the coming of the Spirit to the church can best be seen by noticing some of the results that followed this great outpouring in the days of the apostles. First of all, the descent of the Holy Spirit gave great effectiveness to the witnessing of the apostles (Acts 1:7, 8); it gave a holy boldness to the believers, such as had never before been seen among men (Acts 2:14; 4:13, 31); it converted many souls—at one

<sup>8</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1892, p. 738.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 351.

<sup>11</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 352.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 63.

<sup>13</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 392.

time three thousand (Acts 2:41), and at another time about five thousand (Acts 4:4); it drew multitudes (Acts 5:14; 6:7)—according to Acts 14:1 “a great multitude,” according to Acts 11:21 “a great number”—churches increased rapidly (Acts 16:5); the word of God grew mightily (Acts 19:20); a great company of priests came to Christ (Acts 6:7).

### The Ministry of the Spirit

The ministry of the Spirit is manifold; in fact, it would be impossible to exhaust the subject by any human effort. Perhaps the simplest analysis of the Spirit's ministry for man is stated by three words; namely, *regenerating* (Titus 3:5), *indwelling* (Eph. 3:17), *equipping* (Acts 1:8). All that is revealed of the mission and ministry of the third person of the Godhead will naturally fall somewhere under these three classifications. Thus Paul's statement is made plain when he says:

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Rom. 8:26, 27.

Through the ministry of the Spirit redemption is efficacious to man.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. . . . And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” John 16:7-11.

While Christ was here among men He could only by an external presence and verbal counsel communicate with them. This could be done only to a comparative few at any one time and in any one territory or city for a few years, until He was offered up as an offering for sin. But God's presence by the Spirit could dwell in and remain with His

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followers. Through the Spirit He could abide with them forever, have sweet communion and fellowship with them; through them do mighty deeds and spread forth the gospel in all lands and to all peoples. Through the Holy Spirit He could be infinitely nearer than even when He walked and talked with men.

“Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter, of whom Christ had said, He ‘shall be in you.’ And He had further said, ‘It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.’ Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them. The light, and love, and power of the indwelling Christ shone out through them, so that men, beholding, ‘marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.’”<sup>14</sup>

By the indwelling Spirit, God comes into full possession of the human soul. His power is received by the believer as fully as though he were the only individual in God’s universe who has access to that power. Thus it is made possible for a greater Power to dominate the heart and life of man; he is made partaker of the divine nature, and abides in Christ, with sweet communion unbroken.

“The work of the Holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.”<sup>15</sup>

The expression “in Christ,” which occurs frequently in the New Testament, is significant, for it not only signifies an experience of a normal Christian life but involves an indwelling Christ.

“The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul. If it is welcomed as an honored guest, those who receive it will be made complete in Christ. The good work begun will be finished; the holy thoughts, heavenly affections, and Christlike actions will take the place of impure thoughts, perverse sentiments, and rebellious acts.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 80.

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1892, p. 738.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 561.

### A Regenerating Agent

The Holy Spirit ministers to the human heart as a regenerating agent and helps our infirmities and weaknesses, which have caused us to sin. (Rom. 8:26, 27.)

"The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this Satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."<sup>17</sup>

The first work of the Holy Spirit on the human heart is that of a convincer of sin. "And when he is come, he will reprove ["convince," margin] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. But His work does not end when He has convinced the soul of these things.

"God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion, establishes so close a relation between Jesus, and His disciples, that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment, better balanced. So quickened is he, by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit, to the glory of God."<sup>18</sup>

Thus are fulfilled the words of the apostle:

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:4, 5.

<sup>17</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

<sup>18</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, pp. 285, 286.

Again we read: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18.

Through the Spirit's ministry the very attributes of the character of Christ come into the life of the believer. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:5. On this point Ellen G. White has stated:

"God's law is fulfilled only as men (love Him) with heart, mind, soul, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. It is the manifestation of this love that brings glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men. The Lord is glorified when the great end of His law is attained. It is the work of the Holy Spirit from age to age to impart love to human hearts, for love is the living principle of brotherhood."<sup>19</sup>

The servant of the Lord has spoken again on this point as follows:

"Unless you receive the Holy Spirit, you cannot have the love of God in the soul; but through a living connection with Christ, we are inspired with love and zeal and earnestness."<sup>20</sup>

The advancement so needful in a successful Christian life is all worked out through this wonderful agency of the third person of the Godhead. By His power alone can the individual grow in grace and rise from one spiritual elevation to another.

Through the loving ministry of the Holy Spirit upon the life of the true believer the character is made holy, created by the power of God.

"Through faith the Holy Spirit works in the heart to create holiness therein; but this cannot be done unless the human agent will work with Christ. We can be fitted for heaven only through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. . . . It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man."<sup>21</sup>

We read further upon this point:

<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 139.

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Sept. 27, 1892, p. 610.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1892, p. 673.

"It is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal to the mind the character of the consecration that God will accept. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is enlightened, and the character is renewed, sanctified, and uplifted."<sup>22</sup>

### Enlightens the Mind

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: . . . and he will shew you things to come. . . . He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16:13, 14. (See also 1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 13.) The Holy Spirit, then, is our great Teacher, not only enlightening our minds but enabling us to teach and preach the truth to others. "The truth that has not been clearly discerned, will be opened before those who search for it as for hid treasure. The Holy Spirit will descend in power upon his people, explaining many mysteries."<sup>23</sup>

How important it is for us to seek for the reception of the Holy Spirit and have no uncertainty at that point in our relationship to this mighty regenerating and enlightening power in our lives.

"No one is prepared to educate and strengthen the church unless he has received the gift of the Holy Spirit. No minister is prepared to labor intelligently for the salvation of souls, unless he is endowed by the Holy Spirit, unless he is feeding on Christ, and has an intense hatred of sin."<sup>24</sup>

Again we read:

"The time has come when we must seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, a power that shall give force to the warnings that are to be given to the world. . . . The words we speak are to be an evidence that the Holy Spirit is speaking through us as His messengers."<sup>25</sup>

"We should have a realization that unless taught by the Holy Spirit, we shall not rightly comprehend the Bible; for it is a sealed book even to the learned, who are wise in their own conceit."<sup>26</sup>

Over and over has the Spirit of prophecy amplified the promise made by Christ concerning the light which the Holy

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 30, 1894, p. 65.

<sup>23</sup> E. G. White letter 31, 1897.

<sup>24</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 29, 1892, p. 193.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1907, p. 10.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, June 4, 1889, p. 53.

Spirit would shed upon the truth by those who would receive this Divine Guest. We dare not deprive ourselves of the enabling power of the Spirit as we search the Scriptures. We are assured that—

“the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven by the benevolence of infinite love, takes the things of God, and reveals them to every soul that has an implicit faith in Christ. . . . As we study the Scriptures, we should pray for the light of God’s Holy Spirit to shine upon the word, that we may see and appreciate its treasures.”<sup>27</sup>

“Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God.”<sup>28</sup>

There needs to come over each one of us as believers the realizing sense of how much we must have the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit with us day by day and hour by hour. Never should we forget that we are wrestling “not against flesh and blood” but against “spiritual wickedness in high places.”

“Realize every moment that you must have the presence of the Holy Spirit; for it can do a work that you can not do of yourself.”<sup>29</sup>

To those who teach and preach the Word this realization is of vast importance, for—

“the preaching of the word is of no avail without the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit: for this Spirit is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit, will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. A minister may be able to present the letter of the word of God: he may be familiar with all its commands and promises; but his sowing of the gospel seed will not be successful unless this seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Without the co-operation of the Spirit of God, no amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light. Before one book of the New Testament had been written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying disciples. Then the testimony of their enemies was, ‘Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.’ ”<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 113.

<sup>28</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 286.

<sup>29</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 310.

<sup>30</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 284.

We are not to seek to be important, but to be worthy and to possess the capacity to receive the fullness of the Holy Ghost in our lives. There will be only one standard when the time comes for us to be invited to sit down with Christ in heavenly places.

"In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building. 'Your size as a human being is nothing,' said he, 'but if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and through the eternal ages you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you.'" <sup>31</sup>

What a marvelous work of grace is wrought out in the life of the one who, laying self aside, makes room for the Holy Spirit! What transformations take place, what joy and rejoicing fill the heart!

"Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. The Spirit conforms the renewed soul to the model, Jesus Christ. Through its influence, enmity against God is changed into faith and love, and pride into humility. The soul perceives the beauty of truth, and Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break out in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude." <sup>32</sup>

Again comes the revelation of the great work of transformation which by the Holy Spirit is carried out in the life of the Spirit-filled disciples of Christ:

"When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, and humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God." <sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, April 11, 1899, p. 225.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 25, 1896, p. 533.

<sup>33</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 172, 173.

"In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin."<sup>34</sup>

"He came to destroy the works of the devil, and he has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning."<sup>35</sup>

Here are other matchless statements for our encouragement:

"He who is endowed with the Holy Spirit has great capacities of heart and intellect, with strength of will and purpose that is unconquerable."<sup>36</sup>

"Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers."<sup>37</sup>

"The choicest productions of art possess no beauty that can compare with the beauty of character which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit's working in the soul."<sup>38</sup>

"In order to be purified and to remain pure, Seventh-day Adventists must have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and in their homes. The Lord has given me light that when the Israel of today humble themselves before Him, and cleanse the soul temple from all defilement, He will hear their prayers in behalf of the sick and will bless in the use of His remedies for disease."<sup>39</sup>

"Pray that the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, with all their quickening, recuperative, and transforming power, may fall like an electric shock on the palsy-stricken soul, causing every nerve to thrill with new life, restoring the whole man from his dead, earthly, sensual state to spiritual soundness. You will thus become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."<sup>40</sup>

The new covenant becomes effective in the human heart only through the working of Christ therein. This is made possible through the mighty working of the Holy Spirit, who is the agent whereby the blessings of the new covenant come into the life of the one who enters into that redemptive relationship. We read:

"God is the mighty, all-powerful agency in the work of transforma-

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

<sup>36</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 176.

<sup>37</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 414.

<sup>38</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 143.

<sup>39</sup> *Counsels on Health*, p. 138.

<sup>40</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 267.

tion. By His Spirit, He writes His law in the heart. Thus divine relationship is renewed between God and man. . . . The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means that sin is taken away, and that the vacuum is filled with the Spirit. It means that the mind is divinely illumined, that the heart is emptied of self, and filled with the presence of Christ."<sup>41</sup>

### Bestower of Spiritual Gifts

According to the apostle Paul, when Christ ascended to heaven, there went with Him a multitude of captives and He "gave gifts unto men." (Eph. 4:8.) We find a list of the gifts that are referred to here in the writings of this same apostle; namely, in Ephesians 4:11-15 and 1 Corinthians 12. These gifts of the Spirit were to be permanently in the church to the end of the gospel work in the earth, and were to be distributed to the church "severally as he will."

"All men do not receive the same gifts, but to every servant of the Master some gift of the Spirit is promised. . . . The gifts are already ours in Christ, but their actual possession depends upon our reception of the Spirit of God. The promise of the Spirit is not appreciated as it should be. Its fulfilment is not realized at it might be. . . . None need lament that they have not received larger gifts; for He who has apportioned to every man, is equally honored by the improvement of each trust, whether it be great or small."<sup>42</sup>

The office work of the Holy Spirit will bring out in the life the fruits of the Spirit, which are these: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. 5:22, 23. "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Eph. 5:9.

"Christ is seeking to reproduce Himself in the hearts of men; and He does this through those who believe in Him. The object of the Christian life is fruitbearing,—the reproduction of Christ's character in the believer, that it may be reproduced in others. . . . As you receive the Spirit of Christ,—the spirit of unselfish love and labor for others,—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of

<sup>41</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, June 10, 1902, p. 8; also *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312.

<sup>42</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 327, 328.

Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely. . . . Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."<sup>43</sup>

This wonderful fruitage of the Christian life is not something to be struggled after or labored for.

"The Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. . . . The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ."<sup>44</sup>

### Seals the Saints

The last act in the preparation of the saints of God to meet the Saviour is the sealing work of the Holy Spirit. Paul enjoins us: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4:30. The sealing involves all for which the acceptable keeping of the true Sabbath signifies, for the Sabbath is to be kept as a sign not only of God's creating power in making a world but also of His re-creating power, which is found in the life that is truly sanctified. This involves victory over every sin and besetment in the life of the one whom God accepts as His own, which experience is wrought out by the Holy Spirit alone. The sealing work is performed by the third person of the Godhead.

The seal of God cannot be placed upon sin, but upon holiness alone. So it will be in the last days, when the saints are finally sealed by the Holy Spirit under the latter rain experience.

"Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully. I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.

<sup>44</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 677.

to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. . . . I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action."<sup>45</sup>

Thus we see that the solemn work of sealing the saints of God is a part of the office work of the Holy Spirit and calls for the sanctifying of the human soul. This is the work that is now going on, and only in the life of the one who with all his heart is searching and seeking for the gift of the Holy Spirit in all earnestness can this work be completed. How diligently, then, should the people of God make room for the Holy Spirit in their lives and allow Him to take His rightful place in all that they do and say. This is the time of heart searching which precedes the mighty outpouring of the latter rain, to prepare a people for the courts of heaven.

### Grieving the Holy Spirit

"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30) is the injunction the apostle Paul writes to the church. To follow out this good counsel means that our heart's door will be opened wide for the indwelling Spirit of Christ. (Rev. 3:20.) It means that we will receive the Spirit, as was Christ's intention for the disciples when He breathed on them. (John 20:22.) It means that we must turn away from every sin, from "bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, . . . malice" (Eph. 4:30, 31), cleansing the soul temple from every defilement and entering into the work of sanctification with all that it means.

The kind of life that grieves the Holy Spirit is plainly seen by the words of the messenger of the Lord as she describes those upon whom the seal of God will never be placed:

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without

<sup>45</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 71.

spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.”<sup>46</sup>

Grieving the Holy Spirit is to quench the Spirit’s working in our hearts and lives. How serious it is, then, to disregard the plain counsel the Lord has sent us to pray and seek and search for the Holy Spirit. How it must grieve Him when we turn to nought His loving counsel in this regard and go entirely upon our own in the work we strive to do for Him.

“There is not an impulse of our nature, not a faculty of the mind or an inclination of the heart, but needs to be, moment by moment, under the control of the Spirit of God.”<sup>47</sup>

It is by constantly resisting the Holy Ghost that we grieve Him and cause Him to turn from us and leave us in our sins and weakness. Darkness covers us and obscures the light of heaven in our lives as we quench the pleadings of His Spirit:

“Precious light is to shine forth from the word of God, and let no one presume to dictate what shall or what shall not be brought before the people in the messages of enlightenment that He shall send, and so quench the Spirit of God. . . . It was from pursuing this very course that the popular churches were left in partial darkness, and that is why the messages of heaven have not reached them.”<sup>48</sup>

Resisting and grieving the Holy Spirit consists in a determined hostility toward the Spirit’s purposes, His counsel, and His work. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is grieved through blindness. He takes into account that which causes the blindness and where the cause is of our own creation, He holds us responsible. Many times human blindness is due to disobedience to the heavenly vision at some earlier point in the experience, and for that disobedience we are responsible and guilty. Therefore, we need to perpetually examine ourselves as to whether we are in the faith. There are many who

<sup>46</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 216.

<sup>47</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 421.

<sup>48</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, p. 65.

would vehemently deny that they are at cross-purposes with the Spirit, but whose lives are out of touch with His divine leadings and deeper moves.

Whenever the Spirit of God is thwarted, whenever He is disobeyed, whenever He opens up our minds and hearts to some new aspect of the character of Christ, and there is no response in our hearts, the Holy Spirit is grieved. The heart of Christ is made sad when His tender touches of grace by His Spirit are hindered or go unheeded by His professed children. Oh, how often has He been grieved in our lives when the Master has made some gentle demands for truer devotion and piety and He has been spurned and His ministry looked upon as a light thing. Every day's postponement of the perfecting work of the saints has grieved Him, for thereby His coming has been postponed and His great purposes have been thwarted. In solemn quietness and contemplation let us then ponder in our hearts where and how we have grieved the Holy Spirit, and let us cause the heart of Christ sorrow and sadness no longer.

Have we not quenched the Spirit too often by rushing into His service instead of waiting upon Him for the unction from on high? Have we not been lighting false fires upon the altars of God instead of waiting for the burnings of the Pentecostal flame? "Quench not the Spirit" longer by the use of worldly means of advancing the work of God, for God will not allow the fire of the Holy Spirit to be mingled with strange fires upon His altars. Man perpetually quenches the Spirit by attempting to work in his own strength, hoping that God will step in and make up what he lacks so desperately. God wants man to give himself up to Him for the doing of His own work. Has He not warned, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow"? Isa. 50:11.

Let us hear His precious promise to those who will wait upon Him for His Divine Spirit and power: "But they that

wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. 40:31.

Much more might be said of the precious ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life and in the church—how He brings to our remembrance the things we have learned, how He reproves and corrects and restrains evil in our lives. We might well ponder how the Holy Spirit ministers to us by helping us to surmount great difficulties, by controlling all spiritual exercise, by inditing prayer, by molding the life, and by pleading with the heart.

We might also well spend time in pondering what other hindrances there may be in our lives to the powerful working of this heavenly Guest; how we hinder His loving ministry by being devoid of brotherly love and by disbelieving and working contrary to His plain revelations. We might well study how His ministry is barred from our lives by our holding fast to misconceived opinions and principles and being set in our own ideas; how self-sufficiency and sullenly pursuing our own way and worshiping the human, will obstruct His wooings upon our hearts; how faithlessness and a sharp and critical censorious spirit, with evil imaginings, quench His gracious work for our salvation; how frivolous talk and taking personal credit, gossiping, sowing discord, following too precise a program, and pleasing self alone, seeking only our interests rather than the interests of others, will wither the spiritual life He seeks to foster in our lives.

Those who vex the Spirit by following after carnal things, by indulging a fleshly disposition, by manifesting an unholy temper, or by compromising with iniquity in any way, cannot enjoy the peace and presence of the Holy Spirit. He is pre-eminently the Holy Spirit; and in order to enjoy His ministry in the life, we must put away forever from our lives whatsoever is known or believed to be unholy. He can have nothing in common with that which is unspiritual; therefore, whatsoever is known to be unspiritual in our lives must be abandoned, if we would have full fellowship with Him. "For

if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Rom. 8:13. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Verse 6.

Perhaps one of the greatest and most prominent ministries of the Spirit is the work of unifying the church. He it is who brings the church to the ultimate idea of unity to be attained by the body of Christ as described in the Biblical expression, "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Eph. 4:13. The complete realization of this unity will be seen at the second coming of our Lord, when He will be manifested in glory among the children of men as His people reflect His image perfectly. Then will be seen a unity of faith and knowledge among His disciples that is impossible while we are compelled to "see through a glass, darkly" and to "know in part" only. Until that great hour it is the privilege of the church to come into the "unity of the Spirit" and walk in the Spirit through the uncertainties of the last days with complete triumph of faith. "I . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, . . . endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:1-3. "The unity of the Spirit" is that unity of fellowship which is begotten of the Spirit. "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," says the apostle John. (1 John 1:3.) This is the great objective of the Holy Spirit as He works within the hearts of the believers in order to bring them into the same fellowship with the Father and the Son and thereby into blessed and sweet fellowship with one another.

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## The Former Rain

The promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Scriptures under the figure of rain. Two rains are mentioned, the former and the latter rain. Since Palestine was a land watered by rain and not by irrigation, these figures were easily understood by God's people. In Deuteronomy 11:10 and onward we find the Lord speaking with His people regarding their "land which the Lord . . . careth for." He said He would watch over it "from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." God promised them that He would give rain "in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil." Verse 14.

There were conditions under which all these promises were to be fulfilled to Israel. "If ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him" (Deut. 11:22), were the conditions upon which God would work to give them rich fruitage in their fields and in their struggles with other nations. "There shall no man be able to stand before you," God declared: "for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon." Verse 25. Not only would their land be fruitful and their crops bountiful, but because of God's mighty power working in their midst their enemies would be powerless in their antagonisms.

No one can read the history of Israel in the days of David and his son Solomon without recognizing that God kept His promise to His people in a most glorious fashion. Israel became so successful and prosperous that she was able to support her own millions of inhabitants and to help other nations to support their people besides.

It is interesting, in connection with the falling of the former and the latter rain, to note that the first rain fell in the fall of the year, before the plowing time began. The land was such that no plowing or seed sowing could be done before the soil had received the early rain. The latter rain fell in the spring of the year, in order to bring the grain to complete maturity, ready for the harvesting. The prosperity of the nation depended upon these two rains, the falling of which depended upon the spiritual relationship of the people of God and their obedience to His commandments. If for any reason the rain did not fall in its scheduled period, the people sought the Lord most earnestly and searched their hearts and lives that they might find the reason. So dependent were they upon the two rains falling regularly and on time that everything was put aside to make way for seeking after God, that they might receive the fulfillment of His promises concerning them.

Ever since the establishment of the church in apostolic times, down to the present day, it has been of the utmost importance that the people of God see and understand the true significance of the early and the latter rain. Because of the dimness of understanding relating to this great truth, the church has been weak and impoverished far below the plans and purposes of God. And so, today, it is of first importance that we understand the true meaning of all that God has revealed concerning both the former and the latter rain.

“It is true that in the time of the end, when God’s work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seed-time and harvest, the Hebrew prophets

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foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time, the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church."<sup>49</sup>

Because of the fact that "the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church" to the end of time, some have supposed that merely believing that fact and accepting the truthfulness of it is all that is necessary in order to benefit by the gift of the Holy Spirit in this time of the latter rain. Because of this danger of misunderstanding, it is important that we study carefully the teaching of God upon this point. Although it is true that we are living in what might be termed the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, this fact diminishes nought from the necessity of the Christian to seek earnestly through much prayer and thorough cleansing and perfect faith the outpouring of both the former and the latter rain upon his heart and life.

This is the very truth that was discovered by the disciples, who were in possession of the promise of Christ, that if they would tarry in Jerusalem they would be endued with power from on high. They had already witnessed the powerful work of God in connection with their going forth in obedience to the command of Christ. The sick had been healed and wonderful things had been wrought by and through them prior to Pentecost. (Matt. 10:8; Luke 9:2.) But in spite of all this, they discovered that in order to be clothed with the promised power and in order that the Spirit might be "in them" as promised by Christ, they had some most diligent heart searching to do prior to the day of Pentecost.

Very significant is the fact that in a number of places in the Scriptures where the work of God for these last days is mentioned, the former rain and the latter rain are placed very near together. (Joel 2:23; Hosea 6:1-3.) Indeed, the messenger of the Lord seems to have had this in mind when she wrote:

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<sup>49</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 54, 55.

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close."<sup>50</sup>

#### Relationship of the Holy Spirit to Soul Winning

In the great commission Christ declared, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. By His Spirit Christ promised to always be with him "that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed." This was true even before Pentecost and was fulfilled to the disciples as they were sent forth in His name. By the presence of His Spirit these men went forth, and the sick were healed, miracles were wrought, and the dead were raised. (See Matt. 10:8; Luke 9:2.) Great wonders followed in the wake of their ministry long before the promised outpouring on the day of Pentecost brought a baptism of power such as had never before been seen.

The Holy Spirit is given only to those whose lives are given to the service of Christ. "The Holy Spirit will come to all who are begging for the bread of life to give to their neighbors."<sup>51</sup>

The basis of the Holy Spirit's coming to the individual has always been that it is sought for the purpose of carrying out God's work. But the condition of receiving the Holy Spirit is not alone activity, but also earnest seeking for this matchless gift through faith and importunate prayer. No one should sit in idleness, waiting for an impelling power to lay hold upon him for service for others, for it is given only to those who ask; and the former and the latter rain power must be sought exactly as the apostles sought that power prior to Pentecost.

Ellen G. White has said:

"We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that

<sup>50</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612.

<sup>51</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 90.

time, we need it more to-day. . . . Without the Spirit's aid, our efforts to present divine truth will be in vain."<sup>52</sup>

Again we read:

"I beseech the members of every church to seek now for the greatest blessing heaven can bestow—the Holy Spirit. If in faith you seek for a greater measure of God's Spirit, you will be constantly taking it in and breathing it out."<sup>53</sup>

It is enlightening in this regard to note the following: "Christ has left His work in our hands, and we are to wrestle with God, supplicating day and night for the power that is unseen."<sup>54</sup>

Again we have this word, showing that this great power will not come to us through any casual attitude on our part, but only as we have experienced a complete revival and reformation of life: "The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."<sup>55</sup>

It is made clear in many places that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit takes place to give power for witnessing, the ability to win precious souls. The time and the place of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, after it has been sought for in God's own way, are the time and the place most suitable for personal labor for souls.

We are told: "All occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God's appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain."<sup>56</sup>

This surely does not mean that whenever one is laboring for souls the Holy Spirit is bestowed, but it does mean that to the one who is seeking in God's way for that priceless gift, the Holy Spirit is bestowed as he labors for others. That is God's opportunity to fulfill His promise and to answer the

<sup>52</sup> *Review and Herald*, Aug. 25, 1896, p. 533.

<sup>53</sup> Ellen G. White in *Australian Union Conference Record*, Aug. 15, 1903, p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 111.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 619.

<sup>56</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 2, 1897, p. 129.

earnest prayers of the believer for this marvelous gift. It is this that we must keep in our minds as we read such statements as the following:

"Satan is now seeking to hold God's people in a state of inactivity, to keep them from acting their part in spreading the truth, that they may at last be weighed in the balance and found wanting. . . . I was shown God's people waiting for some change to take place—a compelling power to take hold of them. But they will be disappointed, for they are wrong. They must act, they must take hold of the work themselves and earnestly cry to God for a true knowledge of themselves."<sup>57</sup>

"Those who make no decided effort, but simply wait for the Holy Spirit to compel them to action, will perish in darkness. You are not to sit still and do nothing in the work of God."<sup>58</sup>

There are two mistakes some make that are pointed out by the servant of the Lord in relationship to soul winning, or activity, and the receiving of the power of the Holy Spirit. One may make the mistake of filling his life with great activity, mere "busyness," in God's service, without seeking that experience in God which would make him able to pray the effectual prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit. Such a one may make service records and even stir many minds, but his work without the Spirit will not be effective. Another one may make the mistake of idly waiting for the outpouring of some great power to impel him into activity for God. Both of these are failing to follow the plan of God in soul-winning service. We read:

"There are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service."<sup>59</sup>

"With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides."<sup>60</sup>

"When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been

<sup>57</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 260, 261.

<sup>58</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 228.

<sup>59</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 54.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

wiped away from the church, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested. Divine power will be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts. The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and, as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lighted with the glory of the Lord.”<sup>61</sup>

“When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere requests. . . . Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain.”<sup>62</sup>

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.”<sup>63</sup>

If the foregoing statements were set apart and isolated, it would seem that mere activity in God's service ensures the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in great measure. But as with other subjects treated in *Testimonies for the Church*, we must take a balanced view, based upon a more exhaustive study of these helpful writings. Let us not forget the earnest counsel of the Scriptures and the Spirit of prophecy, that we earnestly seek through prayer the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There must be repentance, confession, and importunate prayer, waiting upon God for the fulfillment of His great and precious promises, if we would enjoy the fullness of His divine favor in relationship to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the same time we must give ourselves to personally carrying out the great commission of Christ, for this also is part of the conditions laid down. The Holy Spirit is not given simply that the individual may possess power, but only that he may possess power for witnessing. The individual who receives the full blessing of His promised Spirit seeks for it because he feels his desperate need of power to fulfill the divine commission to which his all is dedicated.

“Let Christians put away all dissension and give themselves to God

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<sup>61</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 46.

<sup>62</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 25, 1890, p. 113.

<sup>63</sup> *Christian Service*, p. 253.

for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was 'the former rain,' and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant."<sup>64</sup>

We should at this point recognize that the former rain, dispensationally speaking, came at Pentecost. From another viewpoint there was an early rain experience which came to the church in the 1844 movement. Personally, the early rain comes at conversion. The same threefold application may be made concerning the latter rain. The church receives it at the close of the work of God in the earth. Just so this movement passes through that same experience, and also the individual.

"The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was 'the former rain,' and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant."<sup>65</sup>

The early rain experience of the great second Advent movement in 1844 and immediately preceding that year, probably was the greatest demonstration of power the church has seen since the days of Pentecost. But there is again to be an early rain experience:

"The power which stirred the people so mightily in the 1844 movement will again be revealed."<sup>66</sup> A great spiritual awakening of the church is yet to be seen, an awakening that will compare in proportions and power with the days of the midnight cry and the second angel's message.

This is all alluded to in the writings of the minor prophets concerning the closing up of the gospel work in the earth.

"Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. . . . Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:1-3.

Note how this prophet indicates that these two rains will come close together.

<sup>64</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 21.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 252.

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In the second chapter of the prophecy of Joel a great spiritual awakening, a revival and reformation, is called for in which a trumpet is to be blown in Zion to arouse the people and a fast and solemn assembly are to be called in order to gather the people and even the little children. Greater earnestness is called for on the part of the ministry, and their prayers are to be heard supplicating God to spare His people. In response to this consecration and seeking after God on the part of the remnant people, the sure promise is given:

"Then will the Lord . . . pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen. . . . Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. . . . Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. . . . And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. . . . And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call. For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel." Joel 2:18 to 3:2.

In explanation of what happened on the day of Pentecost we read a quotation from this passage in Joel. (Acts 2:16-21.) This same experience is to be repeated in these last days.<sup>67</sup> Let us then examine the experience of the disciples

<sup>67</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612.

under the early rain, that we may learn lessons concerning the same experience in this our day.

When Jesus gave to His disciples the great commission, prominent among the points He emphasized was the power they would need with which to carry it out.

"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:18-20.

To implement this great commission Jesus gave that wonderful promise and counsel that we find in Luke 24:45-53:

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."

How overwhelmed the disciples must have been in the face of such a commission, when in their ignorance they could not understand the working out of the promised power that would accompany them as they sought to carry out the divine command of their Master. But in the midst of their disappointment at His death and in the light of His repeated statement of promised power as He ascended, they did not understand the meaning of being endued with power from on high as they tarried in Jerusalem. They still were asking according to Acts 1:6-8:

"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be

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witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

A mighty work of grace was required to bring these men, who were utterly unfitted for the task that had been given them, to the place where they would finally be willing to be what was necessary for them to be in order for Christ to do with them what He had planned. They were to be made men through whom the Holy Spirit could manifest His power, men devoid of selfishness and sin, men with hearts and minds prepared for the infilling of the Holy Ghost in Pentecostal degree.

They had heard Him say “Go ye”; now they hear Him say “Tarry ye”; “Tarry ye . . . , until ye be endued with power from on high.” What consternation must have filled their minds! Here was a world task to perform, and they had heard Him say that when it was performed, “then shall the end come.” Matt. 24:14. Now, would He have them wait, tarry? Ah! it was not altogether clear to them yet that without that promised power they were incapable of performing the commission no matter how fast or far they might “go.” Indeed the Lord has revealed to His servant that in our day the very same necessity exists:

“What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution, and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high.”<sup>68</sup>

“The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit, will it quicken the conscience or transform the life.”<sup>69</sup>

“If divine power does not combine with human effort, I would not give a straw for all that the greatest man could do. The Holy Spirit is wanting in our work.”<sup>70</sup>

As the disciples came back to Jerusalem from Olivet,

<sup>68</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890, p. 98.

<sup>69</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

<sup>70</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890, p. 98.

where they had witnessed the ascension of the Lord, they were no longer filled with sorrow, confusion, or defeat. Truly their hopes were disappointed, but they somehow no longer found their hearts filled with sadness. They had been with their risen Lord, had seen Him "go away"; and echoing and re-echoing in their hearts were the two words of counsel to them, "I will come again" and "Tarry ye in . . . Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Not in full understanding but in obedience to what Christ had commanded them, they waited in Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They did not merely sit in silence, waiting in idleness, but they went "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Luke 24:53. They were undoubtedly going over among themselves the final counsels of the Master and the rich promises that now came readily to their memory, and "in solemn awe they bowed in prayer," repeating the assurance, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John 16:23, 24. Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34.

They continued to pray with intense earnestness not only for power but for a fitness to meet the world and to declare the gospel and lead sinners to repentance. They humbled their hearts by putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, and all unbelief, and they found growing up within their hearts a deep sorrow that they had ever grieved their Lord by any word or act. Comfort filled their hearts as they came closer and still closer to God and to one another and as they consecrated themselves with courage to go forth and face an unbelieving and hostile world, to confess Jesus as the Christ.

"They did not ask a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that

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the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised. . . . In obedience to the word of the Saviour, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.”<sup>71</sup>

Their hearts were filled with reproach toward themselves and—

“like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life, they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ’s character. . . .

“‘And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.’

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fulness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All Heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, ‘Herein is love.’ They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.”<sup>72</sup>

The importance and true significance of the Pentecostal visitation of the Holy Spirit is not comprehended until we realize that this visitation marked an event of surpassing magnitude and tremendous and far-reaching results. We read: “The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven’s communication that the Redeemer’s inauguration was accomplished.”<sup>73</sup> Jesus, the Lamb of Calvary, had paid the price of sin, had passed through death, and had come forth in resurrection power and ascended to the right hand of God. The atonement had been accomplished and accepted by the Father, and now

<sup>71</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Christ desired to mark the event by the bestowal of heaven's most priceless gift.

"Christ determined to bestow a gift on those who had been with Him and on those who should believe on Him, because this was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, a jubilee in heaven. What gift could Christ bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. Christ gave His representative, the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This gift could not be excelled. The divine Spirit, converting, enlightening, sanctifying, would be His donation, because He would give all gifts in one. On the day of Pentecost Christ gave His disciples the Holy Spirit as their Comforter."<sup>74</sup>

"As the divine endowment—the power of the Holy Spirit—was given to the disciples, so it will today be given to all who seek aright. This power alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, and to fit us for the courts above."<sup>75</sup>

### Results

By reading the second chapter of the book of Acts we learn of the marvelous results of the outpouring, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit, upon the disciples. The event could not be kept secret, and we are told that when it was noised abroad, "the multitudes came together," and when they saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears what power was being displayed in the lives of the early believers, particularly because each one heard the gospel in his own tongue, they greatly marveled and were amazed and confounded. The church doubled its membership, yes, trebled it, and still souls came and were baptized and joined themselves to the believers in Christ, the risen Lord. Wonderful miracles were performed, great "wonders and signs were done." They "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need," and God gave them "favour with all the people." Acts 2:43-47.

Their prayers were no more powerless and listless, but when they prayed even "the place was shaken where they were assembled together; . . . and they spake the word with

<sup>74</sup> E. G. White manuscript 44, 1898.

<sup>75</sup> E. G. White letter 96, 1902.

boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." Acts 4:31, 32. God gave such favor with the people that they—

"magnified them [the apostles]. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Acts 5:13-16. "And the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Acts 6:7.

It is of primary importance that in analyzing the results of Pentecost and the outpouring of the former rain, we remember that power was bestowed for witnessing. The disciples received power that they might become witnesses for Christ, in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. This wonderful power of Pentecost made great preachers and very successful laymen for the service of Christ. It cast out devils and caused the dumb to speak out of fullness of heart what God had done through Christ for their souls.

This great power took all backwardness away from men and yet did not make them boastful or forward. It impelled men to speak boldly yet humbly in spite of all uprising opposition, to call sin by its right name, and to rebuke religionists and nonreligionists because of their blindness and wickedness. The sermons of apostolic preachers were not noted so much for their logic and homiletical arrangement or their ornate rhetoric, as for their dynamic witnessing power. The apostles talked out of their own experiences, and the Spirit of God took their mere declaration of truth and drove it home to the hearts of their listeners with a convincing force that made men tremble and earnestly ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

When the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples He appeared like "cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them," symbolic of the consuming power of the Holy Ghost against sin and unrighteousness. It may have had other points of significance and also signified the flaming tongues for speaking forth the truth as did the apostles following that great outpouring. If ever there was a time that called for fiery tongues with which to speak the message of God, this is such an hour. The church today needs men and women, young men and young women, with tongues loosened by the power of the Holy Spirit and set aflame for God to go forth and proclaim the truth in all of its purity and completeness. That message must be a Christ-centered message, but it must be a message suitable for this hour, unadulterated and unmuffled.

Significantly the messenger of the Lord has this to say on this important point of muffling the message or hiding it and cringing in compromise with those who demand that the whole truth be not preached. God is against that strange so-called strategy that hides the truth and delivers it in a corner rather than before the multitudes, as did the early apostles. We read:

"Unless you watch, and keep your garments unspotted from the world, Satan will stand as your captain. It is no time now to hide your colors, no time to turn traitor, when the battle presses sore. . . .

"When the days come, as they surely will, in which the law of God is made void, the zeal of the true and loyal should rise with the emergency, and should be the more warm and decided, and their testimony should be the more positive and unflinching. But we are to do nothing in a defiant spirit, and we shall not if our hearts are fully surrendered to God. . . .

"God has no place in His work for half-hearted men and women, those who are neither cold nor hot. Christ says, 'I will spew thee out of my mouth.' God calls for men who are wholehearted. . . . Let His truth be received into the heart, that you may be spiritualized by its living, sanctifying power. Then let the distinct message for this time be sent from watchman to watchman on the walls of Zion."

"As the end approaches, the testimonies of God's people will become more decided and more powerful, flashing the light of truth upon

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the systems of error and oppression that have so long held the supremacy.”<sup>76</sup>

Under the power of the Holy Spirit the disciples did not forbear to declare the whole truth. They did it in love, but they did not hide from the multitudes that came to hear them the whole truth regarding who was responsible for the death of their Lord. Perhaps they might have held some of the people longer if they had simply talked on the smooth things of the gospel story, but under the impelling power of the Holy Ghost they withdrew the veil and allowed the whole truth to shine forth, and many, yes, multitudes, believed. Could it be that if we would spend less time in deploying around what we consider, at times, the cutting truths of our message, and more time seeking for that power that will enable us to know how to tell the truth in love and yet not cringe before the multitudes, our evangelism would be more telling and more lasting?

We do not mean to infer that we should ruthlessly tear the hearts and ears of the multitude by cruel and sharp expressions and personal thrusts, but rather that we should faithfully and in love, with judicious words, reveal to men the warning message that is ours to give and for which we have been called into being. There is a vast difference between giving the message in love and in the power of the Holy Spirit of Christ and hiding the truth away from the multitudes who must hear it.

Great care must be taken in the presentation of the message for this hour. Christ said to His disciples: “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Matt. 10:16.

In giving words of caution relative to the presentation of the truth for this time, Ellen G. White says:

“What course shall the advocates of truth pursue? They have the unchangeable, eternal word of God, and they should reveal the fact that they have the truth as it is in Jesus. Their words must not be rugged and sharp. In their presentation of truth they must manifest the love

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<sup>76</sup> Ellen G. White, *Appeal to Ministers and Conference Committees*, pp. 9-13, 18.

and meekness and gentleness of Christ. Let the truth do the cutting; the word of God is as a sharp, two-edged sword and will cut its way to the heart. Those who know that they have the truth should not, by the use of harsh and severe expressions, give Satan one chance to misinterpret their spirit.

"As a people we must stand as did the world's Redeemer. . . . The course of Christ in dealing even with the adversary of souls should be an example to us in all our intercourse with others never to bring a railing accusation against any. . . . Precious truth must be presented in its native force. The deceptive errors that are widespread, and that are leading the world captive, are to be unveiled. . . . This message must be given; but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have."<sup>77</sup>

All of this requires great wisdom, tact, and skill. Such ability can come to us only by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—this outpouring we may have if we will earnestly seek for it.

Hear the words of the messenger of the Lord further on these things:

"The message we have to bear is not a message that men need cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. . . . God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God."<sup>78</sup>

Again we read:

"The people of the world will try to induce us to soften down our message, to suppress some of its more distinctive features. . . . 'We would harmonize with you if you would not say so much on this point.' . . . This is their invitation to compromise, and there has been a disposition on the part of some of our workers to adopt this policy. But those who favor this action entertain deceptive sentiments, are bound by false modesty and caution, and manifest a disposition to withhold the confession of our faith. . . . But shall we permit the world to shape the messages that God has given us to bear to them? Shall we entertain the proposal of Satan, and thereby entangle our souls, and the souls of others, for the sake of policy? Shall we betray sacred trusts? If the world

<sup>77</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 239-243.

<sup>78</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 329.

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are in error and delusion . . . is it not our duty to show them their sin and danger? We must proclaim the third angel's message. . . .

"We should cry aloud, and spare not, and show the people their transgressions. We are not to cringe, and beg pardon of the world for telling them the truth. We should scorn concealment. Unfurl your true colors to the gaze of men and angels. Let it be understood that Seventh-day Adventists can make no compromise. In our opinions and faith there must not be the least appearance of wavering. The world has a right to expect something of us, and will look upon us as dishonest, as hiding our real sentiments and principles out of policy, if we present even the semblance of being uncommitted."<sup>79</sup>

We read further:

"We should be alarmed at the least manifestation of a disposition to hush the voices that proclaim the third angel's message. That angel represents the people of God, who give the last warning to the world. Let not the fear of man, the desire for patronage, be allowed to obscure a ray of heaven's light. Should the sentinels of truth now fail to sound the warning, they would be unworthy of their position as light-bearers to the world; but should the standard fall from their hands, the Lord would raise up others who would be faithful and loyal."<sup>80</sup>

It would be well for us all who are called to proclaim the truth for this hour to reread the accounts of the preaching of the apostles after the falling of the former rain. (See Acts 2:22, 23; 4:8-12.) One cannot detect any compromising here or cringing for the sake of gaining patronage and escaping certain natural results. May God give His ministry "cloven tongues like as of fire," flaming tongues, for witnessing and declaring in the power and love of the Spirit of God the whole truth as it is in Jesus. When these new fires, these celestial fires, are rekindled in our hearts, the Lord will again bring us matchless results in souls, similar to those that were seen in apostolic times.

We must always remember that the apostolic church under the former rain was normal Christianity. These people, clothed with power from on high, coming down from the hidden chamber to present to the multitudes clear to the far corners of the earth the great message of God for the present

<sup>79</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 31, 1893, pp. 65, 66.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, 1893, p. 82.

hour, were the church in all its pristine beauty and glory. Here we catch a glimpse of what the church of Christ was meant to be, uncontaminated, each witnessing out of his heart what God had done through Christ for his soul. It has not yet been touched by heresy or marred by compromise or deflected in any way from its original purpose. What a glorious sight is the church that the Holy Spirit founded.

That church must now appear again in its purity. Paul said: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:27. It was soon to fall away from this experience, and as it did, the power of the Holy Ghost waned, but the apostolic church was still to be the pattern for the church of Jesus Christ in all the centuries to follow. As men became exalted and took upon themselves the glory and authority that belonged to God alone, the Holy Spirit was grieved away. Miracles became a thing of the past. Powerful prayer was no longer heard. Perfunctory worship was introduced. Compromise with paganism about them brought damnable heresies and vain and wicked counterfeits into the ritual and worship of Christ. True men and women suffered while holding up the banner of truth. They were thrown to the wild beasts and were consumed by the flaming stakes that lighted up the orgies of those who opposed the truth. Prisons were filled with the righteous. The commandments of God were obscured, and men sought to change them to meet their own sinful ways; the manifestation of the Spirit waned and was lost.

All of this came about because men forgot to continue to enter fully into the benefits of the former rain and allowed self and selfish motives to rule their hearts. Pentecost had not been perpetuated, and all the defects, deflections, imperfections, and failures that history records and that we see today in the modern churches emanate from that fact. Every blemish in the church today grows out of the fact that the experience of the former rain was not perpetuated in the life of the church and in the lives of the believers.

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Christ's prayer that His people might be one as He and the Father are one, was answered at the establishment of the church at Pentecost. This prayer of Christ reaches down to our day and must be answered again in the experience of the remnant church. Said Jesus:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John 17:20-23.

Such love among the brethren must come back to the church. It means a oneness in love, purpose, and sympathy, an intimacy of love analogous to that which exists between the Son and the Father. This can only be brought about in the way it came to the Pentecostal church: by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in former rain measure and by the appropriating of all the benefits promised under such a heavenly gift.

What kind of church must it be? It must be a church filled with men and women who are rid of all lukewarmness. Its ministry must be a witnessing ministry, preaching out of a fresh experience in the Holy Ghost. It must have local church officers whose lives witness to the fact that the business of the church comes first. It must have a laity whose hearts are warmed and aflame with the love of God and an overwhelming, impelling urge to witness for the truth that cannot be smothered by the world, by fear, or by self-seeking. It must have the original apostolic attitude toward the unsaved multitudes at home and abroad. It must adopt the program of Jesus, the only program that He ever gave to the church, that of declaring the message to the world in such power that men would believe and be baptized. It must have the standards of Christ held highly aloft and glorified in the lives of its members.

The faith of Pentecost must be revived. The prayers of Pentecost must be restored. The earnestness, the oneness, the sacrifice, of Pentecost must return. The love of the upper room at Pentecost must again cement the lives of the believers. A repetition of the former-rain experience is indispensable for the world program of the remnant church. The sobering question is, Are the people of God willing and ready, or ready to be made willing and ready, to pay the price of such an experience? Upon the answer to this question rests the destiny of the church in our day.

### **Baptism of the Spirit**

For a good understanding of what the baptism of the Holy Spirit means in the life of the believer we must study closely what the Scriptures say regarding this experience. The New Testament passages which refer to this baptism are as follows:

“When he [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? . . . I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Matt. 3:7-11.

“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.” “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” John 1:26, 27, 32, 33.

Strange it is that the four Gospels do not speak of Christ’s being baptized with the Holy Spirit, but speak only of His anointing. We understand that the anointing was the baptism of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. John speaks of it as something beyond, which would come with the advent of Christ and which would be administered by Christ.

We may gather more concerning this baptism of the Spirit

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from Jesus' word to Nicodemus: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5. The converse, then, of course would be true, that if a man be born of water and of the Spirit he would be a candidate for eternal life. But let us follow on with the Master's words:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again ["from above," margin]. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Verses 6-8.

Years passed by, and Jesus stood in the midst of His disciples just before His ascension and said to them: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts 1:5. There can be no doubt that He was directing their attention to the experience that was about to come to them at Pentecost. This baptism was necessary in order that the disciples might be able to fulfill the divine commission. Baptism, in this sense, means to be filled with the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, and clothed with the Spirit. It means to be in full possession by the Spirit. We read: "The disciples felt their spiritual need, and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul-saving."<sup>81</sup>

It is plain that the baptism of the Holy Spirit came as the disciples were lifted to higher planes of spirituality. Their whole beings, mind, soul, and spirit, were focused upon that one great objective of receiving from God the precious gift of His Spirit. Until the spiritual energies of God's people are no longer torpid and a resurrection from apparent spiritual death occurs, the church will not enjoy all the benefits of the early rain and will not be prepared for the great task that is set before her.

There can be no intelligent seeking of God for the latter rain until there is a true understanding of the experience

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<sup>81</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37.

under the early rain. Indeed, we must sense that the former rain is "a teacher of righteousness" as described in the margin of Joel 2:23. Here also the falling of the early rain "moderately" is spoken of as "according to righteousness." It is by our entering into the great truths of righteousness that our hearts are made ready for the former rain. This is just as true regarding the reception of the latter rain. The messenger of the Lord says: "We may be sure that when the Holy Spirit is poured out, those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain will not see or understand the value of the latter rain."<sup>82</sup>

What, therefore, the church needs, and each one of us needs, at this time is to enter fully into the baptism of the Holy Spirit, just as did the early disciples under the former rain, for we are told, "All that the disciples did every church is to do." This calls for a definite experience of seeking and finding beyond that of merely having the Spirit with us, as in conversion. There must be an infilling that is real and that is lasting and that comes in answer to the prayer of faith. This experience is one that brings the individual into closer and more conscious relationship with the Holy Spirit than he was able to enter into immediately upon water baptism. This is an experience that calls for us to become partakers with Christ in a much fuller sense than is possible during the first steps of the Christian life.

"As you empty the heart of self, you must accept the righteousness of Christ. . . . If you open the door of the heart, Jesus will supply the vacuum by the gift of His Spirit."<sup>83</sup> This heavenly Guest only comes in where He is invited; He never intrudes Himself where self is yet upon the throne.

For this baptism we must now seek, plan, and pray. We need now all the results of such a baptism in our lives and in our work for God. Let us no longer delay, but let us unitedly join in seeking and finding this needed preparation for the greater power which God is waiting to bestow.

<sup>82</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 399.

<sup>83</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 23, 1892, p. 113.

## The Latter Rain

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” Zech. 10:1. (See also Joel 2:23; Hosea 6:1-3.)

This passage, as well as others, reveals the fact that before the second coming of Christ there will be a manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit similar to but greater than that seen on the day of Pentecost. As a result of this outpouring without measure, the loud cry of the third angel will be heard, coupled with the voice of that other angel, spoken of in Revelation 18. The messenger of the Lord writes as follows concerning this great experience yet to come to the remnant church: “At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.”<sup>84</sup>

Again we read:

“Near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’ ‘He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.’ ”<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 86.

<sup>85</sup> *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 55.

This marvelous outpouring of God's Spirit adds power to the church for the finishing of the work and prepares the church for that great event. There can be no doubt but that the church has long delayed the second coming of her Lord by her attitude on this question. The spiritual life of the church has been low, and her urgent need of the Spirit has been taken as a light thing. God has been left waiting to bestow "heaven's most priceless gift" while men have been following their own ways and seeking to finish the work in their own strength.

Says the Spirit of prophecy:

"If God's people had the love of Christ in the heart; if every church member was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice; if all manifested thorough earnestness, there would be no lack of funds for home and foreign missions; our resources would be multiplied; a thousand doors of usefulness would be opened, and we should be invited to enter.

"Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving the message of mercy to the world, Christ would have come to the earth, and the saints would ere this have received their welcome into the city of God."<sup>86</sup>

Great neglect has been seen in the lives of church members. The work of God has been postponed because of indifference and self-seeking. "If those who claimed to have a living experience in the things of God had done their appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would have been warned ere this, and the Lord Jesus would have come in power and great glory."<sup>87</sup>

Our attention is called to the experience of Israel that we may learn a lesson of how we need to follow closely the counsel of the Lord in the carrying on of His work.

"The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the Advent Movement, even as He led the Children of Israel from Egypt. In the disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been

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<sup>86</sup> Ellen G. White, quoted in *Australasian Union Conference Record*, Oct. 15, 1898, p. 104.

<sup>87</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 6, 1896, p. 629.

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with them in their past experience, they would have seen of the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work in 1844, had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.

"It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness. He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief.' Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message."<sup>88</sup>

Thus it is made plain that we are living on borrowed time. God intended that we should now be in the kingdom. Just what has caused the delay has been made perfectly plain. Listen to the message God has sent to this people:

"Brethren and sisters, from the light given me, I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His word, they would to-day be in the heavenly Canaan."<sup>89</sup>

"It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years."<sup>90</sup>

Let us allow this solemn statement from the Lord to sink deep into our minds. It should bring to us a clear realization of the need of a mighty awakening among us. The fact that Jesus desired to come, and would have come so many years ago, and we were not ready to receive the power that would have enabled us to finish His work so He could come, should startle us into a soberness we have never known before.

It is of the utmost importance that we realize the seriousness of our indifference in this "time of the latter rain."

<sup>88</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 457, 458.

<sup>89</sup> Ellen G. White in *General Conference Bulletin*, March 30, 1903, p. 9.

<sup>90</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 696.

“To those who are indifferent at this time Christ’s warning is: ‘Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.’ Rev. 3:16. The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.

“Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding.”<sup>91</sup>

Over and over again does the messenger of the Lord call our attention to the fact that in this time, when God is waiting to bestow His choicest gift upon the remnant, He finds them in a state of unpreparedness. Now, when we should be receiving this added power, we must spend our time in preparing to ask for it.

“Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. But the promise is not appreciated as it should be; and therefore its fulfillment is not seen as it might be. The promise of the Spirit is a matter little thought of; and the result is only what might be expected—spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Minor matters occupy the attention, and the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in its infinite plenitude.”<sup>92</sup>

In many ways has the church neglected to make ready for the pouring out of the Spirit with great measure. Particularly have God’s people been slow to answer the great commission of the Master to every believing soul. The winning of souls has to a large extent been relegated to a secondary place in the life of the majority of the members of the church. We are told that until this is changed the rich outpouring will be delayed. We read:

“Every truly converted soul will be intensely desirous to bring

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<sup>91</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 408.  
<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 21.

others from the darkness of error into the marvelous light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.”<sup>83</sup>

To be occupied with other things than the Lord’s work now is dangerous. Everything in our lives must now be directed toward the finishing of the work in all the earth. We must be living missionaries for God wherever we are. We read:

“Isaiah says, ‘Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward!’ This is the righteousness of Christ which goes before us, and the glory of the Lord is to be our rereward. Ye churches of the living God, study this promise, and consider how your lack of faith, of spirituality, of divine power, *is hindering the coming of the kingdom of God*. Were every one of you a living missionary, the gospel would be speedily proclaimed in all countries, to all peoples, nations, and tongues.”<sup>84</sup>

Let no one understand by this that mere busyness or activity will assure one of the power of the latter rain. No amount of mere activity will bring to the church this great gift. What is here disclosed is that one of the conditions whereby our prayers for the Holy Spirit in latter rain proportions will be answered is that our lives are given for the salvation of our fellow men. However, there are many other conditions, and we must not become confused in our thinking, so that we forget that the latter rain comes only in answer to the importunate prayer of faith. A Christlike character is the prerequisite to the added power of the latter rain. The preparation is not only action but seeking, and seeking in prayer.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,” said the Master. No

<sup>83</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, July 21, 1896, p. 449.

<sup>84</sup> Ellen G. White, *An Appeal to Our Churches in Behalf of Home Missionary Work*, pp. 20, 21.

casual expectancy that under some ordinary experience of life the Holy Spirit will come in latter rain proportions is sufficient.

“Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it. The growth and perfection of the seed rests not with the husbandman. God alone can ripen the harvest. But man’s cooperation is required. God’s work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith. We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us. We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. . . . The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.

“But let none think that in attending these gatherings, their duty is done. A mere attendance upon all the meetings that are held will not in itself bring a blessing to the soul. It is not an immutable law that all who attend general gatherings or local meetings shall receive large supplies from heaven. The circumstances may seem to be favorable for a rich outpouring of the showers of grace. But God Himself must command the rain to fall. Therefore, we should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working of providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend that at this very time, God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised.”<sup>95</sup>

#### Results of the Falling of the Latter Rain

The entire figure of rain falling upon seed and causing it to grow and to ripen into a beautiful harvest is given to show that the moisture falling on the newly planted grain causes it to germinate and have life, so that it might grow as well as ripen into a harvest. There is no life without the rain. This is the lesson we are to learn under both the former and the latter rain.

<sup>95</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 508, 509.

"In the East the former rain falls at the sowing-time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain, and prepares it for the sickle. . . . As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. . . . By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection."<sup>96</sup>

As these showers of both the former and the latter rain fall upon our hearts and lives, our experience becomes a living experience, our service is not lifeless, but we become living missionaries and a power that cannot be misunderstood or denied accompanies our labor. In that precious book *Early Writings*, as the messenger of the Lord comments upon the fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 18, she gives us a picture of what may be expected under the falling of the latter rain.

"The glory of God rested upon the patient, waiting saints, and they fearlessly gave the last solemn warning, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, and calling upon God's people to come out of her that they might escape her fearful doom.

"The light that was shed upon the waiting ones penetrated every-where, and those in the churches who had any light, who had not heard and rejected the three messages, obeyed the call, and left the fallen churches. . . . A compelling power moved the honest, while the manifestation of the power of God brought a fear and restraint upon their unbelieving relatives and friends, so that they dared not, neither had they the power to hinder those who felt the work of the Spirit of God upon them. . . . Mighty miracles were wrought, the sick were healed, and signs and wonders followed the believers, God was in the work, and every saint, fearless of consequences, followed the convictions of his own conscience, and united with those who were keeping all the commandments of God; and with power they sounded abroad the

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 506.

third message. I saw that this message will close with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry.

"Servants of God, endowed with power from on high, with their faces lighted up, and shining with holy consecration, went forth to proclaim the message from heaven. . . . I heard everywhere a multitude of voices saying, 'Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'" <sup>87</sup>

In others of the writings of the Spirit of prophecy the Lord has given us glimpses of what will happen when the latter rain falls upon the church.

"In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844." <sup>88</sup>

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are 'the times of refreshing' to which the apostle Peter looked forward. . . . Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed, have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience.

<sup>87</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 277-279.

<sup>88</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 126.

X Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."<sup>99</sup>

We read further of the results of God's mightiest outpouring of His Spirit:

"Almost unconsciously barriers have been erected in the strait and narrow way; stones of stumbling have been placed in the path; these will be rolled away. The safeguards which false shepherds have thrown around their flocks will become as nought; thousands will step out into the light, and work to spread the light. Heavenly intelligences will combine with the human agencies."<sup>100</sup>

Again we read of the wonderful evangelistic results that will follow the falling of the latter rain:

"Notwithstanding the wide-spread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming."<sup>101</sup>

Marvelous will be the results of the preaching and teaching of the message under the fullness of the power of the Holy Ghost. Many who have been unapproachable and hard to reach will be found and will give their hearts to God and obey His blessed truth.

"Many of the rulers are those whom Satan controls; but I saw that God has His agents, even among the rulers. And some of them will yet be converted to the truth. They are now acting the part that God would have them. . . . Thus the work will go on until the third message has done its work, and at the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble."<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> *The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612.

<sup>100</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 692, 693.

<sup>101</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 464.

<sup>102</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 203, 204.

As the message under the ministration of the Holy Spirit in latter rain proportions speeds its way around the world and swells to the loud cry, the work of God will be finished in a mighty blaze of glory.

"Those who have held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be wide-awake during the time that the third angel's message is proclaimed with great power. During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interpositions of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation so abundantly that light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere." <sup>103</sup>

One never tires of reading the descriptions the messenger of the Lord gives in her writings concerning the evangelistic results of the loud cry and the outpouring of the latter rain. Many of them must of necessity be left out of this study, but let us look at these:

X "God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love revives in their hearts, His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them, and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. Then a multitude, not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the Redeemer." <sup>104</sup> X

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe, and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy, united with the commandment-keeping people of God." <sup>105</sup>

### Preparation for the Latter Rain

The preparation to receive the latter rain is identical with the preparation to meet the Lord, so far as the individual is concerned. This preparation must not be neglected now, for

<sup>103</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 13, 1904, p. 7.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 25, 1902, p. 114.

<sup>105</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 41.

only those who have fulfilled the conditions will receive this special outpouring.

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets, and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father."<sup>106</sup>

Wherein lies the great lack among God's people? Why are we not now ready for the refreshing from God? The answer is given very directly through the Spirit of prophecy:

"Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. . . . At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us till the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. . . ."

"If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door."<sup>107</sup>

To obtain "all the benefits" under the former rain calls for an experience in the Lord that few have reached. The real experience of seeking and finding God and His power is entered into under the former rain. In this experience the believer enters into a life of prevailing prayer. It is a life

<sup>106</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 71.

<sup>107</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 507, 508.

of walking by faith and not by sight. It brings one to the place where he abides in Christ and gains the victory in His strength over every besetment. Under the former rain we enter into the very life of Christ and His life dwells in us continually. We follow Him in service and in sacrifice and find access to the same piety and devotion that the apostles had at Pentecost. Under the benefits of the former rain the apostles were enabled to believe, powerfully believe, and because of their faith they were able to cope with the assaults of the enemy with boldness, yet in humility.

To enter into such an experience, we must all take our religious life much more seriously than we have yet done. There must come into our midst a great revival and reformation of life if we would enter into all the benefits under the former rain and be prepared for the latter rain. There must come a great awakening and a return to primitive godliness among us.

"I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, 'Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and ye are not ready. Rend the heart, and not the garment. A great work must be done for the remnant.'" <sup>108</sup>

"We are upon the enchanted ground, and Satan is continually at work to rock our people to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There is an indifference, a lack of zeal, that paralyzes all our efforts." <sup>109</sup>

"We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God." <sup>110</sup>

"If we have any regard for our souls' salvation we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins, that they may be blotted out. We must no longer remain upon the enchanted ground." <sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 119.

<sup>109</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 600.

<sup>110</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 601.

<sup>111</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 22, 1887, p. 178.

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By a close study of Joel, chapters one and two, we may learn what God has to say to His people in preparation for the latter rain. Words could not be more explicit to tell us that a great reformation must come to the church and to each one of our lives. There must come upon us a realization of our true condition before God. We must not wait to feel it or to sense it according to our own understanding, but we must take the counsel of the True Witness and come out of our lukewarm condition. The saddest statement to the Laodiceans is, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; *and knowest not* that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. 3:17. Let us then acknowledge our mistakes, and believe God when He describes us, the best of us, as "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." This is our only hope. Unless we believe this to the point where we are driven to seek the Lord for gold tried in the fire and white raiment, the righteousness of Christ, we shall remain unprepared for the great and final refreshing from the Lord.

We face a mighty foe. The times to which we have come are dangerous times.

"The time in which we live is a time of intense excitement. Ambition and war, pleasure and money-making, absorb the minds of men. Satan sees that his time is short, and he has set all his energies at work, that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied, and entranced, until probation shall be ended and the door of mercy be forever shut."<sup>112</sup>

As ministers and leaders we need to lead our people into this rich experience now called for.

"Meetings should be held in every church for solemn prayer and earnest searching of the word to know what is truth. Take the promises of God, and ask God in living faith for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is shed upon us, marrow and fatness will be drawn from the word of God. . . . When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request. Then the truth of God's word will be regarded with new interest, and will be explored as if it were a revelation just from the

<sup>112</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 31.

courts above. . . . The Bible will be regarded as a charter from heaven. Its study will absorb the mind, and its truth will feast the soul. The promises of God now repeated as if the soul had never tasted of His love, will then glow upon the altar of the heart, and fall in burning words from the lips of the messengers of God. They will then plead with souls with an earnestness that cannot be repulsed. Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain."<sup>113</sup>

As we go further into the needed preparation for the outpouring of the latter rain and search the writings of the Spirit of prophecy for the messages God has sent to this people bearing upon this very experience, our hearts are stirred to a new understanding of the deep spiritual life that is now called for. We read:

"Leaving the first love is represented as a spiritual fall. Many have fallen thus. In every church in our land, there is needed confession, repentance, and reversion. The disappointment of Christ is beyond description. Unless those who have sinned speedily repent, the deceptions of the last days will overtake them. Some, though they do not realize it, are preparing to be overtaken. God calls for repentance without delay. So long have many trifled with salvation that their spiritual eyesight is dimmed, and they can not discern between light and darkness. Christ is humiliated in His people. The first love is gone, the faith is weak, there is need of a thorough transformation.

"My brethren and sisters, humble your hearts before the Lord. Seek Him earnestly. I have an intense desire to see you walking in the light as Christ is in the light. . . . You have left your first love. Self-righteousness is not the wedding-garment. A failure to follow the clear light of truth is our fearful danger. The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people."<sup>114</sup>

"It is not because of any restriction on God's part that the riches of His grace do not flow to men. His gift is godlike. He gave with a liberality that men do not appreciate because they do not love to receive. If all were willing to receive, all would be filled with the Spirit. By resting content with small blessings, we disqualify ourselves for receiving the Spirit in its unlimited fulness. We are too easily satisfied with a ripple on the surface, when it is our privilege to expect the deep movings of the Spirit of God. Expecting little, we receive little. . . . When the Holy Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost, it was like a rushing, mighty wind. It was given in no stinted measure; for it filled

<sup>113</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 25, 1890, p. 113.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 15, 1904, p. 8.

all the place where the disciples were sitting. So will it be given to us when our hearts are prepared to receive it.”<sup>115</sup>

How precious are the messages from God that take the veil from our eyes, that we may know and see our true condition in a time so important as this. How we should thank God that He in His great love has revealed just what we should do and be in order to receive this choice gift from His hand. Says Mrs. E. G. White:

“I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary, through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully. . . . I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing,’ unless they obtained the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.”<sup>116</sup>

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.”<sup>117</sup>

This is the time of testing. We are all on trial in this hour of preparation. I quote:

“Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: ‘They are joined to their idols, let them alone,’ and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.”<sup>118</sup>

Again, let us note this statement:

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, June 10, 1902, p. 8.

<sup>116</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 71.

<sup>117</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 187.

"To-day you are to give yourself to God, that He may make you vessels unto honor, and meet for His service. To-day you are to give yourselves to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. To-day you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work to-day to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit."<sup>119</sup>

Of the supplications of God's people who will be pleading for the final outpouring in the latter rain we read:

"The answer may come with sudden velocity and overpowering might; or it may be delayed for days and weeks, and our faith receive a trial. But God knows how and when to answer our prayer. It is *our* part of the work to put ourselves in connection with the divine channel. God is responsible for *His* part of the work. He is faithful who hath promised. The great and important matter with us is to be of one heart and mind, putting aside all envy and malice, and, as humble supplicants, to watch and wait. Jesus, our Representative and Head, is ready to do for us what He did for the praying, watching ones on the day of Pentecost."<sup>120</sup>

We must pray most earnestly, as did the early disciples. No casual praying will suffice for the bestowal of this precious gift to the church.

"All who were fully identified as disciples of Christ and associated with the apostles as evangelists, assembled together at Jerusalem. They put away all differences. They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, that they might receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit; for they were to preach the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God. . . . They were waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of His promise, and were praying with special fervency.

"This is the very course that should be pursued by those who act a part in the work of proclaiming the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven; for a people are to be prepared to stand in the great day of God. Although Christ had given the promise to His disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit, this did not remove the necessity

<sup>119</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 22, 1892, p. 178.

<sup>120</sup> *Redemption: or The Ministry of Peter and Conversion of Saul*, pp. 9, 10, in Ellen G. White, *Life of Christ and His Apostles*, vol. 2.

of prayer. They prayed all the more earnestly; they continued in prayer with one accord.

"Those who are now engaged in the solemn work of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord, should also continue in prayer."<sup>121</sup>

New emphasis needs now to be placed upon all the light the Lord has given to His people. There must be no neglected places in our lives. The full light of heaven will be revealed to the remnant people, and it is highly important that we be found living up to that full light.

"Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it."<sup>122</sup>

In seeking the preparation for the falling of the latter rain we must never forget that we shall also be tested in our service for Christ. The true Christian will labor for the Master at every opportunity. We read on this point:

"The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God."<sup>123</sup>

"Why has the history of the work of the disciples, as they labored with holy zeal, animated and vitalized by the Holy Spirit, been recorded, if it is not that from this record the Lord's people today are to gain an inspiration to work earnestly for Him? What the Lord did for His people in that time, it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today. (All that the apostles did) every church member today is to do. And we are to work with as much more fervor, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance."<sup>124</sup>

The laymen of the church have their responsibility also in this final preparation for the outpouring of the latter rain.

<sup>121</sup> *Gospel Workers* (1892 ed.), pp. 370, 371.

<sup>122</sup> *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 507.

<sup>123</sup> *Christian Service*, p. 253.

<sup>124</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 33.

"If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going on a warfare at their own charges, each seeking how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ. If our people will act upon the light that is given in these few words of instruction, we shall surely see of the salvation of God. Wonderful revivals will follow. Sinners will be converted, and many souls will be added to the church. When we bring our hearts into unity with Christ, and our lives into harmony with His work, the Spirit that fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost will fall on us."<sup>125</sup>

There is much more that might be said and gathered from the messages that have come to this people on the gift of the Holy Spirit. Time will not permit us to develop this subject further. Finally, then, let us note the assurances found in the Spirit of prophecy writings regarding the kind of life that will meet the standard in preparation for the latter rain and the coming of the Lord.

We read:

"Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. . . . Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ."<sup>126</sup>

"It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change."<sup>127</sup>

"Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. . . . Satan did not gain the victory over Christ. He did not put his foot upon the soul of the Redeemer. He did not touch the head though he bruised the heel. Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil—

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 246.

<sup>126</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 623.

<sup>127</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 466.

a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them."<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Ellen G. White in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890, p. 97.

## Some Questions Answered



## Preaching Unfulfilled Prophecy

BY R. R. FIGUHR

Adventists are a people of prophecy. It was the earnest perusal and fervent preaching of prophecy that brought forth this people. Carefully, thoroughly, and with marked simple-hearted earnestness the great prophetic outlines of Daniel and the Revelation were studied by rugged men whose sole quest was truth. Sturdy William Miller and his stouthearted companions saw the light shining from the sure word of prophecy and not only walked in it themselves but unitedly did their utmost to persuade others to do likewise.

One is impressed with their thoroughness and caution. These modern pioneers of prophetic interpretation did not feel impelled, upon catching sight of the first faint glimmer of light, immediately to rush out and declare to the world new discoveries. Their very great carefulness and caution as well as hesitancy, born of a deep recognition of human limitations, resulted in a preaching, when they finally did go out, of such confidence and conviction that it clearly indicated a divine unction from on high, reminding one of what even the enemies of Christ had to admit of His ministry, that "he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The prophetic interpretations of these early Adventist preachers made a profound and lasting impact upon the people.

We note especially as we consider our theme, "Preaching Unfulfilled Prophecy," the experience of that great pioneer,

William Miller. For more than twelve years he assiduously applied himself to the study of prophecy. No one knows how many thousands of hours he labored thus. He wanted to be sure of his ground. No fly-by-night interpretation for him. He recognized that he was dealing with matters of transcending importance, and extreme caution and constant reliance on God were his safeguards. We are much impressed with his hesitancy to go out and proclaim to the world what earnest, prayerful searching had revealed to him. It was with the greatest reluctance that he finally went to the public. He felt very humble, incapable of declaring the great truths that he found in God's great mine of truth. Only after a severe struggle with himself and after he had satisfied himself that God had clearly indicated that this was his task did he dare to venture out. After he had once arrived at this decision and knew that God expected him to go to the world with His message, nothing could turn him from his task. Not even the shrewd arguments of the learned could confound him or dissuade him from his mission. With moving power he proclaimed what God had foretold centuries before, and thousands were so deeply convicted that they gave up lives of sin and began marching toward the kingdom.

The preaching of unfulfilled prophecy calls for the greatest carefulness and caution. There dare be no guessing, no human prognosticating. Only God Himself can foresee and foretell with certainty coming events. This is a divine prerogative. Jehovah calls attention to this power and points to it as proof that he is the only true God.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10.

Prophecy should be a mighty argument for the divine inspiration of the Bible. It should be so presented that confidence in God and His Word is deepened. How tragic when its proclamation is lightly and irresponsibly undertaken,

when fanciful ideas and purely human interpretations are accepted as divinely inspired and are openly preached. It has been embarrassing to have people come asking about the soundness of some new interpretation of prophecy that a Seventh-day Adventist preacher has proclaimed. I can even remember instances in which such matters have appeared in print. I recall that in my boyhood days several evangelists clearly saw in Nahum 2:3-5 the modern railroad train with the conductor unsteadily walking down the aisle, checking his passengers, pictured in the following prophetic language: "He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk." Verse 5. This railroad prophecy made a profound impression on my young mind, especially after I had heard it a number of times. There was also the preacher who, with more fertility of imagination than serious scholarship, declared that the text, "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matt. 24:28), found its clear fulfillment in the breaking up of the Turkish Empire, which he said was imminent. Someone had asked him the meaning of the text, and he believed it incumbent upon him to give some kind of explanation.

Other fanciful interpretations could be cited. Suffice it to say that such imaginative preaching of prophecy does not beget confidence in the Bible as God's divinely inspired word or in the prophecies therein given. It results rather in the breaking down of confidence in the Word. The preacher and his church are branded as queer and erratic.

To date, no worker has ever had a complete revelation of God's truth and plans. God gives to each worker what he needs to accomplish successfully his task in his generation. It is well to bear this in mind in our search for truth and to recognize our human limitation. The following inspired statement clearly sets this forth:

"Each has his part to act; to each is granted a measure of light, adapted to the necessities of his time, and sufficient to enable him to perform the work which God has given him to do. But no man, however honored of Heaven, has ever attained to a full understanding of the

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great plan of redemption, or even to a perfect appreciation of the divine purpose in the work for his own time. . . .

"Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the Spirit, did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them."<sup>1</sup>

Speaking of some through whom prophecies came, Peter declares:

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

These holy men knew neither what they foretold nor the time to which it applied, and to their credit let it be said that they recognized their limitations. That they were deeply interested in what they had been directed to record is shown by their studiousness. However, they were not precipitate in declaring private opinions as to just what was meant or when the events recorded would take place. They had such confidence in God and in His guidance that they could rest their souls in the knowledge that the fulfillment would be revealed in due time. It might not be in their day, but surely the revelation would come. What an example to us who live in this great age of fulfilling prophecy, and what a rebuke to those who impatiently endeavor to tear aside the veil of the future to see what God has not revealed.

There are reasons why certain prophecies are not fully understood even though men may diligently search for their meaning. Often human prejudices and devotion to preconceived ideas blind to truth.

"Not infrequently the minds of people, and even of God's servants, are so blinded by human opinions, the traditions and false teaching of men, that they are able only partially to grasp the great things which He has revealed in His word."<sup>2</sup>

This was true not only in the experience of Israel but also in that of Jesus' own disciples.

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 343, 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

"Christ Himself had sent them forth with the message, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.' That message was based on the prophecy of Daniel 9. The sixty-nine weeks were declared by the angel to extend to 'the Messiah the Prince,' and with high hopes and joyful anticipations the disciples looked forward to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom at Jerusalem, to rule over the whole earth.

"They preached the message which Christ had committed to them, though they themselves misapprehended its meaning. While their announcement was founded on Dan. 9:25, they did not see, in the next verse of the same chapter, that Messiah was to be cut off. From their very birth their hearts had been set upon the anticipated glory of an earthly empire, and this blinded their understanding alike to the specifications of the prophecy and to the words of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

Still another reason why prophecy may not be understood is that it was given to be understood at a certain time and that time has not yet arrived.

"Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the Spirit, did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them. The meaning was to be unfolded from age to age, as the people of God should need the instruction therein contained."<sup>4</sup>

Some prophecies given centuries before, were not understood until fulfilled or in process of fulfillment. Again and again as Jesus performed some act or passed through some experience He called attention to a prophecy, saying, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." He thus pointed out that many of the writings of holy men were prophecies that found their fulfillment in Him. In this same class is Peter's reference to the prophecy of Joel on the day of Pentecost: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." It is doubtful whether this scripture was known as applying to that event before it found its fulfillment in the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Yet it was a clear prophetic prediction.

Then there are the prophecies that are clearly intended to unfold future events. It is in the exploring of these that we have most of our difficulty. Men are not always satisfied

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

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

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with what the Scriptures reveal, and endeavor to supply what they believe is lacking. Details are filled in. Unwarranted conclusions are drawn. A structure is erected that is bound sooner or later to collapse, to the disappointment and confusion of many.

As a safeguard against such a dangerous tendency, we are given the following counsel:

“There are many who become restless when they cannot know the definite outcome of affairs. *They cannot endure uncertainty*, and in *their impatience* they refuse to wait to see the salvation of God. Apprehended evils drive them nearly distracted. They give way to their rebellious feelings, and run hither and thither in passionate grief, seeking intelligence concerning that which has not been revealed. If they would but trust in God, and watch unto prayer, they would find divine consolation. Their spirit would be calmed by communion with God. The weary and the heavy-laden would find rest unto their souls, if they would only go to Jesus; but when they neglect the means that God has ordained for their comfort, and resort to other sources, hoping *to learn what God has withheld*, they commit the error of Saul, and thereby gain only a knowledge of evil.

“God is not pleased with this course, and has expressed it in the most explicit terms. This impatient haste to tear away the vail from the future reveals a lack of faith in God, and leaves the soul open to the suggestions of the master-deceiver.”<sup>5</sup> (Italics supplied.)

We do well to heed this admonition and to resist the temptation to endeavor to “learn what God has withheld.” “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Deut. 29:29. We must have sufficient faith in God to proclaim what He has revealed and patiently wait for the revelation of those things that are now still secret.

There are certain qualities that mark the careful and conscientious student and preacher of prophecy. They were evident in our forefathers in this message. The first of these is humility. William Miller and those who joined him in preaching the prophecies were humble men. They were

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<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 687.

fearful lest they might lead others astray. They had no yearning to proclaim new and sensational things just to be conspicuous and to give the impression that they were in advance of others. No such spirit actuated them.

It must not actuate us today. God reveals deep and hidden truth to simple and sincere men. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke 10:21. The attitude with which we approach the study of prophecy is highly important. A childlike faith and implicit trust in God's will always mark the reliable student and preacher of prophecy.

There must be a surrender to and a guidance by that same spirit that moved upon the holy men of old who wrote the Scriptures. The surrendered student and preacher of prophecy will so deeply feel the weighty responsibility resting upon him that he will be exceedingly cautious and always anxious to receive all possible counsel and help. He will not want self-confidently to stand alone. He will heed the admonition of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:3: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." A little further on in the same chapter the apostle adds that the Lord gave prophets, together with evangelists, pastors, and teachers, to produce a beautiful, harmonious church "till we all come in the unity of the faith." Verse 13. This unity and complete accord among God's people is the great unanswerable argument to the world of the genuineness of Christ's church. Clearly the Lord does not want His ministers to each proclaim a different message. He who gave the prophetic messages certainly did not intend that they should be capable of multiple interpretations. In the case of the minister, silence would certainly be eloquence.

We dare not be impulsive, hasty, or precipitate in our conclusions when dealing with unfulfilled prophecy. Caution must be the guiding word. And surely self-confidence and speculation have no place here. Back on November 29, 1877,

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James White gave good advice on preaching unfulfilled prophecy, and we do well to heed it today.

“The Bible was given as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It was designed for the benefit of the people in this world and not the next. It is the sure word of prophecy that shines in this dark world. It was not designed for angels or for immortal saints. Therefore we shall not have to wait until we reach Heaven before we understand what the Lord has said to us in His word. The Bible is what God has revealed to man, and if he does not understand it the fault is because he does not search its pages as he should, or because he does not live as near Him as he should, so that he can understand what the Lord has revealed. To say that the Bible was given to be understood—and who will deny this plain proposition?—is one thing, and to say that we do understand every chapter and every verse, is quite another thing.

“Fulfilled prophecy may be understood by the Bible student. Prophecy is history in advance. He can compare history with prophecy and find a complete fit as the glove to the hand, it having been made for it. But in exposition of unfulfilled prophecy, where the history is not written, the student should put forth his propositions with not too much positiveness, lest he find himself straying in the field of fancy.

“There are those who think more of future truth than of present truth. They see but little light in the path in which they walk, but think they see great light ahead of them.

“Positions taken upon the Eastern question are based upon prophecies which have not yet their fulfillment. Here we should tread lightly, and take positions carefully, lest we be found removing the landmarks fully established in the advent movement. It may be said that there is a general agreement upon this subject, and that all eyes are turned toward the war now in progress between Turkey and Russia as the fulfillment of that portion of prophecy which will give great confirmation of faith in the soon loud cry and close of our message. But what will be the result of this positiveness in unfulfilled prophecies should things not come out as very confidently expected, is an anxious question.

“Wars, pestilences, famines, and earthquakes are not the surest signs of the end. These have ever existed. We may have war, then peace, pestilence, then health, famine, then plenty, earthquakes, then the bowels of the earth may be quiet; but the message of the third angel is given but once. The progress of this work in fulfillment of prophecy is the highest and brightest light now shining in the religious heavens. Those looking at the Eastern question will probably be disappointed; but we may bear our whole weight upon the last message without fear of disappointment. As we now see our world-wide message extending to

the nations, we see the fulfillment of prophecy, and the clearest sign of the close of the work, and the consummation of the hope of the church."<sup>6</sup>

It is significant that Elder White turns from that which has a certain amount of speculation, and hence uncertainty, to a great certainty, the progress of this work in fulfillment of prophecy. This, he declares, is the bright light in the religious heavens and there need be no fear of disappointment.

Should not this be our position in preaching unfulfilled prophecy? Should we not confine ourselves to that which we know, that which is revealed? If prophecy is to be a sure word whereunto people take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place, it cannot be speculation and guessing, resulting in disappointment and confusion. Although some may have their own private ideas as to how and when certain divine predictions may come to pass, they certainly should not be publicly proclaimed. Private interpretation should be kept private.

The apostle Peter (2 Peter 1:20), speaking of prophecy, says that none of it is of "private interpretation." Moffatt makes this a little clearer by saying, "No prophetic scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself." Occasionally you hear someone say, "But Elder A's explanation of that prophecy is thus and so," and then follows Elder A's private interpretation, something different from what this people has preached for years. The result is confusion and wonderment. It cannot be that the Lord, whose Spirit moved upon men to write these prophecies, intended that they should be capable of several interpretations. There can be but one correct interpretation. We are beautifully united in preaching the Sabbath truth, the second coming of Christ, the state of the dead, and our other distinctive and great truths. Here we have no private interpretations. Should we not be equally harmonious in our preaching of prophecy? Should it not be that in this field, as well as in others, we all say the same thing?

<sup>6</sup> *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1877, p. 172.

"Now 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 among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1:10.

The impression should not obtain from what has been said here that there should be any less intensive study of prophecy. We are urged to dig deeper into God's great mine of truth. Appropriate here are the words:

"The point in question is not the depth of the exploration, but the direction. We can dig ever deeper into the mine of truth and be profited thereby, but we must be sure that we follow in the direction where the vein of gold leads, and not off into blind passages where we shall be lost in a foggy maze. Or, to change the figure, my protest is against the tendency of some to build a tall structure of finespun deductions, capped with some mysterious or awe-inspiring conclusion, and to claim that the whole edifice consists of a 'Thus saith the Lord,' that every brick, as it were, in the tall structure is a text of Scripture. Afterward, when such structures collapse, as they generally do, under the impact of scrutiny, some trusting souls are led to conclude that we cannot be sure of anything in the Bible. But it was not really the Bible that was on exhibition; it was the theory of some finite mind."<sup>7</sup>

We refer again to Moffatt's translation of 2 Peter 1:20, "No prophetic scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself." Every student and preacher of prophetic Scripture needs help. First of all, he needs the aid and direction of the Holy Spirit, who is sent to guide men into all truth. Without His aid no scripture can be rightly understood. Second, every student and preacher of prophetic Scripture needs the help of his brethren. No man is capable of standing alone. For this reason we are bound together into a church so that the members can help one another and no one need stand by himself. As a people we are conspicuous for our interdependence and for our standing together on issues. We call meetings to decide what we shall do and how we shall do it. Then we go ahead and do the thing together. No man launches a project of any consequence by himself. Were he to try it, he would not get far. This is as it should be, for

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<sup>7</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *Reasons for Our Faith*, pp. 22, 23.

God's people are a united people. The great system of truth that has been revealed to us and that we have accepted should produce a harmony that surprises the world and convinces it of the genuineness of the faith we profess.

This unity and harmony should be strikingly evident in our preaching of the prophecies. Here, as elsewhere, we should present to the world a united front. There should be no broken ranks. Breaks in the ranks invite the enemy to attack and enter, bringing in division and confusion. We should boldly preach only what represents the united thinking of this people. It is difficult to see how any Adventist preacher can put his whole heart into proclaiming anything less. A thousand times better hold our peace than to teach publicly what brings in discord and destroys harmony, and lays us open to the attacks of the enemy. In saying this, I do not suggest that all must think exactly alike in every detail. Manifestly this is an impossibility and too much to expect of human beings. But I do urge that in preaching unfulfilled prophecy we, as representatives of the church, refrain from putting forth prophetic interpretations that do not represent the conclusions of the entire church. The divine admonition, "That ye all speak the same thing," I believe applies to preaching unfulfilled prophecy.

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## **This Generation**

BY W. H. BRANSON

I have been asked by the brethren to talk to you a little while this afternoon on the subject of "This Generation." I hesitate to do this because I am speaking to a group of men all of whom, I am sure, have some satisfactory explanation of this text of Scripture. If you were here in my place, you could give something no doubt that would be logical and satisfactory to us all.

This touches upon a portion of prophecy that is yet unfulfilled; therefore, we cannot be too dogmatic as to just exactly what the reference here is, but I believe it is worth while that we should give some study to it. These words appear in the language of Jesus in connection with His great prophecy of the signs in the heavens and on the earth and must have been intended for us to understand, at least to some extent, as we pass through the last days.

If you have your Bible, please turn to Matthew 24, and let us read a few of the verses that are connected closely with the one we wish to discuss.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven

to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When its branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Verses 29-35.

It is verse 34 that we have been asked to discuss, in which the Lord says that this generation shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled. Just a few weeks ago I received a treatise on this subject from a certain member of our church in which he attempted to prove that the last generation began in 1833, 119 years ago. A statement was quoted in the treatise from one of our pioneer workers, which reads as follows:

"The generation witnessing the falling of the stars will not pass away until His actual coming shall take place."

I am aware of the fact that a number of our brethren, some of our ministers, have taken this position through the years, the position that some of those who were alive and saw the falling of the stars in 1833 will still be alive to see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. But we, of course, have to ask upon what this interpretation is based? Surely it is not upon the language of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24. Nowhere do we find a statement of Jesus that some of those who witnessed the falling of the stars would live until He appears. He says of those who are to constitute the last generation, "When we shall see *all* these things," and I want to ask which generation it is that saw *all* these things come to pass? That really is the crux of the question, it seems to me. No generation ever lived upon the earth long enough to see all these signs with their physical natural eyesight. It doesn't say that the one who sees the *last* of these signs come to pass will constitute the last generation, but that those who see *all* these things come to pass will.

Who, then, constitute the last generation? My answer would be, It is those who "learn a parable of the fig tree." For Jesus said, after telling of the signs in the sun, moon,

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and stars, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man. . . . And he shall send his angels" to gather His elect. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree." What is the parable of the fig tree? We are not left in doubt. When his branch is yet tender and it begins to put out its leaves, what do we then know? "Summer is nigh." "So, likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near [or His coming is near], even at the doors." In the parable of the fig tree, which is to be taught to the people after the signs have been fulfilled, the nations will be led to see all these signs *as signs* of the coming of Jesus.

The only generation that ever sees all these signs at one time will be the ones to whom the parable of the fig tree is taught. And the parable of the fig tree represents the great threefold Advent message that is to be given to the nations of the earth. In the parable of the fig tree these signs are all taken from history and are fitted into the prophetic utterances of Jesus and the prophets, and there the people are bidden to *see* these signs, for they have come to pass.

According to the prophecy the sun and moon were darkened; the stars fell from heaven; and today as the nations are distressed and perplexed, while men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth, the Advent people are proclaiming these things as signs that His coming is near. They have taken place. Here is the prophecy saying they would; here is the history showing they have. Therefore we see these signs. We today see *all* of them. The people who lived through them did not see them at all. In fact, they saw none of them as signs of the coming of Jesus. We do see them as signs of the coming of Jesus, because the parable of the fig tree is now being taught among the nations.

I conclude that this statement by Jesus is parallel to His assertion, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." After the signs have taken place, God's messengers go out and teach the nations the parable of the

fig tree. You know that when a fig tree is putting out its leaves, summer is here. It follows without question; we have absolute assurance of it. So, when one sees these things taking place—and one can see them here in the pages of history—he knows that the coming of Christ is near, even at the door.

Now, the generation that hears this Advent message, the people living in that period of time when this great truth concerning the signs of the times and the coming of Christ is proclaimed to the nations, who learn this parable of the fig tree—this generation shall not pass until all be accomplished.

The people who heard Noah preach that a flood was coming and saw him building the ark out on dry land were the same people who were alive when the Flood came; likewise, the people who live in the world during the time this great Advent message is sweeping over the earth will, many of them no doubt, be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. This generation to whom these signs are preached as signs, this generation that sees them through the light of prophecy as having been signs, shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled.

Somebody says, When, then, did the last generation start? Now the Lord doubtless purposely arranged the prophecy and the parable so that we wouldn't know that. Time prophecy ended in 1844, didn't it? It is not God's purpose that there should be any time prophecy beyond that period to which we can pin our faith and say, The generation began here; it must be only about so long—the coming of the Lord will be approximately at a certain date. Such speculation has all been precluded. We are now having to live by faith in the statement, "Know that he is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:33, margin. And that is just as near as the Lord has revealed the time of His coming. We shall never have another time prophecy. Until after the close of probation we shall not know the day or the hour. Just before Jesus comes He will announce the day and the hour of His

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coming, but until then we shall not know, but we can know that His coming is so near that it is just as though He stood at the door knocking, and was ready to open the door and come in.

**Testimony Service on the Last Day  
and  
Closing Remarks by W. H. Branson**

## Testimony Service on the Last Day

GLENN CALKINS IN CHARGE

GLENN CALKINS: We have just come from the table of the Lord.

We are told in *The Desire of Ages* that there were witnesses present when the disciples met with Jesus that day long ago, and that those same witnesses are present whenever we meet about the Lord's table now. The disciples partook of the bread and wine. We have met today with Jesus. We hear from His lips, as it were, precious words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. The love of Jesus with its constraining power is to be kept fresh in our memory. He who beholds the Saviour's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love.

I like the name that is given to the service we have just concluded, "The Ordinance of Service." Let us keep that thought in mind. We read again in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy these words:

"In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In His life and character He not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man. He was the representative of God and the exemplar of humanity. He represented

to the world what humanity might become when united by faith with divinity.”<sup>1</sup>

May we keep that thought before us, brethren and sisters, remembering this: that our sins were laid on Jesus, that they perished in Jesus, that they were put away by Jesus.

I have in my hand a short statement from the pen of Amos Wells, one of the well-known religious writers. May I read you a portion of it?

“Said the man to the Lord, See what great things I have given Thee. Now wilt Thou do some great thing for me? Said the Lord to the man, I gave thee gold and thou hast given Me copper; I gave thee years but thou hast given Me hours; I gave thee infinite plenty and thou hast given Me hasty thoughts; I gave thee a marvelous body and thou hast given Me heedlessness of health; I gave thee a mind of boundless capabilities, and thou hast given Me a mind of selfish pleasure; I gave thee love, and thou hast given Me indifference; I gave thee comfort and thou hast given Me complaint; I gave thee a boundless opportunity and thou hast given Me a selfish ambition; I gave Myself and all of Myself, and thou hast given Me only a fragment of thine heart. Tell me, O man, what great thing I shall give thee for all the great things thou hast given Me? Then said the man to the Lord, Give me only, O Lord, Thy forgiveness and Thy grace, that I may serve Thee faithfully all the days of my life. For I am unworthy of the least of all these mercies, and I deserve nothing at Thy hand.”

May I read just a few words from the pen of Mrs. Avery Stuttle? Many who have labored on the Pacific Coast knew Sister Stuttle personally, and knew that she was a saint of God.

“Methought I stood one well-remembered night  
Beside a being clad in robes of light.  
She weighed a balance in her mighty hand;  
I stood astonished at her stern command.

“Justice is satisfied, thy prayer prevails;  
The mighty cross of Calvary avails.”

Friends, it isn't by our works that we have the right to enter through the pearly gates into the kingdom. It is only through the precious blood of Jesus that was shed on cruel

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, June 5, 1893, p. 470.

Calvary. This is our only hope. I am so thankful that these meetings are closing as they are with a few studies, or a series of studies, one by Elder Branson on "The Lord our Righteousness," the other by Elder Dickson on "The Holy Spirit." It seems to me, brethren, that that is the great need of every one of us today. I know it is my great need. The Lord our Righteousness,—how we need Him, how we must have Him!

What shall we do? Shall we say with the man, as has been mentioned here by Amos Wells: "Then said the man to the Lord, Give me only, O Lord, Thy forgiveness and Thy grace, that I may serve Thee faithfully all the days of my life"? That, my brethren and sisters, is the life to which God is calling you and me—a life of service. We are refreshed at these meetings. It is now coming to the time when we shall be leaving to go back to our fields again. My prayer is that because of my having been here I will be able to render better service than I have ever rendered before, because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ and because of the Spirit of the living God.

What shall we do? We are clearly told by the messenger of the Lord:

"The Lord wants us to come up into the mount,—more directly into His presence. We are coming to a crisis which, more than any previous time since the world began, will demand the entire consecration of every one who has named the name of Christ. . . . We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of His Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

As we go forth from this place to a life of service, my friends, we can render acceptable service to Him only as we have the unction of His Holy Spirit.

"It is our privilege to take God at His word. As Jesus was about to leave His disciples, to ascend into heaven, He commissioned them to bear the gospel message to all nations, tongues, and peoples. He told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. This was essential to their success. The holy unction must come upon the servants of God. . . . They put away all differ-

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (1892), pp. 369, 370.

ences. They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, that they might receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit; for they were to preach the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God.”<sup>3</sup>

Brethren, I believe that is what God is calling this ministry to today—to preach this message, the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit and in the power of the living God.

“They were waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of His promise, and were praying with special fervency. This is the very course that should be pursued by those who act a part in the work of proclaiming the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. . . . Those who are now engaged in the solemn work of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord should also continue in prayer.”<sup>4</sup>

The ten days that His disciples spent together back there were needed. For we read again:

“For ten days the disciples prayed before the Pentecostal blessing came. It required all that time to bring them to an understanding of what it meant to offer effectual prayer, drawing nearer and nearer to God, confessing their sins, humbling their hearts before God, and by faith beholding Jesus, and becoming changed into His image.”<sup>5</sup>

I like that statement read by Brother Dickson this morning: “We are sealed by the Holy Ghost with power for work that we are to do.” I believe that, brethren. I believe that is what God would have us enter into today, an experience in which He would seal us with power for the finishing of the preaching of this message.

In closing these few remarks I wish to read to you something that has made a great impression upon my mind and heart. You have all heard and known much about that great man of God, Charles H. Spurgeon, who in years gone by stirred the earth with his mighty preaching. He preached in the power and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. Here is a prayer of his.

First he quotes the following scripture:

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 370, 371.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 170.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4.

And then he prays:

"O God, send us the Holy Ghost in this place. Give us both the breath of spiritual life and the fire, till nation after nation shall yield to the sway of Jesus. O Thou who art our God, answer us by fire, we pray Thee. Answer us both by wind and fire. Thou wilt do this when we are all of one accord, all believing, all expecting, all prepared by prayer. Lord, bring us to this waiting state, we pray. Thou art ready to work with us today even as Thou didst then. Stay not, we beseech Thee, but work in us. Break down every barrier that hinders the coming of Thy life. Overturn, overturn, O sacred wind. Consume all obstacles, O heavenly fire. Give us now hearts aflame, and tongues afire to preach Thy reconciling word, for Jesus' sake."

Brethren, are we ready to pray such a prayer? Are we ready to enter into such an experience as that? After these wonderful days spent together in this place, surely we want to go back different men and women from what we were when we came. We must pray, pray earnestly, that God will put His hand of blessing upon our service, and fill us with His Holy Spirit.

"Spirit of God, now take full control, Thy presence now enthroned in my soul; fulness of love O now impart. Reign Thou supreme, O Lord, in my heart."

As I read a bit ago, when the disciples met back there in the upper room on the day of Pentecost they were praying, the record tells us, with a very special purpose in mind. I think it would be well if we would kneel together now, while Elder McElhany, Elder MacGuire, and Elder Richards pray for us this afternoon.

After these prayers we are asking you who feel impressed to do so to come to the microphone here on the platform and give your testimony as to what God has done for you during these meetings—what they have meant to you, the

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blessing you have received, the inspiration that has come. Shall we kneel together while the brethren stand here at the microphone?

J. L. McELHANY: Our heavenly Father, we come into Thy presence again this afternoon to thank Thee for Thy continued love and Thy great mercy. We thank Thee for Jesus, and for the way He has been lifted up during the meetings we have had here. We thank Thee for the new glimpses we have had of His love and of His infinite power to save men from their sins. O Lord, we thank Thee for the measure of Thy Holy Spirit that has rested upon us. For indeed, while we have been present here through these days, have not our hearts burned within us as we have listened and realized and meditated upon the great truths that have been presented to us.

We pray today, O Lord, that Thou wouldst seal up to our good all these blessings. Teach us today how to live lives of righteousness by faith. Come near to us, we pray, just now. We think of the disciples of old as they gathered there in that upper chamber to seek Thee. So today we unite in praying Thee for the outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit upon us. We know that this is the greatest of all our needs. Take out of our lives, out of our work, and out of our methods everything that would hinder the free and full course of Thy Spirit in our midst. O Lord, we repent of all our sins and our shortcomings today. As we have just partaken of these emblems of the death of our precious Redeemer, we pray that we may go forth from this place to rejoice in the mighty power of our blessed risen Saviour, the Jesus who gave His life for us.

Lord, bless this group of men and women here today, we pray. Be with these brethren who have come in from the ends of the earth. Go with them to their fields. And remember all our missionaries and our workers out in the fields abroad today. Bless them and protect them with Thy mercy and Thy grace. Give great power to all workers as they

proclaim the truth of God for this hour. Lord, now we pray as we here individually present ourselves to Thee. Here are brethren who are bearing great burdens in the cause of God. Help them, we pray. Be with our dear Brother Branson as he carries the responsibility of leadership in this cause. Oh, do Thou greatly bless Thy servant. Bless all these men who are associated with him in this work. Help them, dear God, in these trying hours to know how to meet every situation, with the fullness of Thy blessing and Thy leadership resting upon them.

Now, dear Lord, we give ourselves to Thee. Be with us and continue with us, and answer our cries to Thee today as we pray again for the outpouring of Thy Spirit upon us and upon all our co-workers and fellow believers the world around. Hear us, O our Father, hear us today in these our requests. For we plead for them all in the name of Jesus our blessed Lord. Amen.

MEADE MACGUIRE: O Lord, our dear heavenly Father, we are thankful for the privilege of uniting in prayer to the throne of grace for special help that we need in such a time as this. We do thank Thee, for the evidence of Thy grace, mercy, patience, kindness, and love during the meetings here. We have been conscious of the presence of Thy Holy Spirit, Lord, and it has stirred our hearts as we sense anew that the time is here when we should blow the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in Thy holy mountain, and turn to the Lord with all our hearts, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning, and sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, and gather to the altar the fathers and mothers and children, and weep between the porch and the altar, and cry, Spare Thy people, O Lord.

O Lord, we repent of the delay. We are reminded again that Jesus might have come many years ago. Our hearts are appalled to think how we have grieved Thee when Thou has loved us with such an infinite love, and we have kept Thee waiting and waiting and waiting when Thou didst

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long to come and take us out of this old sin-cursed world. God, forgive us, have mercy on us, we pray, for our Laodicean complacency and our satisfaction with the merely human materials we have depended upon, rather than sense as we should that the work of God would never be finished except in the power of God.

And now, Lord, we thank Thee that it is not yet too late for us to seek Thee with all our hearts and claim the promise. We believe that Thou didst put in the hearts of the leaders the idea to bring us together to study here. We believe Thou hast been with us. We believe that Thou didst have something that Thou didst want us to receive here and take home with us, that we never had before. O God, help us that we may not go from this place except as we have gained that which Thou hast longed to bestow upon us.

And now, Lord, Thou hast told us plainly that Thou art waiting to pour out the latter rain for power to finish the work. We think of that one lone man sent off to a foreign field a few hundreds of years ago to a city of a million inhabitants in the darkest heathenism, and in forty-eight hours every man, woman, and child cried to God. O God, we need that power today. We cannot depend longer upon mere human resources. God, help us to humble our hearts, to go home and pray as we never have prayed before. O help us each one to live so close to Thee that we can be filled by the outpouring of the highest influence in the universe. And then we know, Lord, that Thou wilt come to take us home. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

H. M. S. RICHARDS: O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name. We come to Thee with a great sense of Thy might and power, but we love to come to Thee as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. All these words of prayer are the words of our hearts. How much we need Thee, dear Lord. We thank Thee for the privilege of studying together. We pray that as a result we may love Thy Word and study it more, that these great truths that we have heard may grow

brighter and clearer and be more emphasized as we go on. Help us, we pray, as we consider many other questions that come to us. And may the great truths, the old truths upon which this message is founded, grow brighter as they are confirmed by the Spirit of prophecy and by the events of this world.

O God, we thank Thee for bringing us together. We thank Thee for the wonderful spirit prevailing. In the words of thy servant John Wesley we can say, "And the best of all, God is with us." May we have the witness of the Spirit that we are the sons of God.

We pray, O Lord, as we kneel here, for some of the great problems about us, outside of our own lives. We think of the great Mohammedan world. O God, send forth from Thy Word the light and the power to save thousands in the Moslem world. And as the great shadow of Catholicism broadens, give us thinkers and preachers and literature to meet this tremendous issue.

Father in heaven, make us, above all, preachers of the gospel, preachers of the atoning sacrifice, of a Christ who is our surety and substitute, the only hope of a lost world. By Thy Spirit, give us, we pray, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Abide in our hearts and make us to know this great truth, greater than all other truths; by this shall the world know if we love Thee. Father, we give ourselves to Thee. We are ashamed of our failures and shortcomings. We are grieved that the years go by, that the funerals continue, the cemeteries are being filled. Oh, hasten the day of light. We pray in our hearts for consecration that now we may go forth and finish this work. Finish it in our hearts, Lord, that it may be finished in the world. Lord, we bring Thy promises to Thee as little children. Give us answers in Jesus' name. Amen.

GLENN CALKINS: And, now brethren, we are going to suggest to those who feel it in their hearts to give a testimony here this afternoon that they come quickly to the microphone

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here on the floor. May the Spirit of God be with each one as he gives his testimony, and may it all be to His glory.

J. L. SHULER, Seminary: I want to thank God for the inspiration, the illumination, and the heart warming that have come to me during the Bible Conference. As I have listened to these presentations and have seen Jesus in each one, it seems to me that over every presentation I've seen the six great words of Paul, "Christ is all, and in all." Many of our younger workers have often asked, "How can I preach Christ in all the doctrines?" I believe this Bible Conference is a down-to-earth, practical demonstration of how to preach Christ in the doctrines. In this Bible Conference I have felt the personal call of the Lord to me asking me to give Jesus a larger place in my life. I answer that call, I give Him all my heart today, and I want to go forth to reflect His wonderful love to the world.

E. E. ROENFELT, General Conference: The apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost declared to the Jews that the One they had crucified, God had raised from the dead and had made Him to be as Lord and Christ. The word *Christ*, as we all know, means "the anointed one." God the Father made Jesus the anointed Saviour. And during the meetings of the past two weeks the Lord has given to me a new conception of the marvelous salvation that this One, Jesus of Nazareth, has provided for me. And my resolve is that I will enter more fully into this remarkable redemption that He has wrought for me. But I've also received the new realization of what Jesus can do through me as my Lord, and I resolve by the grace of God that Jesus Christ, more fully than ever before, shall be my Lord and my King and that He might be able to use me in harmony with His will and purpose to the accomplishment of the greatest good that He has in mind through me to accomplish.

ROBERT WHITSETT, General Conference: This has truly been one of the greatest meetings in the history of our

church. My heart is overwhelmed with gratitude in being associated with such a fine body of preachers. Surely some of the greatest soldiers of the cross in the history of the world have been gathered here in God's sight during the last two weeks. But what we have accomplished and what we should have accomplished are still too far apart. I give my heart to the Lord Jesus all over again today, that for as much as in me is, as long as life exists, there is one story to tell, the story of the Lord Jesus, that He may be lifted up, not only in preaching, but in the outflowing of the life, so that all with whom I come in contact may learn to love Him even as I love Him today.

ARTHUR ROTH, Inter-America: The Bible Conference has been a real blessing to me. My soul has been nourished and strengthened, and my heart thrills to think that God has called me to share in preaching these wonderful things to others. I go from this conference with renewed confidence and enthusiasm to tell of Jesus wherever I go.

RAYMOND HARTWELL, Middle East: I am very thankful that Brother Richards remembered the Moslems in prayer today. I ask you to remember all of my associate workers as well as myself, that we might be loving and lovable Christians, that we might not be elated by applause or dejected by censure or disappointment.

E. E. COSSENTINE, General Conference: I believe this Bible Conference has been the means and the instrument of strengthening our faith in all our beliefs. I know it has mine. I go from this conference with new confidence and a new assurance. I believe it is a milepost in our experience, and from it I expect to see great blessing flow out through all our work, the blessing that comes to me personally.

D. A. DELAFIELD, Review and Herald: I don't feel worthy to testify this afternoon, but an experience has come to me here that would make me feel recreant to my Lord and to my work if I did not speak for Christ, for the new sense of

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His pardoning mercy and love that has come to me, especially since the meeting last night and during the communion service this afternoon. This love is a wonderful thing, brethren, and there is nothing in all this world that will give a man power like a sense of pardon and the redeeming love of Christ experienced in his own soul. I rejoice this afternoon in the love of Jesus Christ. I praise God for the joy of reconciliation to God and love for my brethren and love for lost sinners. God has done something for me at these meetings; something has come to me. You know, we Adventist preachers are prone to say, "See what the world is coming to." I think, brethren, we ought to be able to say, "See what has come to the world. See what has come to us through Christ." I praise His holy name for a new sense of His pardoning love and His sweet presence.

D. A. OCHS, Columbia Union: I have thought seriously for some time, and perhaps more than ever as I listened to Elder Branson's talk on "Righteousness by Faith," that we as administrators, who in our many duties day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year line up the work to keep the wheels moving, are in great danger that we ourselves are living under the old covenant. It is possible to preach the new covenant, while we ourselves are living under the old. I love my brethren. I want to be of one accord with all, and wherein I have given the impression that I did not love my brethren, I want you to forgive me. Righteousness by faith through Jesus Christ must be uppermost in our ministry. I want to have it in all its fullness.

W. B. OCHS, General Conference: The evening before the Bible Conference began, I was to meet with the planning committee in the Seminary chapel at eight-thirty. I arrived there at eight-twenty-five, opened the door, looked in, and saw the men who have given us these wonderful messages on their knees praying. I listened. I heard them plead with God for help, for guidance, for leadership, as they would

present these messages. I was convinced then that the Bible Conference would be a success. I thank God this afternoon that it has been a success. It has been a great conference, and will mean much to unite our hearts in the great doctrines of the Advent movement. I thank the Lord that it was my privilege to attend every meeting. My own heart has been blessed, and I want to go from here to be a greater blessing to mankind.

E. C. WARD, South Atlantic: There have been three things that this conference has done for me. First of all, it has confirmed my faith in the fundamentals that comprise the everlasting gospel we are preaching. Second, it has assured me that as we go to preach, and as I go along with my brethren to preach, we are preaching what is known in the Word of God as the truth. And finally, it has been reaffirmed in my mind that the truth we preach will not die in oblivion or ignominy in some corner, but it will triumph and go to the ends of the earth, and then Christ will come a second time.

F. A. MOTE, Australasia: I'm very thankful that God made it possible for us to have this Bible Conference. It has been a wonderful meeting. The influence from this meeting will radiate to the ends of the earth until Jesus comes. I'm thankful that we have one Lord, one faith, one message. We're one people. We're united. We're determined to be found faithful until the work is finished. I'm of good courage. As I go back, I ask an interest in your prayers, brethren and sisters, that God will help me to be a faithful servant. I want to be ready to meet Jesus, and I want to help others to get ready. I like these words that have been brought to our attention already: "Like a mighty army moves the church of God; brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod; we are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity."

T. E. UNRUH, East Pennsylvania: For many years I've had in my heart a genuine hunger for the privilege of partici-

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pating in a conference where I could feel the uninterrupted impact of the Word of God on my heart. I hardly believed that that opportunity would come to me. I rejoice in the Bible Conference that we've just had. My confidence both in the mission and in the message of Adventism has greatly deepened, and I go back to my section of the field with the determination that God is to have all there is of me. I mean to continue to press through to the great objective that God has set before us—the opening of our hearts to the full infilling of the Holy Spirit, that I might be able to reveal in my life the uninterrupted revelation of my blessed Master.

ANDREW FEARING, Nevada-Utah: For many years I have been standing before people in evangelism and telling them that the longer I study the Bible, and the longer I preach, the more confident I am in the message found in the Word of God. The privilege that has been mine, to assist at this Bible Conference has been very precious, for I sense the renewal of my confidence in the truth of God's words, the strength of His power, and the possibility of His taking an ordinary individual and using him to present that message. This has all been illuminated and has been reaffirmed here in the Bible Conference. My heart has been richly blessed and strengthened. I want to be a better man for God. I want more of what we have been seeking from meeting to meeting—the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord upon these precious truths, not only in my life, but in the lives of all these workers and the laity in our fields, that Holy Spirit, that companion that has been called alongside to help. I do indeed want to do more for God.

A. W. CORMACK, General Conference: First of all this afternoon, dear brethren and sisters, I would rejoice in the opportunity of yielding my life anew to the Lord Jesus. To me this Bible Conference has been a wonderful meeting. It seems to me that it would be impossible for anyone to be in attendance at it and not be assured in his heart that God has a people and that His people in these last days are the

Seventh-day Adventist people. God has spoken to our hearts, I know, and His Word has been reflected in our talks. I think of one text that has recurred to me again and again as I have listened to these wonderful assurances given us in the messages that have come to us day after day. It is found in the book of Proverbs where God makes an appeal to us: "Have not I written to thee," He says, "excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" Prov. 22:20, 21. And I want, dear brethren and sisters, to be able by my life as well as in my preaching to answer the words of truth to those with whom I come in contact, and to lift up before them the Lord our righteousness.

R. A. SMITHWICK, British Columbia: I wish to say that this meeting has brought a personal blessing to me. I feel deeply grateful that the Lord has given me the opportunity of attending this wonderful Bible Conference. I don't feel at all capable, and still I feel a deep responsibility in returning to my field and, as best I can, bringing to other centers the inspiration that this great conference has brought to me.

E. E. LUTZ, Kansas: My heart is full of gratitude to God for the experience of this Bible Conference. It has renewed our faith in the fundamentals of God's message for this hour. It has brought us a clearer view of the great issues of the controversy today, and I am thankful to God for the privilege of answering His call to walk with Christ in the paths of righteousness, and to the end march to His command on the highways of the advancing kingdom of God.

H. W. KIBBLE, Lake Region: I am very happy to give my testimony along with the rest of my brethren, for this Bible Conference has brought to me a new and greater revelation of God's great plan for the preaching of the gospel, for the finishing of His work. And in spite of what the enemies might say, thank God, we are not divided. All one body we, one in hope and doctrine, and one in charity. May I add,

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one in the preaching of the gospel, one in fellowship. My heart fills up in praise to God. I want to be used as He sees fit, to do my bit in helping finish this work.

JOHN OSBORN, Southern California: This Bible Conference has reassured me of something that I always knew; that is, we haven't followed cunningly devised statements. This day I place my life anew in the hands of Jesus Christ to be used in the preaching of this glorious Advent message to all the world.

P. L. WILLIAMS, Far East: I want to thank God today for the blessings that have been mine during these twelve days here at the Bible Conference. I feel that the only way I can express my feeling of gratitude to God today is in the words of this beautiful hymn: "I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love; I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true; it satisfies my longing as nothing else can do. . . . I love to tell the story, it did so much for me, and that is just the reason I tell it now to thee. . . . I love to tell the story, for some have never heard the message of salvation from God's own holy word." I pray, and I ask you to pray for me, that I may be faithful in giving this story of Jesus' love to mankind.

ROBERT PIERSON, Southern Asia: Great inspiration and spiritual blessing have come to my heart as a result of attending these meetings. I determine by God's grace that a new power will come into my ministry, that I may share these blessings with the workers and laymen of my field. My heart, my life, my all, I lay on the altar of service for God.

B. R. SPEAR, Southern California: I have never doubted the message or the testimonies of the Holy Spirit. I've never been troubled with that. As I have sat through these days listening to a review of the great message, there has been a conviction in my soul that is becoming more and more pronounced, that I've been preaching a wonderful message through the years, and that it is the truth of God. With

that there has also come a renewed consecration and determination. As I go back to my field I am going to throw my life into it with all that I have, as I never have before.

O. B. EDWARDS, Oakwood College: This has been the greatest denominational meeting I have ever attended, and I thank God that I was permitted to be present. I have appreciated the manner in which the leaders have magnified the love of God and how they have expressed the manifestation of that love in the unselfish spirit of Jesus Christ. I am glad also to understand better the work of the Holy Spirit in the finishing of the work, and I leave with this determination—"Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted."

C. E. WENIGER, Seminary: Because my heart and my mind have been refreshed, I praise Him today. I know whom I have believed. Let us pray that Christ may be the center of every activity and every teaching in the Seminary.

W. E. NELSON, General Conference: This meeting has been a great inspiration to me, and I am sure that no one who has attended will ever say that Jesus Christ is not the center of the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine as far as this denomination is concerned. Jesus has been magnified, and I praise His name, because it is through faith in Him that we have everlasting life.

E. M. CHALMERS, Carolina: I want to praise God for the inspiration that has come down deep into my heart in this conference session to indeed follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes, even to the cross, to save a lost world.

MERLE MILLS, Southern New England: I have been greatly blessed by attending this Bible Conference. I have observed that there has been no time for the discussion of inconsequential matters or petty themes. We studied the deep, underlying principles of the plan of salvation. My faith and hope have been renewed from what I have heard here, and I leave today with a greater determination to be of service to Christ, and I long and determine to have more power to preach this great message.

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J. E. EDWARDS, General Conference: As I have listened to each one of the presentations I have thought again and again of that text, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." My own heart has been stirred, my life has been made stronger in faith, and as I go into other fields of service for God with our laymen and our churches, I trust that Christ may be the center of my service, the center of my life, and that He may be lifted up in all that I undertake for Him.

A. F. TARR, Northern Europe: Every hour of this Bible Conference has been a blessed one to me. I only wish that every member and every worker in our division might have been able to share these blessings with us. I came to the meeting believing that it would result in a greater unanimity in faith and in doctrine. I leave the meeting believing that it has brought a greater spirit of love and brotherhood that is going to accomplish great things for us in the days to come.

J. T. POWELL, Camp Breckenridge: For years I have been studying about the good times the pioneers of old had at the Bible conferences, and I have longed and prayed for the opportunity of sharing in one. God has answered my prayer. I am exceedingly happy. For the short time I have been in the armed forces I have been constantly on the firing line, bringing God to man and man to God. Here at this Bible Conference, God has been brought to me in a very vivid way—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As I go forth to labor I have renewed courage, renewed spiritual strength and power. Pray that God will bless my efforts.

GOSTA BERGLUND, Sweden: My heart is filled with thankfulness to God for the privilege of attending this Bible Conference and for all the blessings that have so greatly enriched my soul. I return to my field with a new and deeper spiritual experience.

N. F. BREWER, General Conference: This Bible Conference has given me a new awareness of the beauties of this truth

and the plan of salvation. I thank God for Christ, who was willing to die for me and for sinners. I give myself to Him anew, and trust that God will give me power to live out His life within mine.

L. K. DICKSON, General Conference: It was my privilege to be with the brethren as the early plans of this Bible Conference were laid, and I have known of the anxiety in the hearts of the brethren regarding the results of this conference. May I say that those results could have been much different from what they are. We are all very thankful that the objectives that were in our hearts in the laying of these plans have been realized. The expressed unity in the minds and the hearts of the brethren that we have heard here this afternoon is most reassuring. I have believed this great message ever since my very youthful years. I have never seen the day when I doubted the message in any of its parts. But I must say that after I have gone through this Bible Conference, there has been a cumulative blessing that has come to my soul and my mind in connection with these great topics. Every one of them has been presented in a way that has touched my heart, and I believe God by His Spirit has greatly blessed in this important meeting. I go away from this Bible Conference looking back upon it as one of the greatest meetings that we have ever held so far as my knowledge has gone. My heart has a determination in it, a more fixed determination perhaps than ever before, that Christ shall be uplifted in my ministry beyond any point to which He has been lifted as yet.

C. W. GUENTHER, West Pennsylvania: My heart is full this afternoon. Somehow as I have sat through these meetings and have had the message of God brought again to my attention, my heart has been filled and filled and filled until it is overflowing today. It is a wonderful thing to me to be connected with the message and the movement that have been bound together by the eternal certainties of God's Word. Today we are a united people; we are not divided.

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We are moving forward together for Christ. It is a happy thought to me as I return now to my field and to my labors in a great city that I can share with the people of that city the hope and the assurances that mean much to us here.

W. L. REYNOLDS, Florida: As I have said before, these meetings have been a great blessing to me. I prayed from the very beginning that in every message I would receive something for my own heart. The Lord has answered that. I want to return to my field, surrendering all to Him to preach the message with greater power under the influence of the Spirit of God as I never have before.

CALVIN GORDON, Texico: The greatest privilege that could come to one of the members of God's church today, I think, would be attendance at this Bible Conference. In God's plan every privilege is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility. I have heard God's Word speaking a responsibility to me in the same words that Jesus used long ago in Galilee: Go back, and show what great things God hath done for thee. I believe that is my responsibility, and my prayer is that I will live up to it, that I may see wanderers turned into the paths that lead to eternal life.

F. O. SANDERS, Arkansas-Louisiana: My heart has been thrilled during these meetings by a new glimpse of Jesus. Today I give myself completely to Him, and am determined with the apostle to know in my ministry and my life only Jesus and Him crucified.

PHILIP MOORES, Newfoundland: This conference has been a great blessing to me. I believe it will be a great help to me to be a better servant of my God.

DONALD MACKINTOSH, Baltimore, Maryland: We are sure that the message that has been given here at this Bible Conference will swell to a loud cry until the earth is lightened with the glory thereof. I thank God for the privilege of living in this most propitious hour and sharing in the privilege of giving that message.

C. M. BUNKER, Indiana: I am convinced that one of the designs of the evil one is especially with us out on the firing line of local conferences to try to convince us that God has changed, that His message has changed, and that we are not united. I go from this conference assured that God has not changed, His message has not changed, and we are united. And with you I will triumph with it.

T. R. FLAIZ, General Conference: The messages of this conference have served to bring into clearer, sharper focus the simple truths of the gospel. I am convinced as never before that the foundation of God standeth sure. As I return to my work it is with just one purpose—that Christ may be more effectively, more evidently lifted up in my life and in my ministry.

V. T. ARMSTRONG, Far East: I am deeply thankful for the blessings I personally have received at these meetings. I am thankful to know that we are a united people, that we have the truth for this time. I only wish that the many workers in the Far Eastern Division could all have been here to receive these blessings. But I am sure that with the printed report to go back to the field, we can take the spirit of the meeting with us. I believe this meeting will be the turning point in the finishing of God's work in the earth.

RALPH WATTS, Southern Africa: This meeting, this conference, has done something to my heart. For a number of years Jesus has been a partner with me in all my activities. As I leave this conference the confidence that I have had in Him is certainly strengthened. I am going to uplift Him more in my whole ministry. And I know that as a result of this conference we shall soon see the work finished throughout the world.

N. R. DOWER, Texas: Many times during the seventy-three services that I have attended during this Bible Conference one text of scripture has been in my mind. It was the prayer of the psalmist; it is my prayer today: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

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Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." I want that experience in my own life, and my ministry to be that kind of ministry.

W. C. MOFFETT, New York City: One thing that has impressed me during this Bible Conference is the fact that the fundamental, perfect truth of this message that was proclaimed by the pioneers has been reaffirmed and shines with greater luster in the darkness of our day. Another thing that has impressed me over and above the study of the Word, has been the strong impression that we are coming up to the great day of God with a shortness of time. And I believe the message that concerns the outpouring of the Spirit of God to meet that issue and finish this work triumphantly and quickly is timely. And I share with you in placing my all upon the altar. I am going back to New York City believing that as our hearts are on fire for God and our faith lays hold of His power, those Jericho walls are surely coming down.

FERNON RETZER, Inter-America: I with you have found it a great privilege to be here at this Bible Conference. I have known Jesus for a number of years, but somehow as I have been here I received a new vision of Him. As I go back to the field I want to lift up Jesus, to put Him in His rightful place in my preaching. I want you to remember our field in your prayers as we meet the Catholic mind from day to day.

V. LINDSAY, South Central: I thank God for the privilege of attending this Bible Conference. I believe it has meant more to enrich my ministry than any other experience of life. And if I know my own heart, as I shall leave this conference I shall work for God as I have never worked before to advance His cause.

L. C. EVANS, Southwest: I thank God today that the brethren were led to arrange for this Bible Conference. My own heart has been warmed and stirred, and I praise God today for the glorious truth that binds our hearts together in the

bonds of love and unity and Christian fellowship. Pray for us in the great Southwestern Union, that God's Holy Spirit may be poured out upon us in great measure, that His work may be speedily finished.

A. S. MAXWELL, Pacific Press: This has been not only a very wonderful meeting but, I believe, an ethical meeting. I have a feeling that from this moment this great second Advent movement will surge forward with new power throughout all the world. And I do pray that God may use me in a little way to help forward this glorious enterprise. As I have sat in these seats through all these meetings, so many of them, I have felt wave after wave of truth bursting over my mind and my soul, uplifting me, and giving me certainly a new conviction that this is indeed the truth, the word of the living God. And it is my prayer that as I go back to my work God may greatly bless me and help me to uplift Jesus as the living Saviour and Redeemer and coming King, to the glory of His name.

ROGER ALTMAN, General Conference: Truly the Lord has visited His people, and for this I joy and rejoice with you all. I am determined that the benefits and blessings of these meetings shall abide in my heart, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God in my service during the days to come. "Jesus, engrave it on my heart that thou the one thing needful art; I could from all things parted be, but never, never, Lord, from thee."

J. O. WILSON, Burma: I have never had any doubts about the Advent message. I have often wished that there might be opportunity to give more study to how we can make our message more attractive to the various peoples of the earth. The illuminating lessons given by one of our brethren here on how to present the message to Catholics have renewed my hope that we may still, by earnest prayer and study and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit find ways and approaches by which we may make our wonderful message attractive and beautiful to Buddhists, Hindus, Mohammedans, and

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all the peoples of the earth, so that soon many thousands of them may share with us the saving truth, the everlasting gospel, in the setting of the Advent message. I renew today my strength and all to the finishing of the happy and great task of the Lord's work in the earth.

F. D. NICHOL, *Review and Herald*: My heart is very full today, full of thanksgiving to God for the privilege of having a part in preaching a message to men such as we have for them. I am thankful that in a day of darkness we can have light in our dwelling, thankful to God that in a day of uncertainty we can look with assurance to the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That coming seems more real to me as a result of this Bible Conference. And for that coming I am determined by the grace of God to be ready.

R. A. ANDERSON, *General Conference*: This has been a wonderful meeting, brethren. Elder Dickson has reminded us that some of us who are closer up in the planning program looked with concern on the possibilities of such a conference. We might have broken up, brethren, with all kinds of divisions. But I thank God that we are united today. The dragon must be very disappointed in the remnant church today, I think. It has been a great blessing to my own soul. And I have been thinking of what Jesus has done for my own soul. I have been led to crown Him the Lord of love. "Behold His hands and side, those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified; no angel in the sky can fully bear that sight, but downward bends his wondering eye at mysteries so great." I want to move continually in the sense of that mystery that compels the adoration of the angels as they view the Lord of love whom we serve and worship.

NEAL WILSON, *Middle East*: Some of us came to this Bible Conference wondering just what the true purpose was, and just what the results would be. Personally, brethren, I have had a most satisfying answer to both of these questions. My soul has been stirred, and my heart has been greatly cheered and inspired by the fellowship and by the wonderful mes-

sages of spiritual enlightenment and blessing. Christ has been magnified and exalted, and as a result, self and dogma have been lost sight of. I am overwhelmingly persuaded today that what the Middle East needs, and the world for that matter, is what the Middle East and the world needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Jesus and His love. And I am resolved today, under the blessing and the power of the Holy Spirit, to have some humble part in revealing Jesus to that great part of the world field.

W. L. PASCOE, Australasia: This Bible Conference has brought a great blessing to me. It has brought new courage in the task that the Lord has given us to do. My prayer is that the inspiration of this meeting will quickly radiate to every land around the globe.

GLENN CALKINS: And now, friends, it is nearly five o'clock, and there are several still standing, some thirty-five or forty. I am wondering whether it wouldn't be to your liking that we discontinue the public testimony here at this time, and ask those who have not testified publicly to write out a short testimony and hand it to Brother Rebok, one of the secretaries of the Bible Conference. Then it would become part of the written record. I am afraid some have become weary. May that meet your mind? Shall I suggest, then, that we join in singing hymn no. 597, and make this our consecration prayer as we sing. After the singing of this song we will ask Elder Kern to dismiss this meeting with prayer.

WILLIS L. HYATT, California: The Bible Conference has been a great inspiration to me. I am thankful for the solidarity of our worldwide movement. I am persuaded that this message is soon to triumph gloriously. I wish to rededicate my life to the Lord and to the completion of His work of salvation. I am of good courage, and thank the Lord for the blessings received at this Bible Conference.

W. MUELLER, Germany: The Bible Conference has brought to me great blessings. I am glad that all the deliberations will soon be in print, and by this the good work done in

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research and unification of faith will become a blessing to all our ministers and church members. I wish with all my heart that it will serve the whole church for a more complete and successful way to proclaim the Advent message, and to finish the work. I thank the brethren who made this great Bible Conference possible.

W. E. BAXTER, JR., Mexico: This Bible Conference has been a wonderful inspiration to me. As I have sat and listened to the various speakers review the certainties of this message, my heart has been stirred. We seem to be agreed that Israel has camped on the borders of Canaan long enough, and our hearts, like Caleb's, seem to exclaim, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." As I go back to my tasks I pray that this may be the overwhelming impulse in my ministry. I want to go home!

C. LESTER BOND, Upper Columbia: This Bible Conference has brought to me a great personal blessing. It has given me a new appreciation of the love of God and of the whole plan of salvation. It has led me to dedicate my life anew to God and to the finishing of His work.

ANDREW J. ROBBINS, West Pennsylvania: For years in home, in school, and as a worker in the cause I have believed and loved this message. This Bible Conference has magnified the message, the movement, the Word of God, and Jesus Christ as never before to me. Today the feeling in my heart is, "Where He may lead me I will go, for I have learned to trust Him so, and I remember 'twas for me, that He was slain on Calvary."

E. D. NELSON, Arkansas-Louisiana: The sweet fellowship that I have experienced here has been most precious. The unfolding of the truths we hold so dear in a greater measure, reaffirming and reassuring, prove that on Christ the solid Rock we stand, in surety. I am sorry this conference is ending. God has more than done His part in my behalf in this glorious meeting. My concern now is that I may not fail Him.

My determination is to carry the torch back to my conference.

A. B. HUENERGARDT, Indianapolis, Indiana: This has been a most blessed occasion to me, drinking in the spirit of this Bible Conference. It has put an insistent urge into my heart for much greater service for my Lord who gave all for me. This very gripping quotation brought to us by Elder Dickson this morning stands out boldly to me: "The Holy Spirit will not be given to any who are not ready for heaven." How lightly we examine ourselves, and yet, in the light of this statement, how carefully we need to scrutinize our every motive, for here is really the key to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let me see myself as God sees me.

J. B. PENNER, Pacific Press: I want to praise God for the privilege of attending this great Bible Conference. He has blessed me so abundantly. It is my desire and determination to lead a closer life with Jesus every day and be a better man and servant of God by His grace! Pray for me.

KENNETH OSTER, Iran: We have heard a great deal about television and looked forward with great anticipation to seeing it. Our hopes were amply realized just a bit over two weeks ago when we saw the Faith for Today telecast for the first time. Far more than what this modern invention brings has been brought to us through the Bible Conference. Men inspired by God have turned the knobs in our minds to view far more majestic scenes than we had ever dreamed of. We have seen Jesus in visions of the past, present, and future. We have seen Jesus hanging on Calvary's cross. We have seen Jesus pleading our unworthy cases before the righteous Judge. We have seen Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. Fellow believers and fellow workers, let us determine to be ready all the time until that solemn vision becomes a glorious reality.

CARL SUNDIN, General Conference: I am thankful for the privilege of being in attendance at this great Bible Conference of the church. At a time when abroad in the land are

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ideologies that would destroy in one fell swoop all that has meant stability and certainty, it is so good to know that the "foundation of God standeth sure." This Bible Conference has re-established my faith in the eternal verities of God that make certain our hope for a future happy home in an earth where sin and evil, sickness and suffering, deterioration and death, shall never enter.

W. E. MURRAY, South America: This Bible Conference has been an epoch-making meeting. It has been inspiring and instructive. It is destined to influence the preaching of Seventh-day Adventist ministers as no other meeting of our times. This meeting will be a strong element in unifying our ministry in thought and action around the world. I personally appreciate the efforts of those who have given us these excellent studies. The direction of the sessions and the planning of the whole conference by Elder Branson and his associates are highly commendable. I have been very glad to be here. It has refreshed my whole study of the Scriptures, and I shall do all I can to take to the workers and laity in South America all the benefits of this significant meeting.

LOUIS WALDVOGEL, Brazil: There are two blessings that are most precious to the human soul: (1) Communion with the Lord, (2) communion with the brethren. In this Bible Conference both of these blessings were abundantly present. I give thanks to the brethren and praise to the Lord for these. With His help I shall endeavor to be a better brother to my brethren and a better son for my heavenly Father.

WALTER SCHUBERT, South America: It has always been a source of great satisfaction to me to belong to the Advent movement. The lectures presented at this Bible Conference have strengthened my faith in the irrefutable truth of the Word of God as we make it known. It has encouraged me to reach ever to a higher standard of Christian living and to put my entire life under the constant control of His Holy Spirit. Above all, it has increased my desire to do a greater

work in soul winning, and thus to help hasten that day of triumph for this message.

H. O. OLSON, Emmanuel Missionary College: I cannot refrain from writing concerning my feeling relative to the Bible Conference recently held at Takoma Park. I do believe I voice the sentiment of the large majority present, if not all, when I say that the influence of this meeting will be deeply felt, both in our institutions and in the field at large, as long as probationary time lasts. It is the first time that I know of that we held a communion service near the close of such a large gathering, but I fully believe that the Holy Spirit guided those who made this change in the program. It was a wonderful experience, this, to fellowship together with workers of many countries. I cannot recall a time when I felt that heaven was closer than that Friday afternoon hour. It will be a never-to-be-forgotten experience. Many were privileged to express their feelings in the testimonies that followed, but because time did not permit all of us to speak, I am in this way adding my testimony.

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Minneapolis Conference in 1888—the message that has been repeated here in these meetings by all the speakers at this conference. I speak of the message of righteousness by faith. That will prepare us for everything else that is to follow. Let us talk about it. Let us prepare talks for the workers on this topic. We cannot possibly overemphasize the importance of receiving righteousness by faith in preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and in preparation for the loud cry of the Advent message. Let us appeal to our workers to go out to the churches and preach on this important subject. Let us raise a cry to the ends of the earth, calling our people to the reception of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. If we do, we are going to carry the blessings of the Bible Conference right out to the very ends of the world, and it will bring great revival to all our churches; it will bring added fruitage to our evangelistic efforts as we work for the lost and the unsaved.

And so, brethren, as you go home, go planning in your hearts and minds how you will present this matter to your workers. Call meetings of your workers as you have opportunity, and lay before them the special blessings of this Bible Conference, and particularly this need of getting the message of righteousness by faith before our churches, so that we may not fail where some failed in 1888. We must not repeat that experience.

Let us determine in our heart of hearts that we shall raise this cry until it is heard by workers and people everywhere and until our people learn how to enter into this blessed experience.

And now may God bless every one of you who have been here with us, accompany you as you go back to your fields, and give you success in leading the forces in the field to higher and nobler attainments and achievements in the work of God.

The end is near, brethren. Our pilgrimage in this world is soon to end. May God keep us faithful until it is all over, is my prayer.

# The Foundation Stands Firm

By

J. L. McELHANY

*Sabbath Morning Sermon, September 13, 1952*

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## The Foundation Stands Firm

Before beginning my address I wish to fulfill an exhortation or charge that was given to me a few days ago when I visited Elder Spicer. You all know, of course, that he has been very ill, and last week he inquired about the work with his usual interest and fervor. And then he said to me as I rose to go, "Please take my greetings to all the brethren, and tell them to keep on the main line and preach the message." I think that is an exhortation that we can all be thankful for.

As Elder Branson has just explained to you, this Sabbath concludes the Bible Conference that has been in session here since the first day of the month. We have representatives here from our world divisions. These men have come to join in a renewed study of the great doctrinal principles and truths that make up the framework of the Advent message. It is a great privilege indeed to greet these brethren and to listen to their reports, as we shall during the Autumn Council, of the growth and the progress of the work in their fields. By way of anticipation I can assure you that what you will hear from these men will thrill your hearts indeed.

Now this morning I want to ask your indulgence, and also to ask you for the privilege of bearing my personal testimony regarding the work of this Bible Conference. As I have thought of this conference and of its work, as I have listened from day to day to the brethren who have conducted the studies here, my feelings could well be described by the

words written of the apostle Paul. On his journey to Rome he was met by certain brethren from Rome at Appii forum, and it is recorded of that meeting, "Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." I thank God today for this Bible Conference; and not only do I thank the Lord for it, but I have taken courage. It has been a great stimulation, as it were, to my courage. I have never for a moment doubted the triumph of this movement, for one of the things that I feel certain about today is that this message is founded on the eternal word of God and it is the development of that word and of the prophecies of that word that call for just such a movement in these latter days.

There is another thing that I feel thankful about in connection with this conference, and that is that it has held to the affirmative in connection with the great fundamental principles of this message, and that the nonessential and secondary questions have been left aside. Every man who has led out in these studies has revealed the results of weeks and months of study. And as from day to day these men have appeared on this platform to open the Word of God to us, our faith in and our love for the great outstanding truths that make up this message have been rekindled into a bright flame. I want to assure you this morning, my dear brethren and sisters, that I pray that that same flame may be rekindled in your hearts and in your lives. I believe I can speak for all those who have attended this conference when I say that our courage has been lifted to a new and higher level. And I have no doubt but that in the days to come it will be seen that this conference has been another milestone, another epoch, in the progress of this message. As the workers attending this Bible Conference scatter again to their fields throughout the world, with their hearts aglow with deepened love for Jesus, our precious Redeemer and High Priest, with a quickened sense of the nearness of His coming, the spirit that has prevailed here will spread from heart to heart, from worker to worker. Thus the blessings of this conference will be multiplied manifold. I believe we should all pray for this result.

Deepened love for the coming of Jesus will result in a great revival of spiritual life and power in the heart and in the life of every believer. As the important truths of the third angel's message are proclaimed with increasing power, our workers and members will feel less and less inclined to spend time discussing minor matters and weaving the interests of their lives into the interests of the world. I believe the hour has come, my friends, when we must learn what it means to be a separated people, separating ourselves from the things that make up the attractiveness of this world to those who know not this message.

A number of times during this conference mention has been made of the work of the pioneers of this movement. I want to say this morning that I believe we owe a great debt to these men and women of old who laid so well the foundations of this movement. What we have heard here has only intensified, I feel sure, our respect for them and our love for the sacrificial lives they led in laying so well the foundations of this movement. As reference has been made to them I thought repeatedly of the words recorded in Psalms 44:1: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old."

As we see the unfolding developments of this movement and of this message I believe we shall come more and more to realize what God did for the pioneers of this movement. I am glad that we can feel that God was in their midst and helped them greatly. These words, of course, were spoken to Israel of old. They are still true today regarding the work of the founders of the Advent movement. I want to give you some illustrations of that fact, perhaps also to show, if I can, how the present developments of this movement tie in with the work of the pioneers. I shall read you an excerpt from the first number of *The Midnight Cry*, written by Joshua V. Himes. Please bear in mind as I read these words that this was published before the Advent movement as an organized entity in this world had emerged.

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"Our work is one of unutterable magnitude. It is a mission and an enterprise, unlike, in some respects, anything that has ever awakened the energies of man. It is not a subserviency to human institutions.—It is not a conflict or a political arena.—It is not the operation of a distinct religious sect. But it is an *alarm*, and a cry, uttered by those who, from among all Protestant sects, as Watchmen standing upon the walls of the moral world, believe the *WORLD'S CRISIS IS COME*."<sup>1</sup>

I pause for a moment to comment that if there was any reason for those men back in those days believing that the crisis of the world had come, there is a hundredfold more reason for us to believe it today.

—"and who, under the influence of this faith, are united in proclaiming to the world, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.' It is an enterprise that swallows up all the petty peculiarities of sectarianism, and unites us upon an elevation so far above those mercenary undulations, that they are utterly lost to our view below."<sup>2</sup>

Passing down a little farther, to October 4, 1853, after the Advent movement had emerged and had taken shape with an organized form, we read the words of James White: "But it requires faith to go forth now, and preach the unpopular doctrines of the present truth. Brethren, pray for your preachers, and pray in faith."<sup>3</sup> This throws a little side light on the conditions they had to face back in those days: "As they go out into a cold world, with all hell stirred against them, they need your faithful prayers. Shall they have them? At the family altar and in the closet. O, remember the servants of Christ who are searching out and feeding the scattered flock."<sup>4</sup> Then he uses a term that is perhaps a little peculiar or unknown to us, but turning from this exhortation to the church at large, he gives an exhortation to the ministers. He calls them "preaching brethren." "And preaching brethren, go out leaning on the arm of your Master. Have faith! *faith!!* FAITH!!! a little more FAITH."<sup>5</sup> I believe, brethren, preaching brethren today, if we may use that term, and all our members, that we ought to learn

<sup>1</sup> November 17, 1842, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Review and Herald*, p. 104.

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

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

this lesson of faith and of prayer, that as the messengers of the Lord go forth into all the world they may have success attending their efforts in greater measure even than we see now. "Without it," he says, "you can do nothing. Don't go out to give light to others, while you are enveloped in darkness yourselves. Enter into the solemn work of God, and never rest satisfied unless you feel the responsibility of your calling, and the worth of precious souls."<sup>6</sup>

I must not take time to read the entire statement, but I do pray, brethren, that we may be actuated by that same spirit of faith and devotion that characterized the pioneers in this movement.

During this conference I have listened to studies on the imminence of the coming of Christ and the fulfilling signs of His coming. These studies have stirred in me the memories of things that took place many years ago. I can think back at least sixty-five years ago, when I saw the first Seventh-day Adventist preacher. He was Elder J. N. Loughborough, one of the pioneers of this movement. I heard him tell the story of how he went out in evangelistic work, how he pitched his tent and preached to the multitudes. As a lad I sat under that man's preaching, and my young heart was stirred by what I heard. I not only heard him preach, but I saw him unroll his charts and from those charts explain the fulfillment of prophecy. It was that teaching that helped to make a Seventh-day Adventist of me. I thank God for the work of those pioneers back in those early days. I thank God today for the blessed hope of Jesus' coming.

Many times I listened to the studies of Elder S. N. Haskell. Many times I heard him preach and give Bible studies on the subject of the sanctuary, its types and its shadows in relation to the work of Jesus, our great High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary. I have heard that same kind of preaching here in this Bible Conference, the same truth. Thank God, it has not expired by limitation. It is

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

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still present truth for this movement. Brethren, I want to emphasize that these things are still landmarks in the Seventh-day Adventist message that is being borne to the world today.

More than half a century ago I listened to many of our leaders preach on the gift of the Spirit of prophecy in the remnant church. During this conference I have heard these themes reiterated, re-emphasized. How glad I am for this great gift that God in His grace and mercy has planted in the remnant church. Many times I had the privilege of hearing Ellen G. White preach, and I have seen the power of God rest upon her in mighty measure, as right in the midst of a Sabbath sermon she stopped and delivered some message that God had given to her on some particular question or issue. We all have reason today to thank God for the gift of prophecy in the remnant church. And I commend it to your faith and confidence. There is no reason why you should allow your faith to wane. Do not allow anyone to rob you of the blessings of this gift, or allow the detractors to undermine the foundations of your faith.

In the few minutes I have this morning I cannot mention all of the precious themes of truth that have been studied in this conference. But I thank God that the foundations of this message stand firm and unshaken on the eternal Word of God. How the fathers of this message would have rejoiced if they too could have been here, and could have heard their successors in this movement emphasizing the great outstanding truths that have made this movement what it has been and is today.

I was invited to take part in the one hundredth anniversary of our Washington, New Hampshire, church. You are all familiar, I am sure, with the fact that this is our first Seventh-day Adventist church. I need not go into its history. In that anniversary service we called attention to what God had done for His people and for this movement during the existence of that church. I think it is a good thing sometimes for us to review the leadership of God in this

movement during these years. We ought to go over some of the ground that has been passed over during the century, to re-establish and to reaffirm our faith. I don't know of any better way to emphasize God's leadership than to call your attention again to those words I read in the beginning, "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days."

The next day after that anniversary service several car-loads of brethren and sisters started out to visit some of the places that had a prominent part in the work in those early days. We drove across from New Hampshire to Low Hampton in New York. We visited the home of William Miller, and saw his church and other places connected with his work. We drove up a little country lane to the cemetery where William Miller is buried. The driver of the first car had left his radio turned on. As we got out of the cars there burst out onto the air the theme song of the Voice of prophecy, "Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring: Jesus is coming again!" We walked over to William Miller's grave as the air gave forth the words, "Cheer up, ye pilgrims, be joyful and sing; Jesus is coming again!" Yes, we stood there that day by that grave and counted ourselves among the pilgrims. It did cheer us up and cause us to thank God as the Voice of Prophecy program came on the air proclaiming the great truth of the coming of the Lord.

You can well imagine the tremendous impression made on our minds by that most singular and impressive incident. There in the grave at which we stood lay the body of the man who more than a hundred years before had started a movement that had resulted in laying the foundations of the Advent message now being given to the world. Of the hundreds of men in both the Old and the New World who joined in the proclamation of the coming of the Lord in those early days, he was the only one whose work finally resulted in the definite organization of the great Advent movement. Imagine if you can how we felt, standing by that grave that day, as we heard the strains of that song, "Lift up the trumpet, and

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loud let it ring: Jesus is coming again!" What would that man have thought, what would have been his emotions, if only he could have realized that after the lapse of that time there was being heralded out to the world to tens of millions of people the message through the air, and by the voice of living preachers, that Jesus is coming again! Shall we still that voice? Shall we cease that work? Shall we rest satisfied with what we have done up to this time? I say, No, brethren. We must press on to greater accomplishments in the heralding of this blessed message of Jesus' coming.

O let me say today to the watchmen on the walls of Zion, Lift up your voices and proclaim your tidings. Do not become fainthearted in the great work of proclaiming the coming of our blessed Lord. Never from the time of creation to the present hour have we seen so many prophecies being fulfilled or so many signs coming to pass as we see at the present time. If the pioneers had had all the evidences that we have today, how their voices would have been lifted up, perhaps even more strongly and more urgently than they lifted up their voices in their day. In our day we see the things that are nigh at hand. Listen to these words from the writings of the Lord's messenger:

"Prophecy is fast fulfilling. More, much more, should be said about these tremendously important subjects. The day is at hand when the destiny of every soul will be fixed forever. This day of the Lord hastens on apace. The false watchmen are raising the cry, 'All is well;' but the day of God is rapidly approaching. Its footsteps are so muffled that it does not arouse the world from the death-like slumber into which it has fallen. While the watchmen cry, 'Peace and safety,' 'sudden destruction' cometh upon them. . . . People are now settling to rest, imagining themselves secure under the popular churches; but let all beware, lest there is a place left open for the enemy to gain an entrance. Great pains should be taken to keep this subject before the people."<sup>7</sup>

Note the following sentence:

"The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies on Education*, pp. 107, 108.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

I believe the time has come when we ought to add to our preaching on the coming of Christ another phase, that is, His sudden and unexpected coming. And that is what the messenger of the Lord emphasizes here.

“The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised. Let no one’s interpretation of prophecy rob you of the conviction of the knowledge of events which show that this great event is near at hand.”<sup>9</sup>

No wonder Jesus Himself said, “Therefore be ye also ready.” And why? What is the rest of the text? Do you recall it? “For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matt. 24:44. I sometimes wonder whether we put off too far into the future the coming of the Lord by our own interpretations of prophecy. The servant of the Lord says that we are to let no one’s interpretation rob us of the conviction that His coming is near at hand. Christ says, “Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.” Mark 13:36. We need not only the proclamation of the Advent truth but also the Advent experience. We need to be ready. We need to be living in this world as those who look for their Lord to come.

We must not accept this truth of the Lord’s coming as a mere article of belief. We must not be Adventists in name only, but in heart experience. In our daily living we must live in constant expectation of that great event.

This is a new day. It is a new time for all of us. The demands of this day are more urgent, the calls are more insistent. Last evening Elder Branson read you a statement from *Gospel Workers*: “Our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths.”<sup>10</sup> There is only one thing that will prepare us for the coming of the Lord, and that has been brought out very clearly in the studies of the last few evenings. I wish you all might have been here last night. After Elder

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (1915 ed.), p. 301.

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Branson had presented this great theme of the righteousness of Christ, he made a call to all those who by responding would say to the Lord that they would accept by faith His righteousness. And I was greatly encouraged and cheered as I saw the whole congregation rise and press to the front, expressing that faith. It is the only thing that God has provided whereby we may be made ready for the coming of our blessed Lord.

I rejoice in what I see. I rejoice in this forward movement on the part of the people of God. Brethren, the time has come when we must learn to know Jesus in all His fullness. The time has come when we must lay aside every weight that hinders us, and press forward with eagerness, with great earnestness, for the day of God is drawing on apace, and soon Jesus, our blessed Lord, whom we've preached, whom we love, will appear. And oh, to be ready for Him in that great day ought to be the desire of every heart. There may be those here today who were not present last night, who had no opportunity of pressing into the precious experience that I know came to hundreds of hearts last night. You feel that somehow you ought to join hand and heart to those who are seeking for this blessed experience of preparation for the coming of Jesus, who ought to be moving forward into that kind of experience. God is waiting through Jesus our Saviour to bestow the gift of righteousness upon every believing heart, waiting to forgive our sins if we will but confess them, waiting to wipe them out and cast them behind His back, and lead us on to experiences of power and victory.

I think of those words given to us by the messenger of the Lord: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs."<sup>11</sup> Then is brought to view a further thought that has been emphasized repeatedly in this conference:

"We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of His Spirit; for this is the only efficient agent in the promulgation of sacred truth. It is the Spirit of God [I want you to notice this, please] that

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, (1892 ed.), p. 370.

quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul to appreciate heavenly things, and attracts the affections toward God and the truth.”<sup>12</sup>

That leads me to say, brethren and sisters, that another one of our great outstanding needs today is that we spend more time in praying for the outpouring of that holy unction, the Spirit of God, that we may be prepared, that our hearts may be weaned from earthly things, and that we may know what it means to have a deep soul appreciation of heavenly things.

Are there those here today who have in their hearts a longing to have this blessed and precious experience? You have traveled along in ways of the world, perhaps, and you are dissatisfied with your past experience. I believe, brethren and sisters, that we have come to a milestone in the history of this movement. From now on we must turn our faces toward Zion as never before, and we must press on.

I would like the privilege of standing with you in seeking again for such a precious experience, praying that God will take out of my life everything that would hinder me in the preparation that I need to meet my blessed Lord when He comes. May we be among those who shall with lights trimmed and burning go forth to meet the Bridegroom when He comes.

Are there any here today who would like to join again, or who have not yet had the privilege of joining, in praying that God will grant you this experience? We are going to close this service with a prayer of consecration. We want the Lord to come near to us by His blessed Spirit, and impress our hearts again with the great importance of the things that matter most at this time. Let us learn, brethren and sisters, to put first things first in our lives and in our experience. If there is anyone here this morning who desires to join with me again in seeking God for that kind of experience, will you indicate it by standing?

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

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## Looking Back at the Bible Conference



## Bible Conference Closes on Revival Note

BY D. A. DELAFIELD \*

The second and last week of the never-to-be-forgotten Bible Conference was as full of spiritual power as the first. Thirteen days (Monday, September 1 to Sabbath, September 13) of intensive Bible study and prayer, deep heart searching and confession of sin, has a cumulative effect upon the minds and consciences of men, and particularly upon their lives and experience. Like the great moving sweeps of an oratorio rising to the majestic crescendo at the close, the impressions made by the Spirit of God reached their climax in the last full and busy days of the conference.

The General Conference Committee did not anticipate that the Bible Conference should simply reaffirm our faith in the great truths of the third angel's message. They also encouraged, and looked forward to, a great spiritual revival at the meetings that would reach out through the 450 delegates to our churches in all the world. The greater, more compelling result of sanctification of life through the truth was realized to a highly gratifying extent by the meetings.

The 1952 Bible Conference, which was held in the Sligo church in Takoma Park, will be remembered as one of the truly historic gatherings of Adventist Church leaders in more than a century of activity. But its chief good is not in the past. The conference looked to the future, the immediate future, when the delegates will take up the tools of inquiry and dig deeper into the mine of Bible truth.

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\* Elder Delafield's report in the *Review* of the last week of the Bible Conference.

The devotional meetings of the conference gave great emphasis to the importance of personal study into Scripture themes. These were truly seasons of pentecostal refreshing. There were no tongues of visible flame resting upon the heads of the delegates and the speakers, but it was clear to all whose hearts were opened to the Spirit's influence that God had met with us.

In the devotional study on Monday morning, September 8, H. M. S. Richards, Voice of Prophecy speaker, urged that we set apart certain times each year to feast upon the Bible in "massive doses," then take it as a steady diet every day. He held the Book of power in his hand and invited the preachers and the teachers of the Advent movement to become better acquainted with this Book.

Pioneer workers present at this devotional meeting doubtless recalled the time when Mrs. White made one of her last appearances before our people at the General Conference of 1909. Holding the Bible in her hand before the ministers assembled, she said with quiet dignity and true conviction, "Brethren, I commend unto you this Book."

The delegates were conscious, as they listened to the different papers presented—not read, but presented more or less as sermons are given—that the men chosen to present these topics knew what they were talking about.

L. E. Froom, field secretary of the General Conference and author of the monumental volumes *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, sketched for us the absorbing picture of the temple of truth God has been building through the ages, with the Advent message firmly settled on the top as the gleaming tower of the superstructure. Our message is built upon the foundations of many generations, and our spiritual ancestors may be numbered among Jews and Christians of various persuasions who have caught glimpses of God's truth. Our prophetic faith is confirmed by historical evidences. Adventists proclaim a gospel that is everlasting by its very nature. The third angel's message did not originate in the minds of extremists, but in the mind of God. It is our business

to know this message. Elder Froom climaxed his series of four lectures by quoting these words from Mrs. White:

“Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice, but a change will come. . . . The Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring the commandment-keeping people of God to notice. . . . Every position of our faith will be searched into, and if we are not thorough Bible students, established, strengthened, settled, the wisdom of the world’s great men will be too much for us.”<sup>1</sup>

As we listened to the various speakers through seven full meetings each day, our heads rapidly filled with facts and our hearts began to overflow with a love for the truth, which had been so clearly reaffirmed before us. We all felt that we should know the message better if we are to meet acceptably the challenge of these times.

#### **Adequate Reasons for Our Faith**

One of our older workers remarked, referring to a statement by Eugene Farnsworth, “When I was young in my ministry, I could tell all I knew about a subject in an hour’s lecture. Now I have come to the place where I feel a man should know ten times as much about his subject as he can present in an hour.” As we record our impressions of the lectures, we feel that the different speakers knew twenty or thirty times more about the subjects they offered to us than they had covered in the time allotted. This is an age when we must be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us with meekness and fear.

In between meetings were intermissions of ten to fifteen minutes, when the workers gathered together in small friendly groups and discussed the conference or rehearsed briefly the message presented by the speaker of the past session. There were differences of opinion expressed on small points, but in none of these small groups could we hear any word of doubt concerning the great fundamentals of the Advent message. And these men had come from many distant places around

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<sup>1</sup> E. G. White letter 65, 1886.

the circle of the world. Representatives of the world divisions were present, and ministers from the ten unions of North America. We walked across Flower Avenue to the new parking lot on the Washington Missionary College campus, and as we glanced at the license plates, we noted twenty-one different States of the United States and several provinces of Canada represented. Doubtless there were many more.

The delegates were well cared for as far as personal needs were concerned. Three cafeterias supplied warm, refreshing meals three times a day, but many of the delegates were so filled with spiritual food that they felt very much like Jesus at the well of Samaria when He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Rooming houses in the Takoma Park area were packed with these delegates and their families. Good weather prevailed for most of the days of the conference, and the sun shone down in benediction upon the gathering.

The hunger of the workers for more light and truth was anticipated in the preparation of the large literature display in the foyers of the church. Some of the delegates spent all their money on books. It was a good omen of the desire to get down to original sources and know true facts on the Bible and history and other great themes of truth.

#### **Democratic Spirit Prevails**

A democratic spirit was present at the conference in spite of the absence of general discussion from the floor. The question box periods allowed for free expression, but the speakers who answered the questions humbly recognized their own limitations. They felt as Ellen G. White did when she wrote her preface to *The Desire of Ages*, "I walk with trembling as I present the great truths of the atonement." A spirit of consecrated humility was apparent. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The delegates did not lose interest in the conference at any time. The meetings moved steadily onward and upward. One General Conference vice-president was heard to remark

at the close of the meetings that he had attended all of the eighty-two sessions. An overseas division president said that he had been to eighty meetings, missing only two because of emergencies. The president of a local conference in North America testified publicly that he had attended seventy-eight of the meetings and had enjoyed them all. The glowing smile on his countenance spoke fluently on behalf of his testimony.

How could the brethren do otherwise than enjoy the meetings, which were so filled with spiritual power? If there was need for a diversity in the order of service, there was always music—glorious gospel music at hand to lift our spirits and inspire devotion to God. Charles Keymer and C. H. Lauda prepared most excellent musical offerings. Not only vocal solos and duets and quartets but instrumental music brightened our days. The Faith for Today quartet added much to the services, and everyone was talking about the inspiring organ meditations of Bradford Braley, who played for the conference on the electronic organ especially installed for the occasion.

Every activity moved forward progressively toward a successful conclusion. The very best seemed to be saved until the last. L. K. Dickson's series of studies on "The Holy Spirit and the Latter Rain" and W. H. Branson's stirring messages on "The Lord Our Righteousness" elevated us into the presence of God Himself.

Tracing the work of the Holy Spirit in the human life from the moment when the soul first becomes convicted of sin and onward to the early and latter rain experience, Elder Dickson made clear to all that the work of preparation for heaven and the finishing of God's work on earth can never be accomplished without the conscious presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. But we cannot receive the Spirit unless we earnestly seek for the gift. Particularly solemn were the words from Mrs. White quoted by the speaker:

"In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very,

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very few were admitted into the building. 'Your size as a human being is nothing,' he said. 'But if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and through the eternal ages, you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you.'"<sup>2</sup>

One of the most helpful features in Elder Branson's messages was the direct earnestness with which he spoke. Righteousness by faith is an experience, and no man can talk about it in the power of the Holy Spirit who does not know what it means in his own heart. Two excerpts from these Spirit-filled revival services are typical. "We are not saved by what we do for God. We are saved wholly and completely by what God has done for us." "The law is a standard of righteousness, but it has never been an instrument of righteousness." If we receive righteousness at all, we must receive it by faith from the only source, Jesus Christ.

The services on the second and last Friday afternoon sealed the conference to our everlasting good. The celebration of the ordinance of humility and the Lord's Supper were a high mark of the conference. Then came an inspiring testimony meeting. These services lasted for three hours from two in the afternoon until five. Then the delegates hurried on to their rooms to prepare for the Sabbath—the last glorious day of all.

Friday night Elder Branson spoke. At the conclusion of his revival sermon the workers seemed compelled by the power of God to dedicate themselves to the work of reaffirming the great truths of the Bible to our churches and to the world.

Sabbath morning at eleven o'clock the Sligo church was packed as J. L. McElhany, former General Conference president, offered his impressions of the conference. The attendance in the afternoon and in the evening service was likewise overflowing. When finally the inspiring Voice of Prophecy rally was ended, the workers left the building with the mes-

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<sup>2</sup> *Review and Herald*, April 11, 1899, p. 225.

sages ringing in their ears and welling up in their hearts.

When the brethren finally return to their fields, what will they bring to their churches and to the world? This is the great unanswered question of the conference. The meetings were a great success. Everyone is agreed upon that. But what will the results be? Will our ministers restudy the great truths of inspiration for themselves? Will they urge our people to do the same? What message will come from this conference to our people around the circle of the earth to hasten the preparation for the climactic event of the ages and the finishing of the work? What will the answer be? It depends upon the delegates, who have the responsibility of taking home with them the radiant glory of spiritual revival and power that attended this historic conference.

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## The Bible Conference in Retrospect

BY F. D. NICHOL \*

Now that the great company of the brethren who encamped at Takoma Park for most of September have gone their way, we would take a little time in quietness to evaluate the historic Bible Conference that occupied the first half of that month. What did it accomplish? What did it reveal concerning the doctrines of the movement and the relationship of the Advent ministry to those doctrines? These and other questions come to us from the field. We are glad to give here a forthright and most cheering answer.

First and above all else the Bible Conference revealed in the words of the old hymn,

"We are not divided,  
All one body we,  
One in hope and doctrine,  
One in charity."

We are aware that someone may remark that the speakers were all carefully chosen and their studies written out and previewed by a committee; further, that only written questions were considered in the hours devoted to discussion. That was true. But it was also true that the speakers represented a good cross section of our ministry, as to office, temperament, training, and geography. Nor could it be known in advance what they might say in their papers. Did

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\* A *Review* editorial.

their written studies, when sent in ahead, reveal wide divergence on the primary Advent doctrines? The answer is emphatically, No.

The principal task that confronted the counseling committee that pre-examined the speakers' papers was the elimination of overlapping of subjects. In some instances speakers were requested to enlarge on certain points so as to compass most fully the subject assigned. There were also a few instances, only a few, where the committee suggested to a speaker that he eliminate from his paper an observation on unfulfilled prophecy or a personal view on a point of Scripture not presently clear. We may all rightly have personal views on such matters without in any way affecting our belief in the great doctrines, but obviously those personal views are hardly worthy of time and space in a general meeting on denominational teachings.

#### **No Doubts Revealed**

We repeat, these papers failed to give any suggestion of doubt or uncertainty concerning those teachings that have made us a distinctive people. This is not a point to be passed by hurriedly or casually. In the years that the Advent movement has been growing, the religious world has gradually been abandoning the great truths of revelation. But though, of necessity, we have had to live in this world of theological change and outright apostasy, we continue to preach the same great truths that have marked the movement from its earliest days. No exhibit of differing views on obscure Scriptures or on unfulfilled prophecy on the part of some of us can hide this most impressive fact that we have not changed our theology.

True, the only discussion possible in so large a conference was by written questions, but it is no harder to write a dissenting question than to ask it from the floor. If anything, it is easier. But did the questions sent up for answer at the question hours disclose wide difference of view on the primary truths of the movement? The answer again is emphatically,

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No. The questions largely sought for a clarification of points presented by the speakers.

The Bible Conference has come and gone, and the pillars of the temple are still standing, unmoved and erect. Nor is this strange or unexpected. God laid the foundations of this Advent temple and guided the hands of those who upreared the pillars.

#### **Time Has Not Weakened Message**

The conference revealed to us anew that time has not weakened the significance of our distinctive doctrines. On the contrary, the passing years have only added power and importance to those teachings. Particularly is this true regarding our exposition of the prophecies. This is a most impressive fact and one of the best proofs of the truth of our claim that God gave us a message for a particular time in earth's history. Such a message ought to gain increasing force and timeliness as events move toward the great climax. And thus it is proving true with our teachings.

The conference impressed us anew with the fact that the primary doctrines of this movement are interlocked. They are not isolated, unrelated beliefs, any one of which might be undermined or discarded without damage to the others. On the contrary, the whole structure of truth is affected if even one of them is attacked. For example, to give up the sanctuary truth would be to repudiate our teaching that God raised up a prophetic movement in 1844. To give up the Sabbath truth would be to abandon our beliefs regarding creation and the moral law, and our preaching of the third angel's message, which in turn is tied in to other great prophecies we have preached. To give up the second Advent doctrine would mean giving up our teaching on the literal resurrection, the millennium, and the new earth. Thus we might continue with our illustrations.

To use a new figure of speech: Our prime doctrines are a tapestry, whose beautiful pattern presents a picture of God's plan for saving man out of a sinful world and finally remaking

this world. Each doctrine is a colorful strand necessary to the symmetry and detail of the picture. How vital, then, that we faithfully guard each truth.

#### **Christ the Center of Our Message**

We realized with new force that Christ is the heart and center of all our teachings, and that without Him those teachings have no meaning. We saw Christ riding forth as King of kings as the second Advent truth was presented. We saw Him as our great High Priest as the sanctuary doctrine was set forth. We saw Him as the One through whom all things were created as the doctrines of creation and the Sabbath were discussed. We saw Him as the only Source of our life as the doctrines of the nature of man and the physical resurrection were expounded. In brief, we sensed anew that our doctrines are not so many abstract, theoretical ideas on theology; instead, they all glow with the light from the throne and illumine our steps to the Saviour of men.

#### **Advanced Education for Ministers**

As we listened to different presentations of truth, studiously prepared and documented, we were struck with the fact that many fields of learning make an impact on our doctrines. Geology, biology, physics, history, archaeology, ancient languages, and other fields of learning that might be mentioned, all may contribute something to the proper understanding and exposition of our teachings in this present age. We live in a different world from that of the Advent pioneers a century ago. Today the range of human knowledge has vastly increased and the general level of education of the public has risen sharply. This combination, guided by the naturally rebellious hearts of sinful men, has resulted in much of the apostasy that marks religion today.

Furthermore, the apostate positions in religion seem plausible because they are apparently supported by science and various other findings of learned men. We cannot turn our backs on learning, nor should we wish to do so. Our task

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is to show that the findings of science and other fields of learning, when rightly interpreted, give only added proof of the great truths of revelation.

All this simply means that the Advent ministry in these last days, which are to bring all our teachings under searching scrutiny, must be better trained than ever before. That was the conviction that came upon us as the conference proceeded and we saw ancient history, archaeology, and other special fields of learning employed to enrich our understanding of truth. And as that conviction took hold on us we thanked God for our Theological Seminary, which now opens the way for the young ministerial graduates from our colleges to secure advanced training.

### **The Power of the Message**

The final and greatest result of the Bible Conference was the renewed conviction in all our hearts as to the power that resides in the great truths of the Advent movement. You had to sit in the conference day by day to sense the cumulative effect of the presentation of those truths.

Those of us who were born in the message have not had the thrill of attending an evangelistic effort and for the first time coming under the divine spell of the mighty truths of the message. But we believe we felt something of that same thrill as we listened to the presentation of the whole truth of God presented at the conference. There were no committee meetings to distract, no problems of budgets, no material questions to hold our thoughts to earth. We did something different, something that had not been done for thirty-three years: we saturated our minds and hearts for two full weeks with nothing but the Word of God.

We came from that conference with two thoughts, old yet new, standing out above all others: first, that our major, distinctive doctrines are all important and that by comparison the minor points on which some of us might have liked to consume time seemed insignificant and exceedingly unimportant; second, that we are the bearers to the world of

a message that has saving power for our own lives and for the lives of all who will accept it. We are the bearers to men, not of the dry husks of theological opinions, but of the redeeming grace of Heaven in the setting of a prophetic message increasingly timed for these last days.

We left the conference with two exclamations on our lips: Thank God for the Advent message! Thank God for the Bible Conference that made that message stand out more brightly than ever before!

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