

## FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Seventh-day Adventists hold certain fundamental beliefs, the principal features of which, together with a portion of the scriptural references upon which they are based, may be summarized as follows:

1. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice. 2 Tim. 3:15-17.

2. That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption. Matt. 28:19.

3. That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father. While retaining His divine nature He took upon Himself the nature of the human family, lived on the earth as a man, exemplified in His life as our Example the principles of righteousness, attested His relationship to God by many mighty miracles, died for our sins on the cross, was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for us. John 1:1, 14; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2; 4:14-16; 7:25.

4. That every person in order to obtain salvation must experience the new birth; that this comprises an entire transformation of life and character by the recreative power of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:16; Matt. 18:3; Acts 2:37-39.

5. That baptism is an ordinance of the Christian church and should follow repentance and forgiveness of sins. By its observance faith is shown in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That the proper form of baptism is by immersion. Rom. 6:1-6; Acts 16:30-33.

6. That the will of God as it relates to moral conduct is comprehended in His law of ten commandments; that these are great moral, unchangeable precepts, binding upon all men, in every age. Ex. 20:1-17.

7. That the fourth commandment of this unchangeable law requires the observance of the seventh day Sabbath. This holy institution is at the same time a memorial of creation and a sign of sanctification, a sign of the believer's rest from his own works of sin, and his entrance into the rest of soul which Jesus promises to those who come to Him. Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; 31:12-17; Heb. 4:1-10.

8. That the law of ten commandments points out sin, the penalty of which is death. The law can not save the transgressor from his sin,

nor impart power to keep him from sinning. In infinite love and mercy, God provides a way whereby this may be done. He furnishes a substitute, even Christ the Righteous One, to die in man's stead, making "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. That one is justified, not by obedience to the law, but by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. By accepting Christ, man is reconciled to God, justified by His blood for the sins of the past, and saved from the power of sin by his indwelling life. Thus the gospel becomes "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." This experience is wrought by the divine agency of the Holy Spirit, who convicts of sin and leads to the Sin-Bearer, inducting the believer into the new covenant relationship, where the law of God is written on his heart, and through the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, his life is brought into conformity to the divine precepts. The honor and merit of this wonderful transformation belong wholly to Christ. 1 John 3:4; Rom. 7:7; Rom. 3:20; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 John 2:1, 2; Rom. 5:8-10; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Heb. 8:8-12.

9. That God only hath immortality. Mortal man possesses a nature inherently sinful and dying. Immortality and eternal life come only through the gospel, and are bestowed as the free gift of God at the second advent of Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; 1 Cor. 15:51-55.

10. That the condition of man in death is one of unconsciousness. That all men, good and evil alike, remain in the grave from death to the resurrection. Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 5:28, 29.

11. That there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. The resurrection of the just will take place at the second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the unjust will take place a thousand years later, at the close of the millennium. John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:5-10.

12. That the finally impenitent, including Satan, the author of sin, will, by the fires of the last day, be reduced to a state of non-existence, becoming as though they had not been, thus purging God's universe of sin and sinners. Rom. 6:23; Mal. 4:1-3; Rev. 20:9, 10; Obadiah 16.

13. That no prophetic period is given in the Bible to reach to the second advent, but that the longest one, the 2300 days of Dan. 8:14, terminated in 1844, and brought us to an event called the cleansing of the sanctuary.

14. That the true sanctuary, of which the tabernacle on earth was a type, is the temple of God in Heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8 and onward, and of which the Lord Jesus, as our great high priest, is minister; and that the priestly work of our Lord is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation; that this heavenly sanctuary is the one to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days of Dan. 8:14; its cleansing being, as in the type, a work of judgment, beginning with the entrance of Christ as the high priest upon the judgment phase of His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary foreshadowed in the earthly service of cleansing the sanctuary on the day of atonement. This work of judgment in the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844. Its completion will close human probation.

15. That God, in the time of the judgment and in accordance with His uniform dealing with the human family in warning them of coming events vitally affecting their destiny (Amos 3:6, 7), sends forth a proclamation of the approach of the second advent of Christ; that this work is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; and that their threefold message brings to view a work of reform to prepare a people to meet Him at His coming.

16. That the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, synchronizing with the period of the proclamation of the message of Revelation 14, is a time of investigative judgment, first with reference to the dead, and secondly, with reference to the living. This investigative judgment determines who of the myriads sleeping in the dust of the earth are worthy of a part in the first resurrection, and who of its living multitudes are worthy of translation. 1 Peter 4:17, 18; Dan. 7:9, 10; Rev. 14:6, 7; Luke 20:35.

17. That the followers of Christ should be a godly people, not adopting the unholy maxims nor conforming to the unrighteous ways of the world, not loving its sinful pleasures nor countenancing its follies. That the believer should recognize his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that therefore he should clothe that body in neat, modest, dignified apparel. Further, that in eating and drinking and in his entire course of conduct he should shape his life as becometh a follower of the meek and lowly Master. Thus the believer will be led to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, tobacco, and other narcotics, and the avoidance of every body- and soul-defiling habit and practice. 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 9:25; 10:31; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 John 2:6.

18. That the divine principle of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel is an acknowledgment of God's ownership in our lives, and that we are stewards who must render account to Him of all that He has committed to our possession. Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 23:23; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; 2 Cor. 9:6-15.

19. That God has placed in His church the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. That these gifts operate in harmony with the divine principles of the Bible, and are given for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ. Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 1 Cor. 1:5-7.

20. That the second coming of Christ is the great hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel and plan of salvation. His coming will be literal, personal, and visible. Many important events will be associated with His return, such as the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of the wicked, the purification of the earth, the reward of the righteous, the establishment of His everlasting kingdom. The almost complete fulfillment of various lines of prophecy, particularly those found in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, with existing conditions in the physical, social, industrial, political, and religious worlds, indicates that Christ's coming "is near, even at the doors." The exact time of that event has not been foretold. Believers are exhorted to be ready, for "in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man" will be revealed. Luke 21:25-27; 17:26-30; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; James 5:1-8; Joel 3:9-16; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Dan. 7:27; Matt. 24:36, 44.

21. That the millennial reign of Christ covers the period between the first and the second resurrections, during which time the saints of all ages will live with their blessed Redeemer in Heaven. At the end of the millennium, the Holy City with all the saints will descend to the earth. The wicked, raised in the second resurrection, will go up on the breadth of the earth with Satan at their head to compass the camp of the saints, when fire will come down from God out of Heaven and devour them. In the conflagration which destroys Satan and his host, the earth itself will be regenerated and cleansed from the effects of the curse. Thus the universe of God will be purified from the foul blot of sin. Rev. 20; Zech. 14:1-4; 2 Peter 3:7-10.

22. That God will make all things new. The earth, restored to its pristine beauty, will become forever the abode of the saints of the Lord. The promise to Abraham, that through Christ he and his seed should possess the earth throughout the endless ages of eternity, will be fulfilled. The kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him. Christ, the Lord, will reign supreme and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea will ascribe blessing and honor and glory and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:8-16; Matt. 5:5; Isa. 35; Rev. 21:1-7; Dan. 7:27; Rev. 5:13.

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

## CONSTITUTION

(As revised at the session held in San Francisco, Calif., in 1930)

### Article I—Name

This organization shall be known as the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

### Article II—Object

The object of this Conference is to teach all nations the commandments of God and the everlasting gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

### Article III—Membership

Section 1. The membership of this Conference shall consist of:

(a) Such union conferences and union missions as have been or shall be properly organized and accepted by vote of the General Conference in session:

(b) Such local conferences and properly organized missions not included in any union conference or in any union mission as have been or shall be properly organized and accepted by vote of the General Conference in session.

Sec. 2. The voters of this Conference shall be designated as follows:

(a) Delegates at large.

(b) Regular delegates.

Sec. 3. Delegates at large shall be:

(a) All members of the General Conference Executive Committee, and such members of the division committees as are not members of the General Conference Committee.

(b) Such representatives of missions of the General Conference and of general institutions and departments of work, and such general laborers and field secretaries as shall receive delegate's credentials from the Executive Committee of the General Conference, such credentials to be ratified by the General Conference in session. The number of these delegates thus seated shall not exceed 25 per cent of the total number of delegates in attendance otherwise provided for.

Sec. 4. Regular delegates shall be such persons as are duly accredited by division committees and union conferences.

Sec. 5. Each division shall be entitled to one delegate for each union mission organization within its territory, and one delegate for each one thousand members or fraction thereof within its union mission territories.

Sec. 6. Each union conference shall be entitled to one delegate in addition to its president without regard to numbers, an additional delegate for each local conference in its territory, and an additional delegate for each one thousand or fraction thereof of its membership. In the case of union conferences operating under division committees, these delegates shall be appointed in counsel with the division committees, and shall be seated as part of the division delegation.

### Article IV—Officers and Their Duties

Sec. 1. The regular officers of this Conference shall be a president, vice-presidents, a secretary, associate secretaries, and a treasurer, who shall be elected by the Conference.