

ISRAEL'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE WILDERNESS AMAZINGLY
FORETELLS THE ADVENTIST MOVEMENT

Prophetic
PARALLELS
JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND

ADRIAN WELSH

Prophetic
PARALLELS
JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND

ADRIAN WELSH

Prophetic Parallels - Journey to the Promised Land

Copyright © 2010 by
Adrian Welsh
All rights reserved

Cover design by Adrian Welsh

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version (KJV) unless otherwise stated. All quotations from Ellen White were taken from the Ellen G. White Writings, Comprehensive Research Edition 2008 CD.

This book may be freely copied, so long as it is not sold and is kept in its original form. If you would like your own copy, you can write to:

info@propheticparallels.com

or

Prophetic Parallels
PO Box 602
Maleny, QLD 4552
Australia

Further information can be found at:
www.propheticparallels.com

Dedicated to:

God's amazing grace and patience

&

Linda, my loving and patient wife

Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
1. Chosen of God.....	2
2. Out of Egypt.....	13
3. Go Forward.....	23
4. The Appointed Sign.....	37
5. Has the Lord Led Us?.....	46
6. Organized.....	53
7. Opposition.....	66
8. Rebellion at Kadesh.....	75
9. An Uprising.....	99
10. Rebuked, but Not Forsaken.....	116
11. Thirty-eight Years.....	126
12. Serpents in the Camp.....	142
13. Apostasy at the Jordan.....	181
14. Reformation.....	233
15. The Loud Cry.....	247
16. Mission Impossible.....	264
17. Another Prophet?.....	276
18. Faith Is the Victory.....	296
Epilogue.....	314
Appendix A.....	316
Appendix B.....	327
Appendix C.....	338

Preface

Be very careful what you agree to do. It may take you places you never dreamed of. When I was scheduled to take a Sabbath school lesson on Numbers 25 at the end of 2009, I had no idea I would end up writing a book over three hundred pages. The lesson was entitled “Immorality on the Border.” As I studied the lesson in preparation to teach it, I was amazed at all the parallels that stand out so clearly.

Once the lesson was finished, I then set about writing a study on what I had learned. I had no idea at that stage what this study would turn into. It was my intention to enlarge on what I had learned from Numbers 25. However the thought came to me that it would be worthwhile adding a little of Israel’s history to the beginning of the study. This would take me on a four-month detour where I learned more than I had bargained for. Needless to say, my original plan to prepare a study on Numbers 25 resulted in the writing of this book.

One cannot study Israel’s wilderness wanderings without being exposed to parallels or types. There are so many of them, but what I found more amazing was that most major events in Israel’s history had a chronological parallel in the Advent movement. This means the types or parallels are not only lessons we can learn, but are prophetic.

There are many studies people have prepared dealing with types

that are found in Israel's history, but I am not aware of any that show a clear parallel between Israel's journey to the Promised Land and that of the Seventh-day Adventist church on a chronological basis.

Parallels or types, as they are more commonly known, are prolific throughout the Bible. A type is a shadow that points to the real substance or antitype. Some of the most obvious and well known types are Enoch and Elijah, who were a type of those who will be translated when Jesus returns, Moses—a type of those who will be resurrected, Noah—a type of those who will proclaim the last message before probation closes. Perhaps one of the greatest examples of a type in the Bible is the sanctuary and its services. Its object was to point God's people forward to the great plan of salvation. Every aspect of the sanctuary tells a story of Jesus our Saviour.

The apostle Paul referred to a number of types and their antitypes in his writings. In Hebrews 8:5, he used the Greek word *tupos* to show that the earthly sanctuary and its services were a “pattern” or “type” of the heavenly. *Tupos* is the word we derive our English word “type” from. In Romans 5:14, he used the same Greek word which was translated as “figure” to show that Adam was a type of Christ.

On another occasion, Paul wrote of Israel's journey through the wilderness and said it was a type. “Now all these things happened unto them for *ensamples*: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”¹ The word “ensamples” in this verse can also be translated as “types,” as is shown in the margin. It too is derived from the same Greek word *tupos*. According to Paul, the history of Israel's wilderness wanderings are a type and serve as a lesson for those particularly who live in a time when the “ends of the world are come.” This same truth is repeated in the Spirit of Prophecy. “The Bible has accumulated and bound up together its treasures for *this last generation*. All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, and are, *repeating themselves in the church in these last days*.”²

When we study types, it is important to realize that types and

¹ 1 Corinthians 10:11

² Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 339

their antitypes are not identical, they are only similar. An example of this is the lamb that was slain in the sanctuary service. The lamb pointed forward to Jesus, but the type and antitype were obviously not the same. When we study the types of Israel's wilderness wanderings and their antitypes, we will also find that not all points are identical. However, the similarities are very striking. In fact, the messenger of the Lord wrote, "The history of ancient Israel is a *striking illustration* of the past experience of the Adventist body."³

The history of Israel's wilderness wanderings is filled with glorious highs and appalling lows. As they marched out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, you can just imagine the exhilarating joy and amazement they must have felt. Who could stand in their way with a God that could perform such mighty miracles? Yet there were other times in their history that leave you wondering how they could have ever done that. However hard those passages are to read, particularly as we realize they are a prophetic parallel to the Advent movement, we can be sure that there are important lessons for us to learn. Ellen White wrote, "The murmurings of ancient Israel and their rebellious discontent, as well as the mighty miracles wrought in their favor and the punishment of their idolatry and ingratitude, are recorded for our benefit. The example of ancient Israel is given as a warning to the people of God, that they may avoid unbelief and escape His wrath."⁴

As we study Israel's wilderness wanderings with their ups and downs, one thing we will learn, is that God has a last day movement that He has been leading for over one hundred and sixty-six years. That movement started out as a loosely knit group of believers, known as Adventists, but later became known as the Seventh-day Adventist church. To this Church God has entrusted a most precious message. When that message is accepted and when it has its effect on the people of God, then we, like ancient Israel, will be able to enter the heavenly Canaan.

It is my deepest desire that as you read this book, you will catch a greater glimpse of Jesus and His righteousness.

³ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 457

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Conflict and Courage*, p. 8

“For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. 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.--Manuscript 4, 1883.”

Evangelism, p. 696

Chapter 1

Chosen of God

“And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.”

—Exodus 2:10

The predicted time drew near for the children of Israel to be set free from their captivity. It had been prophesied that they “shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.”⁵ Aware of this time prophecy, Satan used Pharaoh to destroy all the male children. “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. Failing to accomplish their purpose, they proceeded to more cruel measures. 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.* He knew that a *deliverer was to be raised up among the Israelites*; and by leading the king to destroy their children he *hoped to defeat the divine purpose.*”⁶

⁵ Genesis 15:13

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Daughters of God*, p. 31

From the very beginning of this world's history, Satan has tried to thwart the purposes of God. However, each time he tried, God's purpose was fulfilled and He overruled the situation. This was the case with Moses. Like the events at Christ's birth, Moses' life was in danger from the very beginning. Satan had hoped to destroy the coming leader that would one day deliver Israel from the hands of their oppressors.

Eighty years before God delivered His people, Jochebed, an Israelite woman, bore a son who became known as Moses. "Believing that the time of Israel's release was drawing near, and that God would raise up a deliverer for His people, [they] determined that their little one should not be sacrificed."⁷ Knowing that the prophecy given to Abraham was drawing to an end and would soon be fulfilled, it was their hope that Moses would be the one who would lead Israel out of Egypt.

In an attempt to save her child, Jochebed "...took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink."⁸ "The mother's earnest prayers had committed her child to the care of God; and *angels, unseen, hovered above his lowly resting place. Angels directed Pharaoh's daughter thither.*"⁹ Thus Satan's plan to destroy the coming deliverer was ruined and Moses was adopted by the Egyptian princess and protected by the very people who had tried to destroy his life.

From the time of his birth Moses was chosen to accomplish a great work for God.¹⁰ He "was a man of intelligence, and God in His providence placed him where he could acquire knowledge and fitness for a great work."¹¹ At the age of twelve he was handed over to Pharaoh's daughter and became her son. There he spent the next twenty-eight years of his life in the court of Pharaoh where he "received the highest civil and military training"¹² one could receive. It was the purpose of Pharaoh to "make his adopted grandson his successor on the throne, and the youth was educated

⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 242

⁸ Exodus 2:3

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 243

¹⁰ See Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p.168; Ellen G. White, *Peter's Counsel to Parents*, p. 41

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 100.3

¹² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 245

for his high station.”¹³

As the promised time drew nearer and Moses had reached the age of forty,¹⁴ Satan again tried to destroy his life through the same agency he had used at his birth. Angels had been sent to instruct Moses that God had chosen him to break the bondage of His people.¹⁵ Moses “thought that his education in the wisdom of Egypt had fully qualified him to lead Israel from bondage... He felt that he was fully able to deliver Israel.”¹⁶ However, little did he realize that he still needed to learn and unlearn many lessons before he could lead his people out of Egypt. “Moses set about his work by trying to obtain the favor of his people by redressing their wrongs. He killed an Egyptian who was ill-treating an Israelite. In this he manifested the spirit of him who was a murderer from the beginning, and proved himself unfit to represent the God of mercy, love, and tenderness. *He made a miserable failure of his first attempt.* Like many another, he immediately *lost confidence in God and turned his back on his appointed work.* He fled from the wrath of Pharaoh. He concluded that because of his mistake, his sin in taking the life of the Egyptian, *God would not permit him to have any part in the work of delivering His people from their cruel bondage.* But the Lord permitted him to make this mistake in order that He might be able to teach him the gentleness, goodness, longsuffering, that is necessary for every worker for the Lord to possess.”¹⁷

Even great men like Moses sometimes make mistakes and need to learn in the school of Christ. Satan was unsuccessful in his two attempts to take Moses’ life—one at his birth and again after the murder of the Egyptian. Having failed, Satan was bent on destroying Moses’ confidence in God and the purpose God had for him. However, in causing him to flee to Midian, Moses learned the qualities needed to lead his people out of Egypt, not by his own strength and wisdom, but by relying upon the mighty hand of God. Again God overruled Satan’s plans for His own purpose.

Moses spent the next forty years of his life tending sheep in the

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Acts 7:23

¹⁵ See Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 245

¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, July 12, 1905 par. 2

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 3

wilderness. During these long years in a desolate land, he learned to trust in God. “Heavenly angels shed their light around him” and “under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis.”¹⁸

Finally, in God’s timing, He called to Moses from the burning bush and appointed him his mission. Forty years prior, Moses was eager to deliver Israel from Egypt. Now after watching sheep for so long in the wilderness, “The divine command given to Moses found him *self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid*. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece for God to Israel.”¹⁹

Moses was fitted to lead Israel out of Egypt only when he relied fully upon the hand of God. “...having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord.”²⁰ His mission was not an easy or safe one. It was the “greatest work ever given to man.”²¹ “In his mission to Pharaoh, Moses was to be placed in a position of great peril; his life could be preserved only through the protection of holy angels.”²²

After the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and many years of wandering in the wilderness, Moses was finally overcome by Satan and sinned against God. Because of his sin, Moses was told “Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”²³ Consequently Moses never had the opportunity to lead Israel into the Promised Land. However, he was permitted to see the land from the borders and this was as far as he could go.

The deliverance of God’s people from Egypt began with the raising up of a great leader toward the end of a lengthy time prophecy. Sadly, this leader never made it to the Promised Land.

MILLER

Just as God had predicted the exodus with a lengthy time prophecy, so the great 1844 movement was predicted with a time

¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 251

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 255

²³ Numbers 20:12

prophecy. “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”²⁴ This was the clarion call of Miller and later those who supported him.

There are many striking similarities between Moses and William Miller. Both were used of God to lead a great movement. Moses led the nation of Israel, while Miller led the Advent people which later became the Seventh-day Adventist church. The former was God’s first Church while the latter would become His last or remnant Church.

William Miller was born on February 15, 1782, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He was sixty-seven years old when he died, just five years after the passing of 1844, on December 20, 1849. His mother was a Baptist and is said to have been a “deeply religious person.”²⁵ Like Moses, who had been taught by his mother to cherish the God of their fathers, so Miller in his childhood was “subject to religious impressions”²⁶ from his mother.

Although Miller was largely self-educated, “marks of more than ordinary intellectual strength and activity were manifested.”²⁷ “He had a sound physical constitution, and even in childhood gave evidence of *more than ordinary intellectual strength*. As he grew older, this became more marked. His mind was active and well developed, and he had a keen thirst for knowledge. Though he did not enjoy the advantages of a collegiate education, his love of study and a habit of careful thought and close criticism rendered him a man of sound judgment and comprehensive views. He possessed an irreproachable moral character and an enviable reputation, being generally esteemed for integrity, thrift, and benevolence.”²⁸

Moses was a man of keen intellect which enabled him to lead God’s people. Miller was blessed in a similar manner. “The facts connected with the early life of Mr. Miller, and the incidents in his personal history, now spread before the readers of this work, will

²⁴ Daniel 8:14

²⁵ www.whiteestate.org/pathways/wmiller.asp. Retrieved January 10, 2010

²⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 317

²⁷ James White, *Sketches of the Christian life and public labors of William Miller*, Chapter 1, www.earlysda.com/miller/william-miller-biography.html. Retrieved January 10, 2010

²⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 317

enable them to see, in the boy, a *type of the future man*.”²⁹

At an early age, Miller, being “an upright, honest-hearted farmer” was “led to doubt the divine authority of the Scriptures,” yet he “sincerely desired to know the truth.”³⁰ You will recall that Moses too “lost confidence in God” when he tried to accomplish God’s will in his own strength.

In 1803 when Miller was twenty-one, he married Lucy Smith and moved to Poultney, Vermont, where he became a farmer. It wasn’t long before he became associated with a group of men who were Deists. “By association with these men, Miller was led to adopt their sentiments. The current interpretations of Scripture presented difficulties which seemed to him insurmountable; yet his new belief, while setting aside the Bible, offered nothing better to take its place, and he remained far from satisfied.”³¹ Thus he renounced his Baptist heritage and pronounced himself a Deist.³²

Miller continued to hold these views for about twelve years. “But at the age of thirty-four, the Holy Spirit impressed his heart with a sense of his condition as a sinner. He found in his former belief no assurance of happiness beyond the grave. The future was dark and gloomy.”³³ Eventually, Miller writes, “I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God. They became my delight; and in Jesus I found a friend. The Saviour became to me the chiefest among ten thousand; and the Scriptures, which before were dark and contradictory, now became the lamp to my feet and light to my path. My mind became settled and satisfied. I found the Lord God to be a Rock in the midst of the ocean of life. The Bible now became my chief study, and I can truly say, I searched it with great delight. I found the half was never told me. I wondered why I had not seen its beauty and glory before, and marveled that I could have ever rejected it. I found everything revealed that my heart could desire, and a remedy for every disease of the soul. I lost all taste for other

²⁹ James White, *Sketches of the Christian life and public labors of William Miller*, Chapter 1, www.earlysda.com/miller/william-miller-biography.html. Retrieved January 10, 2010

³⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 317

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 318

³² [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Miller_\(preacher\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Miller_(preacher)), Retrieved January 10, 2010

³³ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 318

reading, and applied my heart to get wisdom from God.”³⁴

It was at this point that “God sent His angel to move upon the heart of a farmer who had not believed the Bible, to lead him to search the prophecies. Angels of God repeatedly visited that chosen one, to guide his mind and open to his understanding prophecies which had ever been dark to God’s people. The commencement of the chain of truth was given to him, and he was led on to search for link after link, until he looked with wonder and admiration upon the Word of God. He saw there a perfect chain of truth. That Word which he had regarded as uninspired now opened before his vision in its beauty and glory. He saw that one portion of Scripture explains another, and when one passage was closed to his understanding, he found in another part of the Word that which explained it. He regarded the sacred Word of God with joy and with the deepest respect and awe.”³⁵

“Endeavoring to lay aside all preconceived opinions, and dispensing with commentaries, he compared scripture with scripture by the aid of the marginal references and the concordance. He pursued his study in a regular and methodical manner; beginning with Genesis, and reading verse by verse, he proceeded no faster than the meaning of the several passages so unfolded as to leave him free from all embarrassment. When he found anything obscure, it was his custom to compare it with every other text which seemed to have any reference to the matter under consideration. Every word was permitted to have its proper bearing upon the subject of the text, and if his view of it harmonized with every collateral passage, it ceased to be a difficulty. Thus whenever he met with a passage hard to be understood he found an explanation in some other portion of the Scriptures. As he studied with earnest prayer for divine enlightenment, that which had before appeared dark to his understanding was made clear.

“With intense interest he studied the books of Daniel and the Revelation, employing the same principles of interpretation as in the other scriptures, and found, to his great joy, that the prophetic symbols could be understood. He saw that the prophecies, so far as they had been fulfilled, had been fulfilled literally; that all the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 319

³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 229

various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, etc., were either explained in their immediate connection, or the terms in which they were expressed were defined in other scriptures, and when thus explained, were to be literally understood.”³⁶

Two years after he had started studying the Bible, Miller, in 1818, was convinced that “in about twenty-five years Christ would appear for the redemption of His people.”³⁷ He discovered that “as he followed down the prophecies, he saw that the inhabitants of the earth were living in the closing scenes of this world's history, yet they knew it not. He looked at the churches and *saw that they were corrupt*; they had taken their *affections from Jesus and placed them on the world*; they were seeking for worldly honor, instead of that honor which cometh from above; grasping for worldly riches, instead of laying up their treasure in heaven. He could see hypocrisy, darkness, and death everywhere.”³⁸

Miller was convinced that he needed to share this light which had been opened to him, but feared that he might be wrong and fearful of misleading others.³⁹ Five years passed, and in 1823 he was fully convinced that what he had discovered was truth. It was then that “the duty of making known to others what he believed to be so clearly taught in the Scriptures, urged itself with new force upon him. ‘When I was about my business,’ he said, ‘it was continually ringing in my ears, ‘Go and tell the world of their danger.’”⁴⁰

Finally “his spirit was stirred within him. God called him to leave his farm, as He called Elisha to leave his oxen and the field of his labor to follow Elijah. With trembling, William Miller began to unfold to the people the mysteries of the kingdom of God, carrying his hearers down through the prophecies to the second advent of Christ. With every effort he gained strength. As John the Baptist heralded the first advent of Jesus and prepared the way for His coming, so William Miller and those who joined with him proclaimed the second advent of the Son of God.”⁴¹

³⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 320

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 329

³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 229

³⁹ See Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 329; See also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Miller_\(preacher\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Miller_(preacher))

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 330

⁴¹ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 229

William Miller “was an interesting speaker, and his exhortations, both to professed Christians and the impenitent, were appropriate and powerful. Sometimes a solemnity so marked as to be painful, pervaded his meetings. A sense of the impending crisis of human events impressed the minds of the listening crowds. Many yielded to the conviction of the Spirit of God. Gray-haired men and aged women with trembling steps sought the anxious seats; those in the strength of maturity, the youth and children, were deeply stirred. Groans and the voice of weeping and of praise to God were mingled at the altar of prayer.”⁴²

Miller’s message was rejected by the majority in the world and sadly in the Church as well. As his message began to spread, opposition arose against him. “William Miller was *disturbing Satan’s kingdom*, and the archenemy sought not only to counteract the effect of the message, but to *destroy the messenger himself*.”⁴³ As Satan tried numerous times to take the life of Moses, so he tried with Miller. As Miller “made a practical application of Scripture truth to the hearts of his hearers, the *rage of professed Christians was kindled against him*, even as the anger of the Jews was excited against Christ and His apostles. Church members stirred up the baser classes, and upon several occasions *enemies plotted to take his life* as he should leave the place of meeting. But *holy angels were in the throng, and one of these, in the form of a man, took the arm of this servant of the Lord and led him to safety from the angry mob*. His work was not yet done, and Satan and his emissaries were disappointed in their purpose.”⁴⁴ “Angels of God accompanied William Miller in his mission. He was firm and undaunted, fearlessly proclaiming the message committed to his trust.”⁴⁵

It was five years after the predicted event that Miller was finally laid to rest on December 20, 1849. After the disappointment, Miller was “distressed for his people”⁴⁶ as he saw many of them losing their love and opposing one another. “As he beheld this, grief wasted his strength. I saw leading men watching him, and fearing lest he should receive the third angel’s message and the commandments of God. And as he would lean toward the light

⁴² Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 23

⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant* (1999), p. 337

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 337

⁴⁵ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 232

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 257

from heaven, these men would lay some plan to draw his mind away. A human influence was exerted to keep him in darkness and to retain his influence among those who opposed the truth. At length William Miller raised his voice against the light from heaven. He failed in not receiving the message which would have fully explained his disappointment and cast a light and glory on the past, which would have revived his exhausted energies, brightened his hope, and led him to glorify God. He leaned to human wisdom instead of divine, but being broken with arduous labor in his Master's cause and by age, he was not as accountable as those who kept him from the truth. They are responsible; the sin rests upon them."⁴⁷

Finally, "God suffered him to fall under the power of Satan, the dominion of death, and hid him in the grave from those who were constantly drawing him from the truth. *Moses erred as he was about to enter the Promised Land.* So also, I saw that *William Miller erred as he was soon to enter the heavenly Canaan,* in suffering his influence to go against the truth. Others led him to this; others must account for it. But angels watch the precious dust of this servant of God, and he will come forth at the sound of the last trump."⁴⁸

Thus, Moses and William Miller share many similarities. Both were used by God to lead His people out of bondage, and both were laid in the grave because of unbelief.

Chapter Summary

The lives of Moses and Miller have many striking similarities.

1. Both were called by God to lead His people—Moses to lead God's first church and Miller to lead God's remnant church.
2. Both were intelligent men.
3. Both at one point lost confidence in God.
4. Both were taught by angels.
5. Both were protected by angels.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 258

6. Both were hesitant to accept their mission.
7. Both had to deal with opposition from the world and professed followers of God.
8. Both never saw the results of their labors as they were laid to rest because of their sins.

Chapter 2

Out of Egypt

“But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.”

—Deuteronomy 4:20

In the previous chapter, we identified many similarities between Moses and William Miller. In this chapter, we will learn that “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.*”⁴⁹

After God had led Abraham out from among his people to wander in a land that one day would belong to his descendants, He made a covenant with him. This covenant contained a time prophecy which predicted that in four hundred years to the exact day,⁵⁰ God would lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. “But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes know no haste and no delay. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that

⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 457

⁵⁰ Exodus 12:41

the *time of their sojourning should be four hundred years*. ‘Afterward,’ He said, ‘shall they come out with great substance.’ Genesis 15:14. Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh’s proud empire battled in vain. On ‘*the self-same day*’ appointed in the divine promise, ‘it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.’ Exodus 12:41.⁵¹

When God called His people out of Egypt, He was calling them out of the “most powerful kingdom then in existence.”⁵² With its art, culture, learning, military and religion, Egypt was unequaled.

Egyptian culture centered around the worship of its many gods and goddesses. Great temples such as Abu Simbel and Karnak at Luxor were built to house and honor them. These temples “formed the backbone of the economy. Not only were they houses of worship, but were also responsible for collecting and storing the nation’s wealth in a system of granaries and treasuries administered by overseers, who redistributed grain and goods.”⁵³

Religion guided every aspect of ancient Egyptian life.⁵⁴ The Egyptian religion was founded on the erroneous idea that man has an immortal soul.⁵⁵ This is why so much time and money were spent on the pyramids, temples and tombs. All of them expressed the “unique Ancient Egyptian idea of death.”⁵⁶ The Egyptians “marked their passage into the hereafter perhaps more so than any other ancient society.”⁵⁷

After spending so many years in Egypt, the children of Israel had gradually become corrupted by the influences around them. “After Joseph’s death the *worship of the Egyptians made such an impression* on their minds that the sight of their eyes and the

⁵¹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 32

⁵² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 263

⁵³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt. Retrieved January 10, 2010

⁵⁴ <http://www.egyptologyonline.com/religion.htm>. Retrieved January 10, 2010

⁵⁵ Only God has immortality. See 1 Timothy 6:16. Mankind needs to eat of the tree of life to live forever. Moses wrote, “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and *live for ever*.” Genesis 3:22. Paul teaches that those who will be saved *seek* immortality (Romans 2:7). If we are *seeking* immortality, it only stands to reason that we do not possess it now. Only when Jesus returns will we be *given* immortality. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this *mortal must put on immortality*.” 1 Corinthians 15:53

⁵⁶ http://www.egyptologyonline.com/the_afterlife.htm. Retrieved January 10, 2010

⁵⁷ *Ibid*.

hearing of their ears were corrupted. *They lost the true knowledge of God.*⁵⁸ “When God called Moses to be his instrument in delivering the Hebrew nation out of cruel bondage, Moses considered the difficulties of the situation, and thought of the obstacles that he would have to encounter in doing this great work. He knew that the people *were in blindness and ignorance*, that their minds had become beclouded in faith, and that they were *almost destitute of a knowledge of God*. They had become degraded by *associating with a nation of idolaters*, and had corrupted their ways by practicing idolatry.”⁵⁹

The majority of God’s people have always tended to be influenced by the society in which they live. Later in the history of Israel, many who went to Babylon or who were born there, did not want to leave when God provided for their release. When we choose to associate with people that have no desire to know God, we are in danger of becoming “destitute of a knowledge of God.” This is why God warned His people not to go back and cleave unto the remnant of those nations which continued to exist after they inherited the Promised Land.⁶⁰ This lesson is just as valid for us today as it was for ancient Israel.

Just as Israel was daily surrounded by the influences of their heathen captors, so too were the Advent believers surrounded by worldliness. They were in danger of losing the true knowledge of God just as ancient Israel had after dwelling in Egypt for so long.

“The churches that refused to receive the first angel’s message, rejected light from Heaven. That message was sent in mercy to arouse them to see their *true condition of worldliness and backsliding*, and to seek a preparation to meet their Lord. God has ever required his people to *remain separate from the world*, that they might not be allured from their allegiance to him. He *delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt* because he would not have them corrupted by the idolatry with which they were there surrounded.”⁶¹ “*It was to separate the church of Christ from the corrupting influence of the world* that the first angel’s message was given. But with the multitude, even of professed Christians, the ties which bound them to earth were stronger than the attractions

⁵⁸ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 13, p. 185

⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 17, 1895, par. 2

⁶⁰ Joshua 23:12-13

⁶¹ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 230

heavenward. They chose to listen to the voice of worldly wisdom, and turned away from the heart-searching message of truth."⁶²

Even though the Israelites had lost the true knowledge of God by associating with Egyptians, God still interposed to bring them out of Egypt. What a wonderful revelation of a loving God who wants to set all of His children free from the bondage of sin. "Christ's favourite theme was the paternal character and abundant love of God. When the world was *destitute of a knowledge of God*, Christ came to impart this inestimable blessing."⁶³

Like the condition of ancient Israel, so the churches of Miller's day were almost destitute of a knowledge of God. At the time, Miller "looked at the churches and *saw that they were corrupt*; they had taken their *affections from Jesus and placed them on the world*; they were seeking for worldly honor, instead of that honor which cometh from above; grasping for worldly riches, instead of laying up their treasure in heaven. He could see hypocrisy, darkness, and death everywhere."⁶⁴

OPPRESSED

Not only were the Israelites influenced by the Egyptians, but they had also become slaves to them. This meant they were no longer a free nation to serve and obey God. They started out in Egypt as free people, but they eventually became oppressed.

Just as ancient Israel was oppressed by those they dwelt with, so too were the Advent people oppressed by the world and particularly their churches, which refused the light that was shining from heaven. "As the churches refused to receive the first angel's message, *they rejected the light* from heaven and fell from *the favor of God*. They trusted to their own strength, and by *opposing the first message* placed themselves where they could not see the light of the second angel's message. But the beloved of God, *who were oppressed*, accepted the message, 'Babylon is fallen,' and left the churches."⁶⁵

In describing her experience during the early 1840's, Ellen White wrote, "It was here that I received my first impressions in regard to the speedy, personal coming of our Lord. Here my

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 231

⁶³ Ellen G. White, *Pamphlets 130*, p. 27

⁶⁴ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 229

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 237

father's family, including myself, were *excluded from the Methodist church for cherishing this blessed hope*. I knew there were none in the congregation who had been active workers in the message of the first and second angels. And yet this city was favored with special light and privileges in the great movement of 1842-4. A large company accepted the faith, and rejoiced in the glad tidings that Jesus was soon coming. Many more would have taken their position with the waiting, watching ones, had not the ministers warned them against attending the Adventist meetings, telling them that it was as *great a sin to listen to these doctrines as to attend a theater*.⁶⁶

REJECTED LIGHT

When Moses first appeared before Pharaoh, the proud king responded "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go."⁶⁷ As a consequence, Egypt suffered the plagues of God until eventually the once proud king demanded Israel leave Egypt.⁶⁸ God had given Pharaoh every opportunity to receive light from heaven, but he refused it. "God spoke to the Egyptian king by the mouth of Moses, giving him the most striking evidences of divine power; *but the monarch stubbornly refused the light* which would have brought him to repentance."⁶⁹

Just as Pharaoh rejected light from heaven, so too did the protestant churches in the 1840's reject the precious message of our Saviour's return. "When the churches *spurned the counsel of God by rejecting the Advent message, the Lord rejected them*. The first angel was followed by a second, proclaiming, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' [Revelation 14:8] This message was understood by Adventists to be an announcement of the *moral fall of the churches* in consequence of their rejection of the first message. The proclamation, 'Babylon is fallen,' was *given in the summer of 1844*, and as the result, about fifty thousand *withdrew from these churches*.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884 par. 11

⁶⁷ Exodus 5:2

⁶⁸ Exodus 12:31

⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 160

⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 232

AT MIDNIGHT

When the time for God's promise to lead His people out of Egypt came, the destroying angel passed over Egypt at midnight and a great cry went up throughout the land. "And it came to pass, *that at midnight* the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up *in the night*, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was *a great cry in Egypt*; for there was not a house where there was not one dead."⁷¹

During that same night, Pharaoh called for Moses and commanded the children of Israel to leave Egypt.⁷² God had already told Moses this would happen and Moses had instructed the people. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely *thrust you out hence altogether*."⁷³

The children of Israel were literally thrust out of Egypt that very night. They were not permitted to wait until the morning. "The Passover was a name given to this ceremony in commemoration of the wonderful event of the Hebrews' leaving Egypt. *The night they left Egypt*, the destroying angel entered every house and slew from the firstborn of the king upon his throne down to the firstborn of the lowest slave."⁷⁴ "With their loins girt, with sandaled feet, and staff in hand, the people of Israel had stood, hushed, awed, yet expectant, awaiting the royal mandate that should bid them go forth. *Before the morning broke, they were on their way*."⁷⁵

Just as a cry went forth at midnight during the time of the Exodus, so too a midnight cry sounded in 1844, not by those who had rejected God's warnings, but this time by those favored by God. Furthermore, just as the midnight cry in Egypt led to Israel's freedom from that mighty empire, so too were the Advent people made free from Babylon the great.

⁷¹ Exodus 12:29-30

⁷² Exodus 12:31

⁷³ Exodus 11:1

⁷⁴ Ellen G. White, *Lift Him Up*, p. 31

⁷⁵ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 281

“In every part of the land, light was given upon the second angel’s message, and the cry melted the hearts of thousands. It went from city to city, and from village to village, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. In many churches the message was not permitted to be given, and a large company who had the living testimony *left these fallen churches. A mighty work was accomplished by the midnight cry.* The message was heart-searching, leading the believers to seek a living experience for themselves. They knew that they could not lean upon one another.”⁷⁶

In further describing the event, Ellen White writes, “Our hopes now centered on the coming of the Lord in 1844. This was also the time for the message of the *second angel*, who, flying through the midst of heaven, cried, ‘*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city.*’ Revelation 14:8. That message was first proclaimed by the servants of God in the summer of 1844. As a result, *many left the fallen churches. In connection with this message the ‘midnight cry’* [See Matthew 25:1-13.] *was given: ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him.’*”⁷⁷ Again, in the book *Early Writings*, Mrs. White describes the events of that trying time. “Very many raised their voices to cry, ‘*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!*’ and *left their brethren* who did not love the appearing of Jesus, and who would not suffer them to dwell upon His second coming. I saw Jesus turn His face from those who rejected and despised His coming, and then He bade angels *lead His people out from among the unclean*, lest they should be defiled. Those who were obedient to the message stood out *free* and united. A holy light shone upon them. They renounced the world, sacrificed their earthly interests, gave up their earthly treasures, and directed their anxious gaze to heaven, expecting to see their loved Deliverer. A holy light beamed upon their countenances, telling of the peace and joy which reigned within. Jesus bade His angels go and strengthen them, *for the hour of their trial drew on.*”⁷⁸

God had never worked so many miracles as when He led ancient Israel out of Egypt. Likewise, there has never been a time in the Christian era where so many people were stirred to repentance from so many different denominations as was seen in

⁷⁶ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 238

⁷⁷ Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 50

⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 249

1844. "During the early days of the advent movement, prior to the passing of the time in 1844, the first and second angels' messages were proclaimed with power throughout the Eastern States. Many cities were deeply stirred. Men in positions of responsibility,--ministers, educators, and those connected with the courts,--came out to hear, and listened attentively to the truths presented. Many who came to scoff returned home to pray. At times, appointments were made for meetings to be held in churches and halls in various parts of a city, in order that as many as possible might hear. A knowledge of these appointments extended to the communities round about, and in some instances many came long distances to attend the meetings. Wonderful reformations were wrought, and the glory of God was revealed."⁷⁹

THE SABBATH

It was because God's chosen people had become so blind and ignorant in understanding His will that they no longer kept the Seventh-day Sabbath. This is why Pharaoh said to Moses "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens."⁸⁰

The Sabbath has always been a sign of God's true and faithful people. "I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a *sign between me and you*, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God."⁸¹

It should not surprise us to read one of the first things God did when He brought His people out of Egypt, was to teach them the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy. Even before the awe inspiring event at Sinai, God taught His people how to keep the Sabbath through the miracle of the manna. "Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I *may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no*. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare

⁷⁹ Ellen G. White, *North Pacific Union Gleaner*, March 30, 1910 par. 1

⁸⁰ Exodus 5:4,5

⁸¹ Ezekiel 20:19,20. See also Exodus 31:13

that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”⁸² “And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, *To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD*: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people *rested on the seventh day*.”⁸³

“As God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, *that they might keep His Sabbath*, so He calls His people out of Babylon, that they may not worship the beast or his image.”⁸⁴

During the long years of papal rule, God’s Sabbath had been largely lost sight of. Before Jesus could return, He first needed to lead His people out of Babylon as He led Israel out of Egypt. Only then could He teach them His Sabbath. “I saw that these waiting ones were not yet tried as they must be. They were *not free from errors*. And I saw the mercy and goodness of God in sending a warning to the people of the earth, and repeated messages to lead them to a diligent searching of heart, and study of the Scriptures, that they might divest themselves of errors which have been *handed down from the heathen and papists*. Through these messages God has been *bringing out His people* where He can work for them in greater power, and where they can *keep all His commandments*.”⁸⁵

⁸² Exodus 16:4,5

⁸³ Exodus 16:22-30

⁸⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1892 par. 1

⁸⁵ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 249

Chapter Summary

The history of Israel's deliverance was a type of the great Advent awakening of the 1840s. Particularly we notice:

1. Both began at the end of a lengthy time prophecy.
2. Both Israel and the Advent people were surrounded by worldliness and unbelief.
3. Both Israel and the protestant churches in the 1840s were destitute of a knowledge of God.
4. Both movements were led by a messenger chosen of God.
5. Both Egypt and the fallen churches rejected light from heaven.
6. Both the Israelites and the Advent people were oppressed.
7. There was a literal midnight cry that went out in Egypt, while a spiritual midnight cry was sounded in the Advent movement.
8. Part of the reason why God led His people out of Egypt was so that they could keep the Sabbath. Likewise, the Advent people were also led out of the fallen churches (Babylon), in part so that they could learn the truth of the Sabbath and to keep it holy.

Chapter 3

Go Forward

“And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.”

—Exodus 14:10

As the vast company of Israelites left Egypt, you can imagine the hustle and bustle as they followed Moses into the desert. The little children would have asked their parents where they were going, and how long it would take to get there. The parents would have answered them saying they were going to the Promised Land, a land that flowed with milk and honey, and no doubt they believed it would be a relatively short journey. However, “instead of pursuing the direct route to Canaan, which lay through the country of the Philistines, the Lord directed their course southward, toward the shores of the Red Sea.”⁸⁶

Before entering the Promised Land, God first needed to test and prove His people. Because their faith was destitute after being slaves in Egypt for so long, they would not be able to endure the trials needed to enter the Promised Land. “For God said, Lest

⁸⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 282

peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.' Had they attempted to pass through Philistia, their progress would have been opposed; for the Philistines, regarding them as slaves escaping from their masters, would not have hesitated to make war upon them. The Israelites were poorly prepared for an encounter with that powerful and warlike people. They had little knowledge of God and little faith in Him, and they would have become terrified and disheartened. They were unarmed and unaccustomed to war, their spirits were depressed by long bondage, and they were encumbered with women and children, flocks and herds. In leading them by the way of the Red Sea, the Lord revealed Himself as a God of *compassion as well as of judgment*.⁸⁷

God knew what was best for His people even though they "began to wonder whither their course would lead."⁸⁸ The same was true for the Advent people. God knew they were not yet prepared to enter the Promised Land. "I saw that these waiting ones were *not yet tried as they must be*. They were *not free from errors*. And I saw the mercy and goodness of God in sending a warning to the people of the earth, and repeated messages to lead them to a diligent searching of heart, and study of the Scriptures, that they might divest themselves of errors which have been handed down from the heathen and papists. Through these messages God has been *bringing out His people* where He can work for them in greater power, and where they can *keep all His commandments*."⁸⁹ God was revealing himself as a God of *compassion as well as of judgment*. This is important to understand, as we will see later in the chapter.

The Advent people first needed to pass through a time of trial in order to prepare them for a greater trial. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."⁹⁰ The Bible reveals there will be a time when the people of God will not be able to buy and sell and will suffer great persecution⁹¹ and after this will come an even greater time of trouble, such as never was

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 283

⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 249

⁹⁰ 2 Timothy 3:12

⁹¹ Revelation 13:15-17

since there was a nation.⁹²

“God desires His people to *prepare for the soon-coming crisis*. Prepared or unprepared, they must all meet it; and those only who have brought their lives into conformity to the divine standard, will stand firm at that *time of test and trial*. When secular rulers unite with ministers of religion to dictate in matters of conscience, then it will be seen who really fear and serve God. When the *darkness is deepest, the light of a godlike character will shine the brightest*. When every other trust fails, then it will be seen who have an abiding trust in Jehovah. And while the enemies of truth are on every side, watching the Lord's servants for evil, God will watch over them for good. He will be to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”⁹³

As Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness, “the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.”⁹⁴ This pillar of cloud and fire was the angel of God⁹⁵ who was Jesus Himself. “During the journeyings of the children of Israel through the wilderness, *Jesus Christ, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night, led them on their way*, indicating where they should march and where they should pitch their tents.”⁹⁶

The pillar of cloud and pillar of fire served different functions. “The standard of their invisible Leader was ever with them. By day the cloud *directed their journeyings* or spread as a canopy above the host. It served as a *protection from the burning heat*, and by its coolness and moisture afforded grateful *refreshment in the parched, thirsty desert*. By night it became a pillar of fire, *illuminating their encampment* and constantly assuring them of the divine presence.”⁹⁷

A GREAT TEST

As the children of Israel wandered through the desert, following the pillar of cloud, Moses was instructed to “Speak unto

⁹² Daniel 12:1

⁹³ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 431

⁹⁴ Exodus 13:21

⁹⁵ Exodus 14:19

⁹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 14, p. 345

⁹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 282

the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.”⁹⁸

God had a purpose in leading His people to this place. “God in His providence brought the Hebrews into the mountain fastnesses before the sea, that He might manifest His power in their deliverance and signally humble the pride of their oppressors. He might have saved them in any other way, but He chose this method *in order to test their faith and strengthen their trust in Him.*”⁹⁹

While camped before the sea, it wasn’t long before the children of Israel “beheld in the distance the flashing armor and moving chariots betokening the advance guard of a great army. As the force drew nearer, the hosts of Egypt were seen in full pursuit. Terror filled the hearts of Israel. Some cried unto the Lord, but far the greater part hastened to Moses with their complaints: ‘Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? *wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?* Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.’”¹⁰⁰

The majority of those who had come out of Egypt showed their lack of faith by accusing Moses of leading them into the desert to die. Notwithstanding all the miracles they had seen God perform as He plagued the Egyptians, the Israelites were quick to lose sight of God and blame Moses for their predicament. Just as the Exodus from Egypt was a prophetic parallel to the 1840s movement to preach the first and second angels messages, so too was the great test at the Red Sea a prophetic parallel to the great disappointment.

“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 great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea.* Had they still trusted to the guiding hand

⁹⁸ Exodus 14:2

⁹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 290

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 283

that had been with them in their *past experience*, they would have seen 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."¹⁰¹

Most of those who came out of Egypt had wished they had never listened to Moses. In the face of death, their faith was tested and it proved to be worthless. Likewise, many failed the great disappointment test in 1844 and left the Advent believers. "But the time of expectation passed. This was the *first close test* brought to bear upon those who believed and hoped that Jesus would come in the clouds of heaven. The *disappointment of God's waiting people was great*. The scoffers were triumphant, and won the weak and cowardly to their ranks. Some who had *appeared to possess true faith seemed to have been influenced only by fear*, and now their courage returned with the passing of the time, *and they boldly united with the scoffers, declaring that they had never been duped to really believe the doctrine of Miller, who was a mad fanatic*. Others, naturally yielding or vacillating, *quietly deserted the cause*."¹⁰²

GREAT LIGHT

After failing the test, God still wanted to show the Israelites their true condition and to strengthen their trust in Him. "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them."¹⁰³ As the Egyptian army approached those encamped by the sea "the *cloudy column* rose majestically into the heavens, passed over the Israelites, and descended between them and the armies of Egypt. A *wall of darkness interposed between the pursued and their pursuers*. The Egyptians could no longer discern the camp of the Hebrews, and were forced to halt. But as the darkness of night deepened, the wall of cloud became a *great light to the Hebrews*, flooding the entire encampment with the radiance of

¹⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 457

¹⁰² Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, pp. 47-49

¹⁰³ Exodus 14:19

day.”¹⁰⁴

What was a great light to the people of God became great darkness and confusion to their enemies. Notice this light was now behind the Israelite camp. We find a striking parallel to this in the Advent movement. “At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a *bright light set up behind them* at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the *midnight cry. This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble.* If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they *expected to have entered it before.* Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted, ‘Alleluia!’ Others *rashly denied the light behind them* and said that it *was not God that had led them out so far.* The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below.”¹⁰⁵

“There is *great similarity between our history and that of the children of Israel.* God led His people from Egypt into the wilderness, where they could keep His law and obey His voice. The Egyptians, who had no regard for the Lord, were encamped close by them; yet what was to the Israelites a *great flood of light, illuminating the whole camp,* and shedding *brightness upon the path before them,* was to the hosts of Pharaoh a wall of clouds, making blacker the darkness of night.

“So, at this time, there is a people whom God has made the depositaries of His law. To those who obey them, the commandments of God are as a pillar of fire, lighting and leading the way to eternal salvation. But unto those who *disregard them,* they are as the clouds of night.”¹⁰⁶

God wrought a mighty victory for His people that day as they camped by the sea. When the children of Israel saw the cloud

¹⁰⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 284

¹⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 14

¹⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 27

separate them from their enemies “hope returned to the hearts of Israel.”¹⁰⁷ God then said to Moses, “speak unto the children of Israel, that *they go forward*. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.”¹⁰⁸

No one in the camp of Israel could have imagined that God would deliver them the way He did. “The psalmist, describing the passage of the sea by Israel, sang, ‘Thy way was in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps were not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.’ Psalm 77:19, 20, R.V. As Moses stretched out his rod the waters parted, and Israel went into the *midst of the sea*, upon dry ground, while the waters stood like a wall upon each side. The light from God’s pillar of fire shone upon the foam-capped billows, and lighted the road that was cut like a mighty furrow through the waters of the sea, and was lost in the obscurity of the farther shore.”¹⁰⁹

At a time when the Israelites were severely disappointed and had nowhere to go, God instructed His people to go forward. Before them lay an immense sea that only God could provide safe passage through. “When Moses led the Israelites to the waters of the Red Sea, the command of God was, ‘Go forward.’ As the people moved forward in the path that Providence indicated, as they did that which was commanded, the waters of the sea rolled back. They did not see a broad path opening for them by the power of God. They were not lifted up and borne to the other side in the arms of the angels; but as they moved forward, the *power of God was revealed*, and on one side the sea was piled up like a wall of congealed water, leaving a path for their feet to walk upon in the hitherto buried sands of the Red Sea. What lesson should we learn from this?--To go forward, *walking in the light that God permits to shine upon our pathway, and not stopping to question and doubt.*”¹¹⁰

God was trying to teach His people the science of faith. Instead of complaining and murmuring, He desired to have them trust implicitly in His leading. If they had have learned this lesson, they

¹⁰⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 287

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 287

¹¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, January 24, 1885, par. 6

would have been spared much heartache.

Just as the children of Israel walked by faith through the midst of the sea, so the disappointed, but faithful Advent people continued forward, trusting in God. They did not stop to question or doubt. Many who had accepted the stirring message turned back, but a small group of people continued forward. "After the Great Disappointment there were *few who set themselves to seek the Word with all their heart*. But some souls would not settle down in discouragement and *deny that the Lord had led them*. To these the truth was opened point by point, and entwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. . . . Truth was made to shine forth, beautiful in its simplicity, dignified with a power and invested with an assurance unknown before the Disappointment. We could then proclaim the message in unity."¹¹¹

"Every one who seeks to follow the path of duty will at times be assailed by *doubt and unbelief*. The way will sometimes be *so barred by obstacles, apparently insurmountable*, as to dishearten those who will yield to discouragement; but God is saying to such, *Go forward*. Do your duty at any cost to yourselves. The *sea of trouble* which threatens to overwhelm you *will open as you advance*, revealing a safe path for your feet. The trials and difficulties which seem so formidable, which fill your soul with dread, will vanish as you move boldly forward in the path of obedience, humbly trusting in God."¹¹²

THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

Pharaoh and his army pursued the Israelites into the midst of the sea. "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians."¹¹³ So the mighty army that had threatened to oppose God's people was destroyed. "And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them."¹¹⁴

There are many lessons we can learn from this great event, but

¹¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 341

¹¹² Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, November 11, 1880, par. 15

¹¹³ Exodus 14:24

¹¹⁴ Exodus 14:28

probably the most significant for Seventh-day Adventists is its connection with judgment. Earlier we read, "In leading them by the way of the Red Sea, the Lord revealed Himself as a God of *compassion as well as of judgment.*"¹¹⁵ As Pharaoh's army pursued the Israelites through the Red Sea, God intervened and brought judgment upon them. "Then were fulfilled the words which the Lord spake to Moses, 'And against all the gods of Egypt *I will execute judgment. I am the Lord.*' The *judgment of God* was manifested in the utter destruction of the Egyptian host."¹¹⁶

Is it a coincidence that the events leading up to the investigative judgment in 1844 occurred in the same order as the events in the history of Israel? Just as Israel left Egypt and passed through a testing time, followed by a judgment, so the Advent people left the fallen churches and passed through a testing time in 1844 when the judgment began. Some may be inclined to pass this off as a coincidence, but as we are about to see, the Bible provides further conformation that what happened at the Red Sea was a type or parallel of the investigative judgment.

THE JUDGMENT IN THE SANCTUARY

When describing that fateful day at the Red Sea, the psalmist writes, "*Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*"¹¹⁷

God's way is in the sanctuary. Through the sanctuary every aspect of the plan of salvation is revealed in type—including the judgment, which was the culmination of the entire yearly service. How appropriate then that the psalmist would declare that not

¹¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 282

¹¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, April 1, 1880 par. 34

¹¹⁷ Psalms 77:13-20

only is God's way seen in the sanctuary, but it can also be seen in the crossing of the Red Sea. You will remember God revealed Himself as a God of *compassion as well as of judgment*. He redeemed His people through compassion and He destroyed the Egyptians through His judgment. The Red Sea crossing shows us in miniature the way God deals with the righteous and the wicked and points us to the great antitype—the investigative judgment.

The Red Sea crossing was not the first time God used water as a means to demonstrate the judgment. At the time of Noah, the world came under God's judgment when it was destroyed by the Flood. "As God sent His servant to warn the world of the coming Flood, so He sent chosen messengers to make known the nearness of the final judgment. And as Noah's contemporaries laughed to scorn the predictions of the preacher of righteousness, so in Miller's day many, even of the professed people of God, scoffed at the words of warning."¹¹⁸

LIGHTENED THE WORLD

When the psalmist recounted the events of the Red Sea crossing, he mentioned the lightning that *lightened the world*. Light in the Bible is a symbol for the Word of God. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,"¹¹⁹ but it is also a symbol for God's judgment. Isaiah declares, "Therefore is *judgment far from us*, neither doth justice overtake us: *we wait for light*, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness."¹²⁰ "Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my *judgment to rest for a light of the people*."¹²¹ And David writes, "And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and *thy judgment as the noonday*."¹²²

The lightning that *lightens the world* must then be a message from the Word of God that proclaims the judgment to all the world. Is there such a message in the Bible? Yes, there is. The first angel's message gives the announcement of judgment to all the world. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having

¹¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 339

¹¹⁹ Psalm 119:105

¹²⁰ Isaiah 59:9

¹²¹ Isaiah 51:4

¹²² Psalm 37:6

the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to *every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people*, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; *for the hour of his judgment is come*: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”¹²³

As lightning lightened the world during the Red Sea crossing, so the first angel’s message began to be preached in 1844, declaring the judgment in heaven had begun.

THE JUDGMENT IN REVELATION 10

In chapter ten of the book of Revelation we find further conformation that the Red Sea crossing typified the investigative judgment. A complete study of this chapter is beyond the scope of this book, however we will notice a few pertinent points.

John begins by writing, “And I saw another *mighty angel* come down from heaven, *clothed with a cloud*: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as *pillars of fire*.”¹²⁴ Where have we seen these symbols used before?

You will remember that ancient Israel was led by an angel that was covered in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, the very same symbols John saw in his vision. The phrase “pillars of fire” in John’s description is the only time this is used in the Bible, apart from describing the pillar of fire that led Israel through the wilderness. Both fire and clouds are associated with judgment. “*Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.*”¹²⁵ “*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... 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.*”¹²⁶

The primary focus of Revelation 10 is the sweet and then bitter experience of eating the little book. This was fulfilled by those who at first were overjoyed with the thought of Jesus returning in

¹²³ Revelation 14:6-7

¹²⁴ Revelation 10:1

¹²⁵ Psalms 97:2-3

¹²⁶ Daniel 7:10,13

1844, but who would be sorely disappointed when He didn't return. "The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in 1844 was indeed bitter to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord's order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed."¹²⁷ It was after the disappointment that the Advent believers learned that instead of Jesus returning to this earth, the judgment began in heaven.

We saw earlier that lightning flashed forth when the Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea. Just as lightning can be a symbol of judgment, so we can expect thunder, which is associated with lightning, to also represent judgment. You will remember that the psalmist wrote of the Red Sea crossing, "*The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven.*"¹²⁸ In Revelation 10, John not only saw a mighty angel, a cloud and a pillar of fire, but he also heard thunder. In describing the scene, he writes, "And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."¹²⁹

The seven thunders have caused many to wonder why God instructed John not to record what he heard. The reason was because it related to the judgment, and God's people first needed to be tested, just as the Israelites were tested at the Red Sea. "The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the *first and second angels' messages*. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested."¹³⁰

We find further confirmation that thunder can represent judgment in Hannah's song or prayer of praise. "The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall *he thunder upon them*: the LORD shall *judge the ends of the earth*; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."¹³¹

THE SONG OF MOSES

"The subject of the sanctuary was the *key which unlocked the*

¹²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 108

¹²⁸ Psalm 77:18

¹²⁹ Revelation 10:3

¹³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 1, p. 99

¹³¹ 1 Samuel 2:10

mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people."¹³²

After God had taken His people through the Red Sea and destroyed the Egyptians, they sang the song of Moses. Part of that song of victory reveals the sanctuary. "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, *in the Sanctuary*, O Lord, which thy hands have established."¹³³

The song of Moses was sung on the other side of the Red Sea, after Israel had been tested. So too did the Advent people learn the truth about the sanctuary only after they had passed through the disappointment. Before the disappointment they believed, as did everyone else, that the cleansing of the sanctuary symbolized the second coming of Jesus when the earth would be purified by fire. The prophecy of Revelation 10 said the message would be sweet to start with, but eventually it would become bitter. After this bitter experience, John was then told, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."¹³⁴

In the next chapter John was directed to "Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."¹³⁵ It was only when the Advent people had a better understanding of the sanctuary, symbolized by measuring the temple, that they learned the true meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary. This was further confirmed at the end of the chapter where John writes, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."¹³⁶ The ark was situated in the Most Holy place and the curtain to this part of the sanctuary was only opened once a year when the high priest entered in to cleanse the sanctuary.

When those who gain the victory over the mark of the beast

¹³² Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 423

¹³³ Exodus 15:17

¹³⁴ Revelation 10:11

¹³⁵ Revelation 11:1

¹³⁶ Revelation 11:19

finally stand on the sea of glass in heaven, they will “sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; *just and true are thy ways*, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for *thy judgments are made manifest*.”¹³⁷ The song of Moses not only reveals the sanctuary in heaven, but it reveals the purpose of that sanctuary—the judgment of God. The judgment will make known to the entire universe that God is just and true in all His ways.

Chapter Summary

1. Just as God tested ancient Israel, so He tested His people in 1844.
2. The Red Sea crossing was a time of judgment. God’s people were vindicated while Pharaoh and his army were destroyed.
3. God’s way in the Red Sea (judgment) points to His way in the sanctuary.
4. Revelation 10 points to the beginning of the investigative judgment. The bitterness John experienced by eating the book points to the great disappointment because the sanctuary was not correctly understood.
5. There are many similarities between Revelation 10 and the Red Sea crossing. These include an angel, a cloud, a pillar of fire and thunders. All of these point to the judgment.
6. Only after crossing the Red Sea did Israel understand God’s salvation in the sanctuary. John’s message is the same. After eating the book, John was then directed to measure the temple of God.

¹³⁷ Revelation 15:3–4

Chapter 4

The Appointed Sign

“And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.”

—Exodus 16:1

The children of Israel left the banks of the Red Sea with high spirits after witnessing the salvation of God. Exactly one month after leaving Egypt,¹³⁸ they found themselves in the Wilderness of Sin. It was here that their provisions began to dwindle and the people began to fear they would run out of food. Instead of trusting in the One who had delivered them from their enemies, they complained to Moses. “And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this

¹³⁸ Israel kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month (see Exodus 12:1-8). That night, after midnight, which would be the fifteenth day, they left Egypt. It was the fifteenth day of the second month when they came to the Wilderness of Sin, exactly one month (Exodus 16:1).

wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”¹³⁹

Before they had crossed the Red Sea, the children of Israel had accused Moses of bringing them out of Egypt to perish in the wilderness. God revealed His great power and saved His people, but less than one month later they accused Moses again of leading them into the wilderness to perish, this time from hunger. At the Red Sea God was testing His people, to see if they would walk in His ways. Now, with their provisions running low, God was testing them again.

“They had not as yet suffered from hunger; their present wants were supplied, but they feared for the future. They could not understand how these vast multitudes were to subsist in their travels through the wilderness, and in imagination they saw their children famishing. *The Lord permitted difficulties to surround them, and their supply of food to be cut short, that their hearts might turn to Him* who had hitherto been their Deliverer. If in their want they would call upon Him, He would still grant them manifest tokens of His love and care. He had promised that if they would *obey His commandments*, no disease should come upon them, and it was sinful unbelief on their part to anticipate that they or their children might die for hunger.”¹⁴⁰

THE SABBATH TEST

In answer to their lack of faith, God said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may *prove them*, whether they will walk in my law, or no.”¹⁴¹ God would further test His people and this test involved the keeping of His Sabbath. That is why He said, “And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”¹⁴² They were to gather twice as much on the sixth day, because God wanted them to rest on the seventh day. “And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the

¹³⁹ Exodus 16:2-3

¹⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 292

¹⁴¹ Exodus 16:4

¹⁴² Exodus 16:5

holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.”¹⁴³

After creating this world in six days, God rested the seventh day. “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”¹⁴⁴ God intended that as He rested on the seventh day, so mankind would rest on that day and receive the blessing of communing with Him. Jesus reiterated this when He said, “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.”¹⁴⁵ God only blessed the seventh day. Yet most of the Christian world keep the first day, a day God never blessed. As such, they cannot receive the blessing God promised.

God had provided a test for His people. It was designed to teach them to trust in Him who alone can supply all our needs. When the Sabbath day finally arrived, Moses said to the people, “Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.”¹⁴⁶ But there were people in the camp who did not trust in God’s power to provide their next meal, even though He was the one who provided the manna in the first place. “And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?”¹⁴⁷

“During Israel’s long bondage in Egypt, under taskmasters that knew not God, they could not keep the Sabbath; therefore the Lord brought them out where they could remember his holy day.”¹⁴⁸ We notice a very striking parallel between ancient Israel and the way God led His people after the great disappointment. “As God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, *that they might*

¹⁴³ Exodus 16:22-23

¹⁴⁴ Genesis 2:1-3

¹⁴⁵ Mark 2:27

¹⁴⁶ Exodus 16:25-26

¹⁴⁷ Exodus 16:27-28

¹⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884, par. 2

keep His Sabbath, so He calls His people out of Babylon, that they may not worship the beast or his image.”¹⁴⁹

ADVENT MOVEMENT AND THE SABBATH

Before the children of Israel had left Egypt, Moses was already instructing them on the importance of keeping the Sabbath.¹⁵⁰ So it was with the Advent people. Before they had gone through the great disappointment, the light of the Sabbath was beginning to shine. Everett Dick writes, “In those dark days of disappointment in the fall of 1844 and during the months following, Mr. Bates, with the others, sought diligently for light. *Occasionally before the great disappointment*, individuals had brought up the matter of observing the seventh day as the Sabbath. In September, 1844, just *previous to the great disappointment*, there was quite a stir about this matter. At two different times the editor of the *Midnight Cry* took notice of this matter in the following words: ‘Many persons have their minds deeply exercised respecting a supposed obligation to observe the seventh day.’ One week later the editor made this comment: ‘We last week found ourselves brought to this conclusion: There is no particular portion of time which Christians are required by law to set apart as holy time. If this conclusion is incorrect, then we think the seventh day is the only day for the observance of which there is any law.’”¹⁵¹

Although God had begun to reveal the Sabbath truth before the great disappointment, the Advent people did not then understand its importance. There were however a few who were convicted of its significance. Dick writes, “At Washington, New Hampshire, Mrs. Rachel Preston, a Seventh Day Baptist who came to visit in the community, persuaded the members of the Adventist company of the necessity of keeping Sabbath while she joined them in looking for the Second Coming of Christ. This occurred about the time of the great disappointment. Shortly thereafter, two men, J. B. Cook and T. M. Preble, wrote in favor of the Sabbath, calling the attention of the advent believers to the

¹⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1892 par. 1

¹⁵⁰ This is why Pharaoh had complained that the people were resting. See Exodus 5:4-5

¹⁵¹ Everett Dick, *Founders of the Message*, 1938, p. 25 (web edition <http://www.threeangels.com.au/Books/0518.PDF>). Retrieved April 11, 2010.

need of observing the day.”¹⁵² This small group of believers in Washington, New Hampshire, would eventually be responsible for the acceptance of the Sabbath truth among the Advent people.

After the disappointment, Joseph Bates, a recognized leader in the Advent Movement, accepted the Sabbath in 1845. Dick tells us that “In the spring of 1845, Mr. Bates visited the company of Adventists in Washington, New Hampshire, who were keeping the Sabbath. Through their influence and the reading of the article by T. M. Preble, he was led to the observance of the Sabbath. He began to keep the Sabbath in March, 1845, and was thus the first of the outstanding pioneer leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist people to accept the Sabbath.”¹⁵³

According to Everett Dick, Bates was “probably the most interesting character among the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination” and was a “pioneer of the pioneers.”¹⁵⁴ Historian, George Knight, identifies Bates as Adventism’s real founder in his book, “Bates, The Real Founder of Seventh-day Adventism.” In this book, Knight describes Bates as “Adventism’s first theologian and first historian. Integrating those two fields into the flow of prophecy, he had by January 1847 developed what we today think of as great controversy theology. Bates was also Sabbatarian Adventism’s first mission theorist and first missionary, in that latter role not only spreading the message of the Sabbath and the third angel to Canada, northern New England, and the Midwestern region of the United States, but bringing into Sabbatarian Adventism a who’s who of the early movement. His converts included such prominent individuals as James and Ellen White, S. N. Haskell, M. E. Cornell, Annie Smith, R. F. Cottrell, John Byington, George I. Butler (indirectly), and many more.”¹⁵⁵

When Bates first accepted the Sabbath, “he began at once to proclaim this new-found truth, and became the *true father of the Sabbath* among the people who were to become the Seventh-day Adventists. In August, 1846, he published the first Sabbath tract ever put out by Adventists.”¹⁵⁶ Through Bates, God was able to

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20

¹⁵⁵ George R. Knight, *Bates, The Real Founder of Seventh-day Adventism*, Preface, p. x

¹⁵⁶ Everett Dick, *Founders of the Message*, 1938, p. 25 (web edition <http://www.threeangels.com.au/Books/0518.PDF>). Retrieved April 11, 2010

bring to prominence the Sabbath after the disappointment, just as He had taught His people the Sabbath in the wilderness of Sin.

At first the Sabbath was unpopular with many of the Adventist people. Even James and Ellen White did not accept it when it was first shown to them. Ellen White writes, “In the autumn of 1846 we began to observe the Bible Sabbath, and to teach and defend it. My attention was first called to the Sabbath while I was on a visit to New Bedford, Massachusetts, earlier in the same year. I there became acquainted with Elder Joseph Bates, who had early embraced the advent faith, and was an active laborer in the cause. Elder B. was keeping the Sabbath, and urged its importance. *I did not feel its importance*, and thought that Elder B. erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than upon the other nine.”¹⁵⁷

However when Ellen White received her vision of the heavenly sanctuary, where she saw the ark of God, the significance of the Sabbath was then understood. “The temple of God was opened in heaven, and I was shown the ark of God covered with the mercy seat. Two angels stood, one at each end of the ark, with their wings spread over the mercy seat, and their faces turned toward it. My accompanying angel informed me that these represented all the heavenly host looking with reverential awe toward the holy law which had been written by the finger of God. Jesus raised the cover of the ark, and I beheld the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. I was amazed as I saw the fourth commandment in the very center of the ten precepts, with a soft halo of light encircling it. Said the angel: ‘It is the only one of the ten which defines the living God who created the heavens and the earth and all things that are therein. When the foundations of the earth were laid, then was laid the foundation of the Sabbath also.’”¹⁵⁸

Even though Joseph Bates, the Whites, and others had embraced the Sabbath, there was still opposition to it among the Adventist believers. “The light upon the fourth commandment, which was new and unpopular and generally rejected by our Adventist brethren and sisters, we had accepted. If we had trials and difficulties before this, in accepting the message that the Lord

¹⁵⁷ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 75

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

would soon come the second time to our world with power and great glory, we found that accepting new and advanced truth brought us *into positions of still greater difficulty*. It brought down upon us not only the opposition of the Christian world who refused to believe in the Lord's soon coming, but opposition unexpectedly came upon us from those with whom we had been united in the faith and glorious hope of the second advent of our Saviour. In the place of closely investigating the Scriptures as did the noble Bereans to see if these things were so, there were those with whom we had taken sweet counsel together who denounced the third angel's message as heresy."¹⁵⁹

The Sabbath is a testing truth. It will divide those who are faithful to God from those who are only Christians by name. The last great test that will come upon mankind will be over the Sabbath. "Whoever obeys the fourth commandment will find that a separating line is drawn between him and the world. The Sabbath is a test, not a human requirement, but God's test. It is that which will distinguish between those who serve God and those who serve him not; and upon this point will come the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error."¹⁶⁰

Slowly the Sabbath began to be embraced by a group of Advent believers. "When we received the light upon the fourth commandment" says Ellen White, "there were about twenty-five Adventists in Maine who observed the Sabbath; but these were so diverse in sentiment upon other points of doctrine, and so scattered in location, that their influence was very small. There was about the same number, in similar condition, in other parts of New England."¹⁶¹

God was leading His last day remnant church just as He had led ancient Israel. The Bible predicted this would happen as prophesied in the book of Revelation, "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."¹⁶² The book of James tells us that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty

¹⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 4, p. 402

¹⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church*, p. 268

¹⁶¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 77

¹⁶² Revelation 12:17

of all.”¹⁶³ Therefore God’s last day church would keep all ten of the commandments, including the fourth which says, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”¹⁶⁴

“To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given ‘for a perpetual covenant.’ To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God’s government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.”¹⁶⁵

In the last chapter of the Bible, we find God’s last promise to His people. There John writes, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”¹⁶⁶ Only those who keep all of God’s commandments will enter the heavenly Canaan. This is why Jesus could not have come on October 22, 1844. His people were still ignorant of the Sabbath, just as ancient Israel had lost the knowledge of the Sabbath while captives in Egypt.

Chapter Summary

1. In Egypt God reminded His people of the importance of keeping the Sabbath. However, Pharaoh prevented them from keeping it. So too, some Adventists embraced the Sabbath before the great disappointment, but the majority of them failed to see its significance.
2. God led His people out of Egypt so they would be free to keep the Sabbath. Likewise He led the Advent people out of the fallen churches so they too could keep His Sabbath.
3. Joseph Bates, the “real founder of Seventh-day Adventism” embraced the Sabbath early in 1845, not long after the great disappointment. The following year many others joined him in accepting the Sabbath.
4. Just as the Sabbath became a test for the children of Israel, so God tested those who had passed through the great

¹⁶³ James 2:10

¹⁶⁴ Exodus 20:8

¹⁶⁵ Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church*, p. 262

¹⁶⁶ Revelation 22:14

disappointment.

5. The Sabbath is a perpetual covenant between God and His people. Just as God's first organized church kept the Sabbath, so His last day church also keeps the Sabbath.

Chapter 5

Has the Lord Led Us?

“And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.”

—Exodus 17:1

After testing the children of Israel with manna, they were led to a place called Rephidim. In His foreknowledge, God knew there would be no water for the people. Would they trust in His power to provide water like He provided the manna or would the people lose their faith and accuse God’s faithful messenger of leading them into the wilderness to die? Sadly the Bible records, “Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?”¹⁶⁷

Since leaving Egypt, the people had accused Moses of leading

¹⁶⁷ Exodus 17:2-3

them into the wilderness to perish at the hands of the Egyptians before the Red Sea. They had also accused him of leading them into the wilderness to die of starvation. Now they accused him of leading them into the wilderness to die of thirst.

“He who was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud was leading them, and it was by His express command that they were encamped at this place. The General of the armies of heaven knew of the lack of water at Rephidim, and He brought His people hither to test their faith. But how poorly they proved themselves to be a people whom He could trust. Again and again He had manifested Himself to His chosen people. He had slain the first-born of all families of Egypt to accomplish their deliverance, and had brought them out of the land of their captivity with a high hand. He had fed them with angels’ food, and had covenanted to bring them into the Promised Land. But now, when brought into difficulty, they broke into rebellion, distrusted God, and complained that Moses had brought them and their children out of Egypt only that they might die of thirst in the wilderness. By their murmurings and lack of faith they dishonored God and placed themselves where they could not appreciate His mercies.”¹⁶⁸

The children of Israel possessed so little faith that later, Moses “called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, *Is the LORD among us, or not?*”¹⁶⁹ John Gill in his exposition of this verse notes, “as if they should say, if we perish through thirst, the Lord is not among us, nor takes any care of us; nor was it he that brought us out of Egypt, but Moses; nor is he in the pillar of cloud and fire, as is said; but if he works a miracle, and gives us water, for us, our children, and cattle, then it will appear he is among us; and thus they tempted the Lord, though without this they had full proof, by many instances, that he was among them, and even in a very extraordinary manner.”¹⁷⁰ By inquiring *if the LORD was among them or not*, the children of Israel were denying their past experience in the way that God had led them.

¹⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 112

¹⁶⁹ Exodus 17:7

¹⁷⁰ *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, Exodus 17:7

DAYS OF TRIAL

Those who passed through the great disappointment in 1844 were also in danger of denying the way that God had led them in their experience. After that time, they suffered sorely. “Through the early-winter months of 1844-1845, the Advent believers in Portland, Maine—and, in fact, elsewhere—seldom smiled. On the streets they were taunted and ridiculed by former friends and acquaintances. They often had to meet the assertion ‘You were a set of fools and fanatics’ or ‘I told you so.’ The uniform testimony of those who passed through the experience was that only those who had endured it could realize the depth of disappointment and its reality.”¹⁷¹

So disappointed were the Advent believers that after “the days stretched into weeks and Jesus did not come, their faith began to waver. By December most of the believers in the Portland area had *abandoned their confidence in the integrity of the October 22 date* (WLF, p. 22). Every passing day drove home the conviction that nothing had taken place at that time.”¹⁷² In 1847, James White wrote, “When she [Ellen White] received her first vision, December 1844, she and all the band in Portland, Maine, (where her parents then resided) *had given up the midnight-cry*, and shut door, as being in the past.”¹⁷³ Ellen White herself even wrote, “At the time I had the vision of the Midnight Cry I had *given it up in the past and thought it future*, as also *most of the band had*.”¹⁷⁴

In his biography of Ellen White, Arthur White writes, “This experience became quite general, and by April, 1845, *the larger part* of those who had been in the Advent movement and had not immediately repudiated their experience came to conclude that there had *been a mistake in the date* and that they must look for the fulfillment of the 2300-day prophecy at some time yet to come.”¹⁷⁵ That time was in the seventh month of 1845.

In December 1844, Ellen White received her first vision which God gave to confirm the midnight cry experience the Advent people were now rejecting. Just as He sent water to quench the thirst of the children of Israel and show that He was leading

¹⁷¹ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years - 1827-1862*, Vol. 1, p. 60.1

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 60

¹⁷³ James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 22

¹⁷⁴ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5, p. 95

¹⁷⁵ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years - 1827-1862*, Vol. 1, p. 61

them, so He sent a message to His people showing that He had led them in their experience.

REJECTING THE PROPHET

So stirred up were the children of Israel over the situation that “Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be *almost ready to stone me.*”¹⁷⁶ This was the first instance since leaving Egypt where the children of Israel were ready to stone Moses, God’s messenger. God’s prophets have never had it easy. Great prophets like Noah, Isaiah, Elijah and Jeremiah all suffered tremendous persecution. Jesus Himself said, “Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.”¹⁷⁷

As Moses was rejected by his people, so Ellen White had to suffer rejection as well. In her second vision, she says the Lord “showed me the trials I must pass through, and that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me, and that I should *meet with great opposition and suffer anguish of spirit by going.* But said the angel, “The grace of God is sufficient for you; He will hold you up.”¹⁷⁸

It wasn’t long after this vision that, “it was reported all around that the visions were the result of mesmerism, and many *Adventists were ready to believe and circulate the report.* A physician who was a celebrated mesmerizer told me that my views were mesmerism, that I was a very easy subject, and that he could mesmerize me and give me a vision. I told him that the Lord had shown me in vision that mesmerism was from the devil, from the bottomless pit, and that it would soon go there, with those who continued to use it. I then gave him liberty to mesmerize me if he could. He tried for more than half an hour, resorting to different operations, and then gave it up. By faith in God I was able to resist his influence, so that it did not affect me in the least.”¹⁷⁹

Among those who at first rejected the visions was Joseph Bates, the one to whom God revealed the Sabbath. Bates wrote, “It is now about two years since I first saw the author, and heard her relate the substance of her visions as she has since published them

¹⁷⁶ Exodus 17:4

¹⁷⁷ Matthew 23:31

¹⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 20

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.2

in Portland (April 6, 1846). Although I could see nothing in them that militated against the word, yet I felt alarmed and tried exceedingly, and for a long time unwilling to believe that it was any thing more than what was produced by a protracted debilitated state of her body.”¹⁸⁰

For about two years Bates would not accept the messages Ellen White had been given but eventually he wrote, “I can now confidently speak for myself. I believe the work is of God, and is given to comfort and strengthen his ‘scattered,’ ‘torn,’ and ‘pealed people,’ since the closing up of our work for the world in October, 1844. The distracted state of lo, heres! and lo, theres! since that time has exceedingly perplexed God's honest, willing people, and made it exceedingly difficult for such as were not able to expound the many conflicting texts that have been presented to their view. I confess that I have received light and instruction on many passages that I could not before clearly distinguish. I believe her to be a self-sacrificing, honest, willing child of God, and saved, if at all, through her entire obedience to His will.”¹⁸¹

Although Bates eventually changed his mind and believed the visions were of God, many others did not. In describing one situation, Ellen White writes, “The next morning we went to the place appointed for meeting. When S. came in and saw us present he seemed troubled. The meeting commenced with prayer. Then as I tried to pray, the blessing of the Lord rested upon me, and I was taken off in vision. S. had declared that *he would listen to nothing but [the] Bible*. I was shown what the Bible taught in contrast with his errors. I then saw that the frown of God was upon him; that he was leading astray honest, conscientious souls. They feared to differ with him. Yet they saw inconsistencies in his faith, and their judgment told them he was wrong. His object in appointing that meeting was to make an effort to strengthen the cords of error with which he had bound these souls. I saw that God would work for the salvation of his people; that S. would soon fully manifest himself, and all the honest would see that it was not a right spirit which actuated him, and that his career would soon close. I was told by those present that he would hear no more, and took his hat and left the house. Soon after this the

¹⁸⁰ James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 21

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21

snare was broken, and he could have but little influence over souls. *He denounced the visions as being of the Devil*, and continued to follow his impressions, until Satan seemed to take the full control of his mind. His friends at length were obliged to confine him, where he made a rope of some of his bed clothing with which he hung himself. Thus ended his career.”¹⁸²

According to a letter Otis Nichols wrote to William Miller on April 20, 1846, he describes a class of Adventists that had rejected Ellen White’s vision. “Those that rejected her message very soon fell into the world and a nominal faith, and those that did receive her testimony as from the Lord *and afterward denied it*, calling it mesmerism or an unholy thing, are many of them like those that are given over to strong delusion and the working of Satan—a ship without a helm or anchor and driven by every wind, thus causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of. This class of persons are her *greatest enemies*, and have done what they could by calumny, and lies, to destroy her influence and character. But God has hitherto protected her in a remarkable manner from all harm; raised up benefactors for her wherever she goes, notwithstanding the malice of wicked spirits and fallen Adventists.”¹⁸³

HOLDING UP THE PROPHETS HAND

While the children of Israel were still camped at Rephidim, “the Amalekites, a fierce, warlike tribe inhabiting that region, came out against them and smote those who, faint and weary, had fallen into the rear.”¹⁸⁴ Moses gave instruction to Joshua to fight the Amalekites while he would hold up the rod of God. “And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”¹⁸⁵

Thus Israel gained the victory over the Amalekites. But, this victory was only won because Aaron and Hur had supported Moses in holding up the rod of God. So it was in the years after

¹⁸² Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p. 64

¹⁸³ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years - 1827-1862*, Vol. 1, p. 76

¹⁸⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 298

¹⁸⁵ Exodus 17:11-12

1844. Of all the different groups that splintered out of the 1844 movement, none but those who believed and followed the counsel Ellen White was shown in vision, survived and grew into the remnant church.

God chooses leaders He can trust to lead His people. After 1844 had passed, He began to use a humble young woman to encourage and lead His people. This young woman was not educated, but has become the most translated woman writer in the entire history of literature. During her life she had approximately two thousand dreams and visions and wrote more than forty books. Her book, *Steps to Christ*, has been published in more than 140 languages.

Chapter Summary

1. When tested with trials, the children of Israel denied that God had led them out of Egypt by the hand of Moses. So too the Advent people began to deny the midnight cry and look to the future for its fulfillment. By April 1845, most Adventists had repudiated their experience and looked to a future date for the 2,300 day prophecy to be fulfilled.
2. As the children of Israel were ready to stone Moses, so many Adventists rejected Ellen White, especially as she was directed to teach the people the validity of the October 22, 1844.
3. It was only by holding up the hands of Moses that the children of Israel were able to destroy the Amalekites. Likewise, only those Adventists who trusted in God's messages given through Ellen White, prevailed and became God's remnant church.

Chapter 6

Organized

“And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”

—Exodus 19:18

Exactly three months after leaving Egypt the children of Israel came to mount Sinai.¹⁸⁶ It was here that God descended upon the mount in fire and spoke audibly to His people. “Never since man was created had there been witnessed such a manifestation of divine power as when the law was proclaimed from Sinai. ‘The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.’ Psalm 68:8. Amid the most terrific convulsions of nature the voice of God, like a trumpet, was heard from the cloud. The mountain was shaken from base to summit, and the hosts of Israel, pale and trembling with terror, lay upon their faces upon the earth.”¹⁸⁷

“Soon after the encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mountain to meet with God. Alone he climbed the steep and

¹⁸⁶ Exodus 19:1

¹⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 340

rugged path, and drew near to the cloud that marked the place of Jehovah's presence. Israel was now to be taken into a close and peculiar relation to the Most High--*to be incorporated as a church and a nation under the government of God.*"¹⁸⁸ "From the outset of the journey from Egypt, lessons had been given for their training and discipline. Even before they left Egypt a *temporary organization* had been effected, and the people were arranged in companies, under appointed leaders. *At Sinai the arrangements for organization were completed.* The order so strikingly displayed in all the works of God was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government. Moses, as His representative, was to administer the laws in His name. Then came the council of seventy, then the priests and the princes, under these 'captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens' (Numbers 11:16, 17; Deuteronomy 1:15), and, lastly, officers appointed for special duties. The camp was arranged in exact order, the tabernacle, the abiding place of God, in the midst, and around it the tents of the priests and the Levites."¹⁸⁹

GOD'S ORGANIZED CHURCH

Alone with the Lord upon the mount, God said to Moses, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."¹⁹⁰

"It was God's design to establish the Israelites in Canaan as His chosen nation, to be an example to all nations that should live on the earth. They were to be a kingdom of priests, living only for His service."¹⁹¹ "From a race of slaves the Israelites had been *exalted above all peoples to be the peculiar treasure of the King of kings.* God had *separated them from the world, that He might commit to them a sacred trust.* He had made them the depositaries of His law,

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 303

¹⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 37

¹⁹⁰ Exodus 19:4-6

¹⁹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, July 23, 1901 par. 15

and He purposed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself. Thus the light of heaven was to shine out to a world enshrouded in darkness, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living God.”¹⁹²

Just as God called His people out of Egypt and revealed to them wonderful manifestations of His love and power, so He called the Advent people out of the spiritual darkness of Babylon into a fuller understanding of His truth. And just as God wanted Israel to be the light of the world, drawing all nations to a knowledge of Himself, so He purposed the Advent people would take the gospel to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”¹⁹³

“The Lord made a special covenant with ancient Israel: ‘Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.’ He addresses His commandment-keeping people in these last days: ‘But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.’ ‘Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.’”¹⁹⁴

In our study of Israel’s wilderness wanderings, we have seen how the Advent Movement has so far been a parallel of ancient Israel. Just as Israel was completely organized as a nation and a church under God’s government, so too, the people of God after 1844 were at first loosely organized. However, on May 21, 1863, they were formally organized into the Seventh-day Adventist church, with a membership of 3,500 and 125 churches.¹⁹⁵

TEN COMMANDMENTS

While on the mount with God, Moses was given instructions to prepare the people to witness the greatest display of God’s

¹⁹² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 314

¹⁹³ See Revelation 14:6

¹⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 450

¹⁹⁵ See http://www.adventist.org/world_church/facts_and_figures/history/index.html.en. Retrieved February 6, 2010

divine power that man had ever witnessed. "On the morning of the third day, as the eyes of all the people were turned toward the mount, its summit was covered with a thick cloud, which grew more black and dense, sweeping downward until the entire mountain was wrapped in darkness and awful mystery. Then a sound as of a trumpet was heard, summoning the people to meet with God; and Moses led them forth to the base of the mountain. From the thick darkness flashed vivid lightnings, while peals of thunder echoed and re-echoed among the surrounding heights."¹⁹⁶ "And now the thunders ceased; the trumpet was no longer heard; the earth was still. There was a period of solemn silence, and then the voice of God was heard. Speaking out of the thick darkness that enshrouded Him, as He stood upon the mount, surrounded by a retinue of angels, the Lord made known His law."¹⁹⁷

In ten simple commandments, God made known His law to the Israelites. This is not to say the commandments were not known before this grand event. Of Abraham it is said, "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."¹⁹⁸ Prior to arriving at Sinai, Moses instructed the Israelites, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee."¹⁹⁹ Paul in the New Testament also reasons that if there was no law before God spoke the Ten Commandments, then no one could have been guilty of sinning between the time of Adam and the giving of the law at Sinai. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to

¹⁹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 304

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 304

¹⁹⁸ Genesis 26:5

¹⁹⁹ Exodus 15:26

come.”²⁰⁰

“The law was not spoken at this time exclusively for the benefit of the Hebrews. God honored them by making them the guardians and keepers of His law, but it was to be held as a sacred trust for the whole world. The precepts of the Decalogue are adapted to all mankind, and they were given for the instruction and government of all. Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, cover the duty of man to God and to his fellow man; and all based upon the great fundamental principle of love. ‘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 neighbor as thyself.’ Luke 10:27. See also Deuteronomy 6:4, 5; Leviticus 19:18. In the Ten Commandments these principles are carried out in detail, and made applicable to the condition and circumstances of man.”²⁰¹

As God entrusted His law to the Israelites, so the Seventh-day Adventist Church—the remnant church of the last days, “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”²⁰² This is the only Church in existence that not only keeps all of God’s commandments, but also has the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.²⁰³ “In the providence of God, these same commandments that were written with the finger of Jehovah and entrusted to the Israelites, are now committed to our care. Upon us rests the solemn obligation of proclaiming God’s law to an impenitent world.”²⁰⁴ “God has honored us by making us the depositaries of His law, and if ministers and people were sufficiently aroused they would not rest in indifference.”²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Romans 5:12-14

²⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 305

²⁰² Revelation 12:17

²⁰³ The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In Revelation 19:10 the angel says to John, “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy *brethren that have the testimony of Jesus*: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” In an identical situation, John is further told by the angel in Revelation 22:9, “Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy *brethren the prophets*, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” The spirit of prophecy is then the gift of prophecy, which God’s prophets are given.

²⁰⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, p. September 27, 1906, par. 10

²⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 507

God's law is holy (Romans 7:12) and those whom He has honored to uphold that law He requires to be holy. "God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom. The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven. Clothed in the glorious apparel of *Christ's righteousness*, they have a place at the King's feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng."²⁰⁶

THE HEALTH MESSAGE

After God spoke His law at mount Sinai, He said to Moses, "Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him."²⁰⁷ It was here that Moses received instruction on how to build the sanctuary which typified the plan of salvation. The sanctuary was completed on the first day of the first month in the second year after leaving Egypt. They had been at Sinai for almost nine months and it had been fourteen days short of a year since leaving Egypt. On the first day of the second month, just thirty days later, God instructed Moses to number the children of Israel.²⁰⁸ In the time between these two events Moses was given the instruction contained in the book of Leviticus.²⁰⁹ From chapters eleven through to fifteen we find detailed instructions on how to live a healthy life. God wanted His people to be holy, and following His counsel was necessary to fulfill this.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the

²⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 315

²⁰⁷ Exodus 24:1-2

²⁰⁸ Numbers 1:1-2

²⁰⁹ *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, p. 693

earth.”²¹⁰ Thus God outlined in Leviticus chapter eleven what animals could and could not be eaten. Before the children of Israel had reached Sinai, God had already demonstrated to them what kind of food He preferred them to eat by sending them manna.

“When the Lord brought His people from Egyptian bondage, He led them through the wilderness to prove them, and try them. He promised to be their God, and to take them to Himself as His peculiar treasure. He did not prohibit their eating meat, but withheld it from them in a great measure. He gave them food which He designed that they should have, which was healthy, and of which they could eat freely. He rained their bread from Heaven, and gave them purest water out of the flinty rock. He made a covenant with them, that if they would obey Him in all things, He would put no disease upon them. But the Israelites were not satisfied with the food which God gave them. They murmured against Moses and against God, and wished themselves back in Egypt, where they could sit by the flesh-pots. God in His anger gave them flesh to gratify their lustful appetite, and great numbers of them died in the act of eating the meat for which they had lusted. While it was yet between their teeth the curse of God came upon them [see Numbers 11]. God here teaches His people that He is displeased with their permitting their appetite to control them. The Israelites at times would prefer slavery, and even death, rather than to be deprived of meat.”²¹¹

Just as God gave His people a health message after they had been brought out of Egypt, received the ten commandments and had been organized, so too we can see this parallel fulfilled in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As it has already been noted, in May of 1863, the Church was finally organized. “About two weeks later, on June 6, 1863, Ellen White was given the epochal health vision in Otsego, Michigan. It seems that God waited until the church had completed its organizational struggles before giving them the next step in their assignment—a responsibility that required unity of spirit and a general sense of harmony in doctrinal matters.”²¹²

²¹⁰ Leviticus 11:1-2

²¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods*, p. 159

²¹² Herbert E. Douglass, *Messenger of the Lord*, Chapter 24, www.whiteestate.org/books/mol/Chapt24.html

VEGETARIAN DIET

After being shown the heath vision, Ellen White wrote in 1864, "God gave our first parents the food he designed that the race should eat. It was contrary to his plan to have the life of any creature taken. There was to be no death in Eden. The fruit of the trees in the garden, was the food man's wants required. God gave man no permission to eat animal food until after the flood. Every thing had been destroyed upon which man could subsist, and therefore the Lord in their necessity gave Noah permission to eat of the clean animals which he had taken with him into the ark. But animal food was not the most healthy article of food for man."²¹³ She further wrote concerning the consumption of pork, "When appetite is left to control reason, sacred things are not discerned. God expressly commanded the children of Israel not to eat swine's flesh. The heathen used this meat as an article of food. God prohibited the Hebrews the use of swine's flesh because it was hurtful. It would fill the system with humors, and in that warm climate often produced leprosy. Its influence upon the system in that climate was far more injurious than in a colder climate. But God never designed the swine to be eaten under any circumstances. Swine were useful. In a fruitful country, where there was much to decay upon the ground, which would poison the atmosphere, herds of swine were permitted to run free, and devoured the decaying substances, which was a means of preserving health. Other animals were forbidden to be eaten by the Israelites, because they were not the best articles of food."²¹⁴

ALCOHOL, TEA, COFFEE & TOBACCO

God was very specific in His instruction regarding the use of alcohol, tea, coffee and tobacco. Ellen White wrote, "Appetite has been indulged to the injury of health. Stimulating drinks have been used freely, which have confused the brain and brought down man to the level of the brute creation. While intoxicated, every degree of crime has been committed, and yet the perpetrators have been excused in many instances, because they knew not what they were doing. This does not lessen the guilt of

²¹³ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4A, p. 120

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124

the criminal.”²¹⁵ She further wrote, “Tea and coffee are stimulating. Their effects are similar to those of tobacco; but they affect in a less degree. Those who use these slow poisons, like the tobacco-user, think they cannot live without them, because they feel so very badly when they do not have these idols.”²¹⁶

APPETITE

“There is a class who profess to believe the truth, who do not use tobacco, snuff, tea, or coffee, yet they are guilty of gratifying the appetite in a different manner. They crave highly-seasoned meats, with rich gravies, and their appetite has become so perverted that they cannot be satisfied with even meat, unless prepared in a manner most injurious. The stomach is fevered, the digestive organs are taxed, and yet the stomach labors hard to dispose of the load forced upon it. After the stomach has performed its task it becomes exhausted, which causes faintness. Here many are deceived, and think that it is the want of food which produces such feelings, and without giving the stomach time to rest, they take more food, which for the time removes the faintness. And the more the appetite is indulged, the more will be its clamors for gratification. This faintness is generally the result of meat-eating, and eating frequently, and too much. The stomach becomes weary by being kept constantly at work, disposing of food not the most healthful. Having no time for rest, the digestive organs become enfeebled, hence the sense of ‘goneness,’ and desire for frequent eating. The remedy such require is to eat less frequently and less liberally, and be satisfied with plain, simple food, eating twice, or at most, three times a day. The stomach must have its regular periods for labor and rest, hence eating irregularly between meals is a most pernicious violation of the laws of health. With regular habits, and proper food, the stomach will gradually recover.”²¹⁷

HARMFUL FOODS AND WRONG EATING HABITS

“Because it is the fashion, in harmony with morbid appetite, rich cake, pies, and puddings, and every hurtful thing, are crowded

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 128

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129

into the stomach. The table must be loaded down with a variety, or the depraved appetite cannot be satisfied. In the morning, these slaves to appetite often have impure breath, and a furred tongue. They do not enjoy health, and wonder why they suffer with pains, headaches, and various ills. Many eat three times a day, and again just before going to bed. In a short time the digestive organs are worn out, for they have had no time to rest. These become miserable dyspeptics, and wonder what has made them so. The cause has brought the sure result. A second meal should never be eaten until the stomach has had time to rest from the labor of digesting the preceding meal. If a third meal be eaten at all, it should be light, and several hours before going to bed.”²¹⁸

The health message shown to Ellen White affects every aspect of our lives. She was shown the importance of cleanliness, exercise, the use of fresh water, proper diet, abstaining from harmful substances including the use of prescribed drugs, and the list goes on. If you haven’t taken the time to read the counsel God has given His last day people, then you are missing out on a great blessing.

God promised Moses that if the children of Israel were faithful in obeying all that He had commanded, which included the laws of health, God would “put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians.”²¹⁹ That same promise God extends to His people now. “Christ had been the guide and teacher of ancient Israel, and He taught them that health is the reward of obedience to the laws of God. The Great Physician who healed the sick in Palestine had spoken to His people from the pillar of cloud, telling them what they must do, and what God would do for them. ‘If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God,’ He said, ‘and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.’ Exodus 15:26. Christ gave to Israel definite instruction in regard to their habits of life, and He assured them, ‘The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.’ Deuteronomy 7:15. When they fulfilled the conditions, the promise was verified to them. ‘There

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130

²¹⁹ Exodus 15:26

was not one feeble person among their tribes.' Psalm 105:37.

"These lessons are for us. There are conditions to be observed by all who would preserve health. All should learn what these conditions are. The Lord is not pleased with ignorance in regard to His laws, either natural or spiritual. We are to be workers together with God for the restoration of health to the body as well as to the soul."²²⁰

ADVENTIST HEALTH STUDIES

A number of health studies on Seventh-day Adventist Church members have proved that following God's health laws do improve the quality and length of life. "The first major study of Adventists, begun in 1958, has become known as the Adventist Mortality Study, a cohort or prospective study of 22,940 California Adventists. Organized at Loma Linda University, it entailed an intensive 5-year follow-up and a more informal 25-year follow-up. During the first period, a similar study was being conducted by the American Cancer Society. Both studies enrolled volunteer subjects who were relatively well-educated."²²¹ The results of these studies revealed that:

- Death rates from all cancers was 60% lower for Adventist men and 76% lower for Adventist women.
- Lung cancer 21% lower.
- Colorectal cancer 62% lower.
- Breast cancer 85% lower.
- Coronary heart disease 66% lower for Adventist men, 98% lower for Adventist women.

A second study of Adventists began in 1974 and consisted of 34,000 participants. The results showed that "nonvegetarian Adventists experienced much more heart disease than vegetarian Adventists, particularly among the younger and middle-aged (which is up to at least age 70 in many Adventists!). The nonvegetarians also had about 60 percent more colon cancer, as well as more ovarian and bladder cancer. Moreover, on average,

²²⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 824

²²¹ <http://www.llu.edu/public-health/health/mortality.page?>, Loma Linda University. Retrieved February 7, 2010

they lost about five years of life compared to the vegetarians.”²²²

There is now a third study (AHS-2) that is not yet completed “with more than 96,000 Adventists from every state of the U.S.—and every province and territory of Canada.”²²³ Some of the initial results reveal, “4.2% are total vegetarian [vegan], 31.6% lacto-ovo-vegetarian, 11.4% include fish with their otherwise vegetarian diet, 6.1% are semi-vegetarian (eat meat <1 time/week) and 46.8% are non-vegetarian.”²²⁴ This reveals that about sixty-four percent of Church members in North America consume meat—the majority of them on a regular day-to-day basis. As a result of this, “The average Adventist in AHS-2 is overweight with a BMI (body mass index) of 27, where a value of greater than 25 defines overweight. Adventist Church members have largely followed the nation in this regard. Vegetarian Adventists, however, are less heavy (BMI of 25, on average), and the 4 percent of Adventists who are vegan are on average much lighter still (BMI of 23). Partly as a result of this lower BMI, the vegetarians and vegans experience much less diabetes, lower blood pressures, and less hypertension.”²²⁵

God gave His people a health message in 1863, that if followed, would ensure His people remained healthy longer. The latest statistics sadly show that at least half of the Church in North America, and probably most other first-world countries, have rejected that message and consume meat. God didn’t give us the health message to restrict our freedom. He gave it to us so that we could be a witness to the world, by showing that following all of His laws results in health and happiness. Just as ancient Israel craved the flesh pots of Egypt, it appears that modern Israel is conforming to the world by their rejection of the health message. How can we expect God to bless us when we willingly reject the counsel He has given to give up meat?

Chapter Summary

²²² <http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=2669>, Adventist Review. Retrieved February 7, 2010

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ <http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/dym165v1>, International Journal of Epidemiology, Oxford Journals. Retrieved February 7, 2010

²²⁵ <http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=2669>, Adventist Review. Retrieved February 7, 2010

1. After leaving Egypt and being taught about the Sabbath, God led His people to Mount Sinai, where they were completely organized. Likewise, the Advent people were fully organized in 1863.
2. God entrusted to ancient Israel the Ten Commandments. So too, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been entrusted with the same Ten Commandments.
3. After receiving the Ten Commandments and finishing the sanctuary, Moses was instructed to teach the people the importance of health laws. So too we see this parallel fulfilled in the newly formed Seventh-day Adventist Church. In June of 1863 after the Church had been organized, Ellen White was given a vision concerning the laws of health.

Chapter 7

Opposition

“And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.”

—Numbers 12:1

While the children of Israel were camped at Hazeroth, Moses’s leadership was challenge—not by one of the mixed multitude from Egypt, but from Moses’ own family.

“At Hazeroth, the next encampment after leaving Taberah, a still more bitter trial awaited Moses. Aaron and Miriam had occupied a position of high honor and leadership in Israel. Both were endowed with the prophetic gift, and both had been divinely associated with Moses in the deliverance of the Hebrews. ‘I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam’ (Micah 6:4), are the words of the Lord by the prophet Micah. Miriam’s force of character had been early displayed when as a child she watched beside the Nile the little basket in which was hidden the infant Moses. Her self-control and tact God had made instrumental in preserving the deliverer of His people. Richly endowed with the gifts of poetry and music, Miriam had led the women of Israel in song and dance on the shore of the Red Sea. In the affections of the people and

the honor of Heaven she stood second only to Moses and Aaron. But the same evil that first brought discord in heaven sprang up in the heart of this woman of Israel, and she did not fail to find a sympathizer in her dissatisfaction.”²²⁶

Both Miriam and Aaron were prophets of God and yet they were overcome by Satan, and he used them to try and destroy Moses' influence over the people. God's messengers have always had to endure severe trials, and Moses suffered greatly as he led a rebellious people to the Promised Land. No wonder the Bible says, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”²²⁷

“In the appointment of the seventy elders Miriam and Aaron had not been consulted, and their jealousy was excited against Moses. At the time of Jethro's visit, while the Israelites were on the way to Sinai, the ready acceptance by Moses of the counsel of his father-in-law had aroused in Aaron and Miriam a fear that his influence with the great leader exceeded theirs. In the organization of the council of elders they felt that their position and authority had been ignored. Miriam and Aaron had never known the weight of care and responsibility which had rested upon Moses; yet because they had been chosen to aid him they regarded themselves as sharing equally with him the burden of leadership, and they regarded the appointment of further assistants as uncalled for.”²²⁸

“Though called a ‘Cushite woman’ (Numbers 12:1, R.V.), the wife of Moses was a Midianite, and thus a descendant of Abraham. In personal appearance she differed from the Hebrews in being of a somewhat darker complexion. Though not an Israelite, Zipporah was a worshiper of the true God. She was of a timid, retiring disposition, gentle and affectionate, and greatly distressed at the sight of suffering; and it was for this reason that Moses, when on the way to Egypt, had consented to her return to Midian.”²²⁹ “When Zipporah rejoined her husband in the wilderness, she saw that his burdens were wearing away his strength, and she made known her fears to Jethro, who suggested measures for his relief. *Here was the chief reason for Miriam's*

²²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 382

²²⁷ Numbers 12:3

²²⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 382

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 383

antipathy to Zipporah. Smarting under the supposed neglect shown to herself and Aaron, she regarded the wife of Moses as the cause, concluding that her influence had prevented him from taking them into his counsels as formerly. Had Aaron stood up firmly for the right, he might have checked the evil; but instead of showing Miriam the sinfulness of her conduct, he sympathized with her, listened to her words of complaint, and thus came to share her jealousy.”²³⁰

Miriam had harbored resentment against Zipporah for quite some time. Before Israel had been organized she was jealous of her. “Yielding to the spirit of dissatisfaction, Miriam found cause of complaint in events that God had especially overruled. The marriage of Moses had been displeasing to her. That he should choose a woman of another nation, instead of taking a wife from among the Hebrews, was an offense to her family and national pride. Zipporah was treated with ill-disguised contempt.”²³¹

“God had chosen Moses, and had put His Spirit upon him; and Miriam and Aaron, by their murmurings, were guilty of disloyalty, not only to their appointed leader, but to God Himself. The seditious whisperers were summoned to the tabernacle, and brought face to face with Moses. ‘And Jehovah came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam.’ Their claim to the prophetic gift was not denied; God might have spoken to them in visions and dreams. But to Moses, whom the Lord Himself declared ‘faithful in all Mine house,’ a nearer communion had been granted. With him God spake mouth to mouth. ‘Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and He departed.’ The cloud disappeared from the tabernacle in token of God’s displeasure, and Miriam was smitten. She ‘became leprous, white as snow.’ Aaron was spared, but he was severely rebuked in Miriam’s punishment. Now, their pride humbled in the dust, Aaron confessed their sin, and entreated that his sister might not be left to perish by that loathsome and deadly scourge. In answer to the prayers of Moses the leprosy was cleansed. Miriam was, however, shut out of the camp for seven days. Not until she was banished

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 384

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 383

from the encampment did the symbol of God's favor again rest upon the tabernacle. In respect for her high position, and in grief at the blow that had fallen upon her, the whole company abode in Hazereth, awaiting her return."²³²

ORGANIZATION AND ELLEN WHITE OPPOSED

Not surprisingly, we find a similar parallel in the history of the Adventist Church. In the lead up to fully organizing the Church in 1863, those advocating for the Church to organize struggled with a dissident group in Iowa who were opposed to organization. In the January 6, 1863 edition of the *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, an article entitled "*The Rebel Conference*" by B. F. Snook, president of the Iowa Conference reveals that there was a group in that conference that were opposed to organization and to Ellen White. Snook wrote, "A few weeks ago I spoke in the Review of a contemplated conference to be held in Marion, Iowa, by those Adventists who oppose organization and sister White's visions. It came off November 27, and as their report is before me I shall make such remarks upon it as I think necessity demands." Later in the article, Snook writes, "When the subject of organization was first spoken of in the Review, these same ones began to murmur and complain. Soon a meeting was called for to investigate the visions. In the interim I had a conversation with the main leader of the rebellion, in which he said, 'I will admit that all that sister White has yet seen is according to the Advent doctrine.' Then, said I, you must admit that her visions are good so far. He assented that they were. Now, said I, my impression is that if it were not for the fact that her visions are against your tobacco, you would receive them. Yes, said he; because she is against me I will be against her."²³³

In the next issue of the *Review and Herald* (January 13, 1863), Uriah Smith wrote an article entitled, "*The Secession Movement in Iowa*." In that article he writes, "We do not know that any considerations will justify the occupation of further space in the Review, in reference to the *anti-vision movement* which has been inaugurated in Iowa, inasmuch as enough has already been said to show the nature of that work, and to put the honest on their guard

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 384

²³³ *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald*, Vol. 21, Jan 6, 1863, p. 46

against having any sympathy or union with it. But there are some points which we can hardly forbear to notice.”²³⁴

By May 21, the Church succeeded in organizing. However the rebellion in Iowa would continue and take a heavy toll on some prominent leaders. J. N. Loughborough wrote of what was taking place in Iowa. “In May, 1865, the General Conference council on the distribution of labor decided that I go with Elder and Mrs. White in some meetings in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa, and then labor among the churches in Iowa. At the time of our conference in Battle Creek we were rejoicing in the fact that the four years of terrible civil [war] were over, and that now the coast was clear for a rapid advancement of the third angel's message. Little did we think that right in our midst, at the time of the conference, there were those on the ground who were gathering material with which to start another rebellion in the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists.”²³⁵

Loughborough continues, “At this conference were two or three brethren accompanied by their wives who were not in the truth. They were dressed in worldly fashion and wore jewelry. Here were also Elders Snook and Brinkerhoff from Iowa, who had already (secretly) been sowing seeds of discord in their conference. Then, without taking pains to learn who the ladies in worldly dress were, they returned with great stories of the pride of the Battle Creek Church, and how they saw them decorated with feathers and jewelry. They also trumped up objections to the testimonies, and set out to cause division in our ranks in Iowa.”²³⁶

As Loughborough continues, he wrote, “Of all this we knew nothing until we reached Monroe, Wisconsin (June 9). There Elder Ingraham showed Elder White a letter he received from Snook which said, ‘Brother Ingraham, what do you think of striking out on the old plan of the independence of the churches? . . .’ In this Elder White at once spotted rebellion, and throwing off conference organization. When we reached Pilot Grove, where a spring session of the Iowa Conference was to be held, we learned that Snook and Brinkerhoff were teaching that the message would go forward as soon as it was rid of Sister

²³⁴ *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald*, Vol. 21, Jan 13, 1863, p. 52

²³⁵ J. N. Loughborough, *Miracles in My Life*, Chapter 10, p. 62

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

White's testimonies."²³⁷

In 1863, B. F. Snook had written against those who were opposed to organization and the visions of Ellen White. But now, in 1865, Snook himself had joined the rebellion. In the words of Ellen White, she describes the situation as follows. "We felt it to be our duty to visit Iowa before returning to Michigan. We had no knowledge of the rebellion of Elders Snook and Brinkerhoff, but we felt that there was a work for us to do in that State. On our way to Pilot Grove, Iowa, we first heard of the rebellion, which was only a few hours before we met its leaders face to face in the meeting-house. We labored with intense feeling to save the poor sheep who had been wounded and torn, and left bleeding by these unfaithful shepherds. Our efforts were crowned with success. While engaged in labor to meet opposition, falsehood, and insult, low prejudice, and jealousy, we had thought but little of our health. The blessed results that followed our labors, cheered us amid the gloom which we felt as we beheld what results these two shepherds had accomplished in their dreadful work of tearing to pieces the flock of God."²³⁸

Loughborough describes this in greater detail. "When we met in conference with our people at Pilot Grove, Elder White proposed that, before entering upon any business, there be an investigation of the charges made by Snook and Brinkerhoff. They elected me chairman of that meeting, and we devoted a full day (June 30) to the problem. The two men stated their objections, and either Elder or Mrs. White made reply. At 5 p.m. both men admitted that their objections were fully answered and that they had no more. A day or so later I saw each of them, separately, hand to Elder White written confessions of their wrong course, then on Sunday, before a large audience of outside parties, Snook said that he had been serving the devil in his opposition to the Whites."²³⁹

In the July 25, 1865 edition of the *Review and Herald*, the confessions of both Snook and Brinkerhoff were published. Snook began, "Bro. White: Permit me, an unworthy worm of the dust, to address the brethren and sisters as follows." He then wrote, "I wish to relieve my mind before you, and my God, by confessing that I

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, Feb 20, 1866, par. 7

²³⁹ J. N. Loughborough, *Miracles in My Life*, Chapter 10, p. 62

now feel that I have been led by the wicked One in my movements of late, especially in my opposition to the body. Apparent difficulties in relation to sister White's visions have been accumulating in my mind for some time. These were magnified by the enemy until doubts resulted in unbelief and rebellion. In this distressed state of mind I attended the General Conference at Battle Creek, last May. While there, my mind was impressed that the church there was fast becoming conformed to the world. Without unbosoming myself to the brethren there, and calling for an explanation, I kept these matters to myself till I had a good opportunity to give vent to my feelings by publishing these matters which were a trial to me, to the brethren away from there. I am now convinced that the church at Battle Creek fellowship none of the extravagant fashions that I saw there, and I am now led to believe that they are doing what they can to live out the truth and preserve the way marks of our faith.”²⁴⁰

Adding to this confession, Snook continued, “I wish to say to my good brethren and sisters of the Battle Creek church that I do most deeply deplore this wrong, and humbly beg of them to forgive me. I also beg the pardon of Bro. and sister White for the influence that I have tried to exert against them on account of these things. I also entreat my brethren and sisters in Iowa to forgive me for talking these things to them and thereby inflaming them to wrong feelings. I do most sorrowfully repent of this grievous wrong and pray that God and my brethren may forgive me.”²⁴¹

Sadly, Loughborough writes, “But after a few days, B. F. Snook's objections revived. He began to communicate with Brinkerhoff, and that ended his labors in our ranks, and they were again on their scheme of ‘independence of the churches.’ However, this did not assume its final fighting for several months.”²⁴² The following year, Loughborough notes, “By the time of my return to Battle Creek in the spring of 1866, Snook and Brinkerhoff had drawn off 45 of the 60 members of the Marion Church. They also gave energy to the Messenger and Hope of Israel parties, and were zealously fighting the testimonies of Sister White. They started a

²⁴⁰ *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald*, Vol. 26, July 25, 1865, p. 62

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62

²⁴² J. N. Loughborough, *Miracles in My Life*, Chapter 10, p. 63

paper called *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate*. But before many months had passed, both men dropped interest in the *Advocate* and gave up the Sabbath. Brother Starr of Iowa told me that the day he was baptized, Brinkerhoff was present, and met him as he came up out of the water. Shaking hands with him he said, ‘I am glad to see you take your stand with this people. They have the truth and I am sorry I ever left them. . . . It’s too late for me to rejoin them. I am a lost man.’”²⁴³

On a side note, Loughborough wrote, “The *Advocate*, however, was continued by a man named William Long. But how could he be leader of a flock without an organization? They chose the name ‘Church of God’ and soon organized churches and conferences, and finally a general conference with headquarters at Stanberry, Missouri.”²⁴⁴ The *Church of God* over the years would split into other churches like the *The Church of God 7th Day* and the *Worldwide Church of God*, started by Herbert W. Armstrong.²⁴⁵

Just as Miriam was struck with leprosy, a life threatening disease, so Snook and Brinkerhoff, and all who followed their rebellion in opposing the visions of Ellen White and the organization of the Church, no longer walked with God’s people. In the type, Miriam had to leave the camp for seven days and then was accepted back. How sad that Snook and Brinkerhoff turned from their confession and lost their eternal lives. Their rebellion and tragic end is also a parallel of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and reminds us that it is not a light thing to reject God’s messengers.

Chapter Summary

1. Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, God’s messenger.
2. Miriam resented the fact that Moses had married Zipporah, a Midianite.
3. Miriam was jealous because she had not been consulted in regard to the organization of Israel at Sinai.
4. Just as Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, so dissenters in the Iowa conference rejected Ellen White’s

²⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 65

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ <http://www.thejournal.org/archives/cgtimeln.html>. Retrieved February 7, 2010

visions.

5. Those in the Iowa conference who rejected Ellen White were not in support of organizing the Church.

Chapter 8

Rebellion at Kadesh

“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

—Hebrews 3:19

“**E**leven days after leaving Mount Horeb the Hebrew host encamped at Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, which was not far from the borders of the Promised Land. Here it was proposed by the people that spies be sent up to survey the country. The matter was presented before the Lord by Moses, and permission was granted, with the direction that one of the rulers of each tribe should be selected for this purpose. The men were chosen as had been directed, and Moses bade them go and see the country, what it was, its situation and natural advantages; and the people that dwelt therein, whether they were strong or weak, few or many; also to observe the nature of the soil and its productiveness and to bring of the fruit of the land.”²⁴⁶

The children of Israel had finally reached the borders of the Promised Land. God had promised He would bring them to a land that flowed with milk and honey, and now they were within its reach. The spies were sent out as commanded by God and

²⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 387

“they returned after an absence of forty days. The people of Israel were cherishing high hopes and were waiting in eager expectancy. The news of the spies' return was carried from tribe to tribe and was hailed with rejoicing. The people rushed out to meet the messengers, who had safely escaped the dangers of their perilous undertaking.”²⁴⁷

After returning, the spies began to describe the marvelous things they had seen. “And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.”²⁴⁸ The fruit they brought back was one cluster of grapes that required two men to carry it, some pomegranates and figs.²⁴⁹

After hearing what the spies had seen and brought back, “the people were enthusiastic; they would eagerly obey the voice of the Lord, and go up at once to possess the land.”²⁵⁰ However, “all but two of the spies enlarged upon the difficulties and dangers that lay before the Israelites should they undertake the conquest of Canaan. They enumerated the powerful nations located in various parts of the country, and said that the cities were walled and very great, and the people who dwelt therein were strong, and it would be impossible to conquer them. They also stated that they had seen giants, the sons of Anak, there, and it was useless to think of possessing the land.”²⁵¹

UNBELIEF

The joyous thought of taking possession of the Promised Land suddenly changed. “Hope and courage gave place to cowardly despair, as the spies uttered the sentiments of their unbelieving hearts, which were filled with discouragement prompted by Satan. Their unbelief cast a gloomy shadow over the congregation, and the mighty power of God, so often manifested in behalf of the

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 387

²⁴⁸ Numbers 13:26-27

²⁴⁹ See Numbers 13:23

²⁵⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 387

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

chosen nation, was forgotten. The people did not wait to reflect; they did not reason that He who had brought them thus far would certainly give them the land; they did not call to mind how wonderfully God had delivered them from their oppressors, cutting a path through the sea and destroying the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh. They left God out of the question, and acted as though they must depend solely on the power of arms.”²⁵²

The people then began to reproach Moses, and “murmuringly said to one another, This, then, is the end of all our hopes. This is the land that we have been traveling from Egypt to obtain. Caleb and Joshua sought to obtain a hearing. But the people were so excited they could not command themselves to listen to these two men. After they were calmed a little, Caleb ventured to speak. He said to the people, ‘Let us go up at once, and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it.’ But the men that went up with him said, ‘We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.’ And they continued to repeat their evil report, and declared that all the men were of great stature.”²⁵³

“These men, having entered upon a wrong course, stubbornly set themselves against Caleb and Joshua, against Moses, and against God. Every advance step rendered them the more determined. They were resolved to discourage all effort to gain possession of Canaan. They distorted the truth in order to sustain their baleful influence. It ‘is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof,’ they said. This was not only an evil report, but it was also a lying one. It was inconsistent with itself. The spies had declared the country to be fruitful and prosperous, and the people of giant stature, all of which would be impossible if the climate were so unhealthy that the land could be said to ‘eat up the inhabitants.’ But when men yield their hearts to unbelief they place themselves under the control of Satan, and none can tell to what lengths he will lead them.”²⁵⁴

REJECTION OF MOSES

That night the children of Israel “lifted up their voice, and cried”²⁵⁵ “And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses

²⁵² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 388

²⁵³ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4A, p. 22

²⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 389

²⁵⁵ Numbers 14:1

and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.”²⁵⁶ So rebellious were the people of God that “the Israelites not only gave vent to their complaints against Moses, but accused God himself of dealing deceitfully with them, by promising them a land which they were unable to possess. Their rebellious spirit here arose so high that, forgetful of the strong arm of Omnipotence, which had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and had thus far conducted them by a series of miracles, they resolved to choose a commander to lead them back to Egypt, where they had been slaves, and had suffered so many hardships. They actually appointed them a captain, thus discarding Moses, their patient, suffering leader, and they murmured bitterly against God.”²⁵⁷

God had chosen Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. From the very beginning, the people had rejected him. At each stage of their journey when they were led into difficulties to teach them faith, they murmured against Moses and showed they were not worthy of inheriting the Promised Land. Now they had gone too far. Instead of going forward to inherit the Promised Land, they talked themselves into thinking life was better in Egypt as slaves and so in their foolishness they appointed another leader to lead them back to Egypt.

“Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes.”²⁵⁸ These faithful men had witnessed time and again the rebellious nature of the people. They were men of faith and were ready to go up and possess the land. “And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us,

²⁵⁶ Numbers 14:2-4

²⁵⁷ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4A, p. 23

²⁵⁸ Numbers 14:5-6

then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.”²⁵⁹

“The Canaanites had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and the Lord would no longer bear with them. His protection being removed, they would be an easy prey. By the covenant of God the land was ensured to Israel. But the false report of the unfaithful spies was accepted, and through it the whole congregation were deluded. The traitors had done their work. If only the two men had brought the evil report, and all the ten had encouraged them to possess the land in the name of the Lord, they would still have taken the advice of the two in preference to the ten, because of their wicked unbelief. But there were *only two advocating the right*, while ten were on the side of rebellion.”²⁶⁰

“Those who bore the discouraging report and brought discouragement to the whole camp of Israel, when opposed because of their unfaithful witness, served the satanic powers in complete rebellion. And they carried the disappointed congregation with them, in that they believed their interpretation of the land. The congregation took the wrong side, and, inspired by satanic agencies, they cried out against the faithful spies, and bade them stone Joshua and Caleb, who dared to bear the truthful representation in regard to the land.”²⁶¹

As we contemplate this story, we can't help but wonder how the people of God could have been so foolish and rebellious. They were right on the borders of the Promised Land. They had witnessed the mighty power of God as He sent the plagues on Egypt. He had delivered them through the Red Sea and destroyed the armies of Pharaoh. He provided their food and water. Israel had witnessed the awful grandeur of God descending on Mount Sinai and the audible declaration of the Ten Commandments. Notwithstanding all this, the children of Israel still harbored unbelief in their heart. Sadly, this event was not limited to ancient Israel at the borders of the Promised Land. The Bible repeatedly

²⁵⁹ Numbers 14:7-9

²⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 390

²⁶¹ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 119

reveals this unbelief throughout their history. And not surprisingly we find an event in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that parallels this sad story.

1888 GENERAL CONFERENCE

The most divisive General Conference in the history of Seventh-day Adventists was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on October 17 through November 4 in 1888. Much has been written about that General Conference, with differing views as to what was preached, why it was so divisive and whether or not the message was accepted or rejected. Two writers early in the 20th century, A. G. Daniels and Taylor Bunch, assert that the message was rejected by the majority of those attending the meetings. Bunch wrote, "According to some who attended the Minneapolis meeting fully two thirds of those present either opposed the message of righteousness by faith or were afraid of it. They felt that it was a form of fanaticism, a departure from the good old method of preaching the message."²⁶² In 1926, four years after retiring from being General Conference president (1901-1922), Daniels in his book, *Christ our Righteousness* wrote, "How sad, how deeply regrettable, it is that this message of righteousness in Christ should, at the time of its coming, have met with opposition on the part of earnest, well-meaning men in the cause of God! *The message has never been received, nor proclaimed, nor given free course as it should have been* in order to convey to the church the measureless blessings that were wrapped within it."²⁶³

More recent writers however, such as A.V. Olson, LeRoy Froom, Gerhard Pfandl and Arthur White have all concluded that the Church did not reject the 1888 message and that it was in fact a great victory. For example, Arthur White wrote, "The concept that the General Conference, and thus the denomination, rejected the message of righteousness by faith in 1888 is without foundation and was not projected until forty years after the Minneapolis meeting, and thirteen years after Ellen White's death. Contemporary records yield no suggestion of denominational rejection. There is no E. G. White statement anywhere that says this was so. The concept of such rejection has

²⁶² Taylor G. Bunch, *Exodus and Advent Movement in Type and Anti-Type*, p. 90

²⁶³ Arthur G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 47

been put forward by individuals, none of whom were present at Minneapolis, and in the face of the witness of responsible men who were there.”²⁶⁴

Gerhard Pfandl, an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, also claims the Church did not reject the message. “Eventually most of those who opposed the message changed their attitude and accepted the message of righteousness by faith, though some left the church. After the Minneapolis session Mrs. White joined A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner in carrying the message of righteousness by faith to the churches. From coast to coast they visited camp meetings, workers’ meetings, and Bible schools. In 1889 she could write: ‘I have never seen a revival work go forward with such thoroughness, and yet remain so free from all undue excitement.’ Following Minneapolis many books dealing with righteousness by faith were produced, for example, *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages*. To understand what happened at Minneapolis is important because *some people today claim that the church rejected the message of Minneapolis and call for corporate repentance.*”²⁶⁵

How then do we know who to trust? Did the Church accept or reject the 1888 message? And do the events around that time parallel the children of Israel in their rebellion at Kadesh? Fortunately, there are enough of Ellen White’s published writings to answer these questions. Ellen White is a reliable witness as she attended the 1888 General Conference and she was a prophet of God.

ON THE BORDERS OF THE HEAVENLY CANAAN

The first point we need to consider carefully is, whether the Seventh-day Adventist Church was on the borders of the Promised Land. On January 5, 1892, a little over three years after the 1888 General Conference Session, Ellen White wrote, “Now when we are *just on the borders of the Promised Land*, let none repeat the sin of the unfaithful spies.”²⁶⁶ She continued, “While the

²⁶⁴ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White Volume 3 The Lonely Years 1876–1891*, p. 396

²⁶⁵ Gerhard Pfandl, *Minneapolis, 1888 An Adventist watershed*, Adventist World, <http://www.adventistworld.org/issue.php?issue=2010-1001&page=24>. Retrieved February 15, 2010

²⁶⁶ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 370

people were cherishing doubts, and believing the unfaithful spies, the *golden opportunity for Israel passed by*. . . . *Shall it be, in these last days just before we enter into the heavenly Canaan, that God's people shall indulge the spirit that was revealed by ancient Israel?* People full of doubts and criticisms and complaints can sow seeds of unbelief and distrust that will yield an abundant harvest. *The history of Israel was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.*²⁶⁷

In 1896, Ellen White wrote that if God's people had done their appointed work, Jesus would have returned. "Jesus wants every minister to whom He has committed a sacred trust to remember His injunctions, to consider the vastness of His work, and to place the obligation of preaching the gospel to the world upon the large number to whom it belongs. . . . The power of God was to go with those that proclaimed the gospel. If those who claim to have a living experience in the things of God had done their appointed duty as God ordained, the *whole world would have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our world with power and great glory.*--Home Missionary, August 1, 1896."²⁶⁸

Again, Ellen White wrote in 1903, after she described in great length the rebellion at Kadesh, that God's people would have already been in the heavenly Canaan, just fifteen years after the 1888 event. " 'How long shall I bear with this evil congregation? . . . Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in Mine ears, so will I do unto you: your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old, and upward, which have murmured against Me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware unto you to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.'

" 'And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know My breach of promise. I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 370

²⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 171

congregation, that are gathered together against Me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still. And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people mourned greatly.'

"The lesson of this record is for us. The Lord had prepared the way before His people. They were very near the Promised Land. A little while and they would have entered Canaan. They themselves delayed the entering. In the first place, it was they who requested that spies should be sent up to search the land. Rehearsing to them the history of the unbelief and the trouble that it brought to them. Moses said. 'And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said. We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.'

"The request that the spies be sent into Canaan showed a lack of faith; for God had told the people plainly that they were to take possession of the land. Why then did they need to send spies to search it? Had they put their trust in God, they could have gone straight in. God would have gone before them. He knew the best way in which to lead them through their difficulties. But they wanted to know what was before them, and when Moses took their request to the Lord, He told him to let them have their own way.

"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.* Oh, how sad it makes me to see the way hedging up before us, and to know that it is becoming more and more difficult to carry the message to the people!"²⁶⁹

In the *Union Conference Record* in 1899, Steven N. Haskell, a

²⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *General Conference Bulletins*, Vol. 5, March 30, 1903

long time friend and supporter of Ellen White²⁷⁰ wrote in an article entitled “*The Third Angel’s Message*,” as follows: “Do you think we are in the last days? We are in the last days of the very last generation. We are ten years in the loud cry of the Third Angel’s Message. There is a testimony in the Bulletin, published in 1892, which says: ‘If the people of God had gone to work as they should have gone to work right after the Minneapolis meeting in 1888, the world could have been warned in two years, and the Lord would have come.’ God designed to close the work just in proportion as His people felt the importance and sacredness of the work and the zeal with which they took hold of it.”²⁷¹

Many scholars would be quick to point out that Haskell must have got it wrong because there was no General Conference Bulletin published in 1892.²⁷² Although he did get his source wrong, it is hard to believe that someone as prominent in the Church as Haskell would have fabricated a lie and attributed to Ellen White something she never said or wrote. This one thing we do know from the quotes we have already looked at, Ellen White certainly believed that by 1896, God’s people could have been in the Promised Land if they had been faithful.

Finally, by 1901, Ellen White wrote the following: “We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.--Letter 184, 1901.”²⁷³

²⁷⁰ “Ellen White wrote more letters to Haskell than to any other church leader. Their ministries spanned much the same time period, beginning for him at age 20 and for her at age 17. They often shared the same concerns. She lived to age 87, and he to 90. At the time of her death, the only picture in Ellen White’s bedroom of a non-family member was one of Stephen Haskell.” <http://www.whiteestate.org/pioneer/haskell.asp>. Retrieved February 15, 2010

²⁷¹ S.N. Haskell, *Union Conference Record*, July 17, 1899, p. 10. You can find this article in the Adventist Archives at http://www.adventistarchives.org/docs/AAR/AAR18990717-V02-06s04__B.pdf#view=fit. Retrieved February 12, 2010

²⁷² “A statement reportedly found in the General Conference Bulletin of 1892. Elder S. N. Haskell provided that reference from memory in a talk published in 1899. No Bulletin was published in 1892, nor has the statement been found in any other published or unpublished source.” <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/faq-mist.html>

²⁷³ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 696

THE IMMINENT SUNDAY LAW

If God's people were indeed right on the borders of the promised heavenly Canaan, there should have been agitation for a Sunday law. There should be evidence that Satan's last act of deception was about to be fulfilled. "The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama."²⁷⁴ Did such a push for Sunday arise around 1888?

"In 1884, Rev. Wilbur F. Crafts prepared a petition to Congress for a law against Sunday work in the mail and military service, and in inter-State commerce. It was not till after this that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union added a 'Sabbath Observance Department' to its work, with Mrs. Josephine C. Bateham, of Ohio, as its superintendent. Mrs. Bateham immediately went to work in a systematic manner to secure legislation in behalf of Sunday observance, seeking first to secure signatures to the petition prepared by Mr. Crafts. Through her efforts, and those of her numerous assistants, the number of petitioners is said to have been increased to a million and a half. These were sent to the United States Senate, and were referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, before whom the hearing was soon had (April 6, 1888) by Mrs. Bateham and her fellow-workers, as related in the beginning. In response to these petitions and the appeals made to the committee at this time, and in accordance with his promise, as quoted from the Union Signal of May 3, Mr. Blair drafted the following, which is popularly known as the 'Sunday-Rest Bill,' (Senate Bill, No. 2983) and introduced it into the Senate, May 21, 1888."²⁷⁵

The bill introduced by Senator Henry Blair contained in part the following: "Be it enacted in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That no person or corporation, or the agent, servant, or employee of any person or corporation, shall perform or authorize to be performed, any secular work, labor, or business, to the disturbance of others, works of necessity, mercy, and humanity excepted; nor shall any person engage in any play, game, or amusement, or recreation, to the disturbance of others, on the first

²⁷⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 141

²⁷⁵ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Blair Sunday-Rest Bill*, 1889, p. 11

day of the week, commonly known as the Lord's day, or during any part thereof, in any Territory, District, vessel, or place, subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States; nor shall it be lawful for any person or corporation to receive pay for labor or service performed or rendered in violation of this section."²⁷⁶

Later that year, on December 9, 1888, "Senator Blair of New Hampshire, re-introduced his bill for a national Sunday law."²⁷⁷ Two days later, in an article entitled "*The Approaching Crisis*," Ellen White wrote, "A great crisis awaits the people of God. Very soon our nation will attempt to enforce upon all, the observance of the first day of the week as a sacred day. In doing this, they will not scruple to compel men against the voice of their own conscience to observe the day the nation declares to be the Sabbath."²⁷⁸ She later continued, "We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; *and now that the movement is right upon us*, we ask, What are our people going to do in the matter? Do you realize that the night will soon come, when no man can work?"²⁷⁹

Not only were God's people right on the borders of the Promised Land, but in the very same year, Satan was trying to bring in the Sunday law. In writing about the 1888 General Conference, Ellen White says, "There was much business to be done. The work had enlarged. New missions had been opened and new churches organized. All should be in harmony freely to consult together as brethren at work in the great harvest field, all working interestedly in the different branches of the work, and unselfishly considering how the Lord's work could be done to the best advantage. *If ever there was a time when, as a conference, we needed the special grace and enlightenment of the Spirit of God, it was at this meeting. There was a power from beneath moving agencies to bring about a change in the constitution and laws of our nation*, which will bind the consciences of all those who keep the Bible Sabbath, plainly specified in the fourth commandment as the seventh day."²⁸⁰

If modern Israel, the Seventh-day Adventist church, was on the

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12

²⁷⁷ A. T. Jones, *The American Sentinel* 5, Jan 9, 1890, p. 9

²⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, Dec 11. 1888, par. 1

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, par. 17

²⁸⁰ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 166

borders of the Promised Land like Ellen White says, and there was a push to enforce a Sunday law, what happened? Why are we still here over one hundred and twenty years later? The answer to that question is staring us in the face in the account of ancient Israel at Kadesh. Paul, writing in Hebrews says “they could not enter in because of unbelief.”²⁸¹ You will recall that after hearing the report of the ten unfaithful spies, Caleb and Joshua stood up and said, “let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”²⁸² These two men had the faith to believe that God would fulfill His promise. The rebellious people did not have this faith. They rejected this message and thus rejected God. They didn’t believe that the One who had led them out of Egypt could drive the inhabitants of the Promised Land out before them. As we have compared the parallels between ancient and modern Israel, we have seen the similarities in their journeys. It only stands to reason that because of unbelief and lack of faith, that God’s people in and just after 1888 did not take possession of the Promised Land. Because they rejected the message and because it has never been accepted, consequently we have been wandering in the wilderness ever since.

THE MESSAGE REJECTED

Not only do we have the parallel of ancient Israel to prove modern Israel largely rejected the 1888 message, but God’s messenger, Ellen White writes, “An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, *lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones.* By exciting that opposition, Satan succeeded in *shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them.* The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. *The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.*”²⁸³

²⁸¹ Hebrews 3:19

²⁸² Numbers 13:30

²⁸³ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 1, p. 130

Not everyone who came to Kadesh were unfaithful. However the majority of them were and this was enough to keep the Israelites wandering in the wilderness for forty years. So too the light God sent His Church in 1888 was rejected by the majority and this was enough keep us in the world as ancient Israel was left in the wilderness.

1889

In 1889, just one year after the 1888 General Conference Session, Ellen White wrote, "In Minneapolis God gave precious gems of truth to His people in new settings. *This light from heaven by some was rejected with all the stubbornness the Jews manifested in rejecting Christ*, and there was much talk about standing by the old landmarks. But there was evidence they knew not what the old landmarks were. There was evidence and there was reasoning from the word that commended itself to the conscience; but the minds of men were fixed, sealed against the entrance of light, because they had decided it was a dangerous error removing the 'old landmarks' when it was not moving a peg of the old landmarks, but they had perverted ideas of what constituted the old landmarks."²⁸⁴

As she continued, she writes, "Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe present truth, [and make them believe] that the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe. The work for this time has certainly been a surprising work of various hindrances, owing to the false setting of matters before the minds of *many of our people*. That which is food to the churches is regarded as dangerous, and should not be given them. And this slight difference of ideas is allowed to unsettle the faith, to cause apostasy, to break up unity, to sow discord, all because they do not know what they are striving about themselves. Brethren, is it not best to be sensible? Heaven is looking upon us all, and what can they think of recent developments? While in this condition of

²⁸⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 518

things, building up barriers, we not only deprive ourselves of great light and precious advantages, but just now, when we so much need it, we place ourselves where light cannot be communicated from heaven that we ought to communicate to others." *Emphasis in brackets not added.*²⁸⁵

Further, she writes, "The men in responsible positions have disappointed Jesus. *They have refused precious blessings, and refused to be channels of light, as He wanted them to be. The knowledge they should receive of God that they might be a light and blessing to others, they refuse to accept, and thus become channels of darkness. The Spirit of God is grieved. Never can the heart be stirred up with envy, with evil-surmising, with evil reports, but the intellect becomes unbalanced, and cannot decide correctly any controverted point. The attributes of Satan which have found entrance to the soul, cannot harmonize with truth.*"²⁸⁶

Instead of being channels of light, those leaders who rejected the 1888 message became channels of darkness. We are not talking about obscure people in the Church. Ellen White primarily had in mind the leadership. This will become more evident as we continue.

1890

On March 11, 1890, less than two years after the 1888 General Conference Session, Ellen White wrote, "There are many outside our people who are in the favor of God, because they have lived up to all the light that God has given them. *For nearly two years we have been urging the people to come up and accept the light and the truth concerning the righteousness of Christ, and they do not know whether to come and take hold of this precious truth or not. They are bound about with their own ideas. They do not let the Saviour in. I have done what I could to present the matter. I can speak to the ear, but I cannot speak to the heart. Shall we not arise, and get out of this position of unbelief? Shall we not bruise Satan under our feet? I beseech of you, Come up where the living waters flow.*"²⁸⁷

For almost two years after 1888 the message had not been accepted by the majority of the Church, for Ellen White was still

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 518

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 519

²⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890, par. 11

urging the people to accept it. Sure, not all had rejected the message and there were times, when as Gerhard Pfandl pointed out, there was a great revival, but this did not affect the whole Church. The majority of the leadership still refused the light and were used by Satan as channels of darkness instead of light.

1892

Four years after the General Conference Session, on November 5, 1892, Ellen White wrote a letter from Adelaide, South Australia, to “Dear Nephew and Niece, Frank and Hattie [Belden].”²⁸⁸ In that letter she wrote, “Light has been shining in Battle Creek in clear, bright rays; but who of those that acted a part in the meeting at Minneapolis have come to the light and received the rich treasures of truth which the Lord sent them from heaven? Who have kept step and step with the Leader, Jesus Christ? *Who have made full confession of their mistaken zeal, their blindness, their jealousies and evil surmisings, their defiance of truth?* Not one; and because of their long neglect to acknowledge the light, it has left them far behind; they have not been growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. They have failed to receive the needed grace which they might have had, and which would have made them strong men in religious experience.”²⁸⁹

In the same letter, Ellen White describes how the rejection of the 1888 message has hindered the advancement of the message. “God meant that the watchmen should arise and with united voices send forth a decided message, giving the trumpet a certain sound, that the people might all spring to their post of duty and act their part in the great work. Then the strong, clear light of that other angel who comes down from heaven having great power, would have filled the earth with his glory. We are years behind; and those who stood in blindness and *hindered the advancement of the very message that God meant should go forth from the Minneapolis meeting* as a lamp that burneth, have need to humble their hearts before God and see and understand how the *work has been hindered* by their blindness of mind and hardness of heart.”²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1063

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1068

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1070

In the next paragraph, Ellen White says that because of unbelief, the 1888 message was rejected. This unbelief existed in Christ's day and it was also what kept the Israelites from entering the Promised Land. "Hours have been spent in quibbling over little things; golden opportunities have been wasted while heavenly messengers have grieved, impatient at the delay. The Holy Spirit—there has been so little appreciation of its value or the necessity for every soul to receive it. Those who do receive the heavenly endowment will go forth clad with the *armor of righteousness* to do battle for God. They will respect the leadings of the Lord and will be filled with gratitude to Him for His mercy. But in many, many places, and on many, many occasions, it could truthfully be said as in Christ's day of those who profess to be God's people, *that not many mighty works could be done, because of their unbelief*. Many who have been bound in fetters of darkness have been respected because God has used them, and *their unbelief has aroused doubt and prejudice against the message of truth which angels of heaven were seeking to communicate through human agencies*—justification by faith, the righteousness of Christ."²⁹¹

1895

Ellen White does not mince words. In 1895, she again reveals what truly happened at the 1888 General Conference. "The perils of the last days are upon us. Satan takes control of every mind that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God. Some have been cultivating *hatred against the men whom God has commissioned to bear a special message to the world*. They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, *they hated it the more*, because it was a testimony against them. They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could. Captain Eldridge and Frank Belden acted a prominent part, but in mercy to them they disconnected themselves from the

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

office. Since their separation the work has been going on after the same order. It is time that there was a change.”²⁹²

1896

In 1896 in a letter written to the “Brethren Who Occupy Responsible Positions in the Work” Ellen White laid out the truth in plain words. She wrote, “The Lord has a controversy with you. I have no need to specify the reasons; you have had them laid open before you *again and again*. The clean hands, the pure, unselfish, holy purposes have not been brought into your practise, and the benediction of God has not come upon many of those who handle sacred things.”²⁹³ A few pages later she writes the following rebuke, “On many occasions the Holy Spirit did work, but those who resisted the Spirit of God at Minneapolis were waiting for a chance to travel over the same ground again, because their spirit was the same. Afterward, when they had evidence heaped upon evidence, some were convicted, but those who were not softened and subdued by the Holy Spirit's working, put their own interpretation upon every manifestation of the grace of God, and they have lost much. They pronounced in their heart and soul and words that this manifestation of the Holy Spirit was fanaticism and delusion. They stood like a rock, the waves of mercy flowing upon and around them, but beaten back by their hard and wicked hearts, which resisted the Holy Spirit's working. Had this been received, it would have made them wise unto salvation; holier men, prepared to do the work of God with sanctified ability. *But all the universe of heaven witnessed the disgraceful treatment of Jesus Christ, represented by the Holy Spirit. Had Christ been before them, they would have treated him in a manner similar to that in which the Jews treated Christ.*”²⁹⁴

Further in the letter, Ellen White describes the spirit of the Jews which led them to reject Jesus, “The Jews considered that this was spoken against them; and that those of a heathen nation should be represented as favored by God before the Jewish nation, was a statement that should not be tolerated; ‘And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 1325

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1476

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1478

and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.' While they were contending among themselves, Christ passed through the midst of them, and went on his way. Certainly this was one of the places where Christ could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief."²⁹⁵ Following this paragraph, God's messenger writes, "The very same spirit has been manifested in Battle Creek. *Those who opened the door of their hearts to temptation at Minneapolis*, and carried the same spirit home with them, will realize, if not now, *in the near future*, that they resisted the Holy Spirit of God, and did despite to the Spirit of grace. Will they repent? or will they harden their hearts, and resist evidence?"²⁹⁶

Finally, in concluding the letter, Ellen White wrote, "Who will now understand these things that I write. There are men who have known the truth, who have feasted upon the truth, who are now divided between infidel sentiments. There is only a step between them and the precipice of eternal ruin. The Lord is coming, *but those who ventured to resist the light that God gave in rich measure at Minneapolis*, who have not humbled their hearts before God, will follow on in the path of resistance, saying, 'Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?' The banner all will bear who voice the message of the third angel, *is being covered with another color that virtually kills it*. This is being done. Will our people now hold fast to the truth. 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' This is our standard. Hold it aloft; for it is truth."²⁹⁷

Eight years after the time when God sent a most precious message to His people it was still being rejected by the majority. So much so that it appeared as though it had been virtually killed. This is very different to what we are being told today. If the message was accepted, how then could Ellen White write that "*all the universe of heaven witnessed the disgraceful treatment of Jesus Christ, represented by the Holy Spirit*." Something doesn't add up with what actually happened and what we are being told.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1481

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1481

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1485

CRITICISM, JEERING AND LAUGHTER

The attitude of those who had rejected the message was certainly far from Christlike. Ellen White writes, "I shall never, I think, be called to stand under the direction of the Holy Spirit as I stood at Minneapolis. The presence of Jesus was with me. All assembled in that meeting had an opportunity to place themselves on the side of truth by receiving the Holy Spirit, which was sent by God in such a rich current of love and mercy. But in the rooms occupied by some of our people was *heard ridicule, criticism, jeering, laughter*. The manifestations of the Holy Spirit were attributed to fanaticism. Who searched the Holy Scriptures, as did the noble Bereans, to see if the things they heard were so? Who prayed for divine guidance? The scenes which took place at this meeting made the God of heaven ashamed to call those who took part in them, his brethren. All this the heavenly Watcher noticed, and it is written in the book of God's remembrance."²⁹⁸

"Some have made confession, yourself among the number. Others have made no confession, for they were too proud to do this, and they have not come to the light. They were moved at the meeting by another spirit, and they knew not that God had sent these young men, Elders Jones and Waggoner, to bear a special message to them, *which they treated with ridicule and contempt*, not realizing that the heavenly intelligences were looking upon them and registering their words in the books of heaven."²⁹⁹

DESPISED, HATED AND PERSECUTED

Not only were Jones and Waggoner ridiculed, but they were also hated and persecuted. "The first thing recorded in Scripture history after the fall was the persecution of Abel. And the last thing in Scripture prophecy is the persecution against those who refuse to receive the mark of the beast. We should be the last people on the earth to indulge in the slightest degree the spirit of persecution against those who are bearing the message of God to the world. This is the most terrible feature of unchristlikeness that has manifested itself among us *since the Minneapolis meeting*. Sometime it will be seen in its true bearing, with all the burden of

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1565

²⁹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 15, p. 83

woe that has resulted from it.”³⁰⁰

“I would speak in warning to those who have stood for years resisting light and cherishing the spirit of opposition. How long will you *hate and despise the messengers of God's righteousness?* God has given them His message. They bear the word of the Lord. There is salvation for you, but only through the merits of Jesus Christ. The grace of the Holy Spirit has been offered you again and again. Light and power from on high have been shed abundantly in the midst of you. Here was evidence, that all might discern whom the Lord recognized as His servants. But there are those who despised the men and the message they bore. They have *taunted them with being fanatics, extremists, and enthusiasts.* Let me prophesy unto you: Unless you speedily humble your hearts before God, and confess your sins, which are many, you will, when it is too late, see that you have been fighting against God. Through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, no longer unto reformation and pardon, you will see that these men whom you have spoken against have been as signs in the world, as witnesses for God. Then you would give the whole world if you could redeem the past, and be just such zealous men, moved by the Spirit of God to lift your voice in solemn warning to the world; and, like them, to be in principle firm as a rock. Your turning things upside down is known of the Lord. Go on a little longer as you have gone, in rejection of the light from heaven, *and you are lost.*”³⁰¹

FURTHER STATEMENTS SHOWING THE MESSAGE WAS REJECTED

At the 1893 General Conference Session, A. T. Jones, one of two men whom God had sent with a “precious message” to His people, presented a series of sermons on the third angel’s message. In his ninth sermon, he said, “Now brethren, when did that message of the righteousness of Christ, begin with us as a people? [One or two in the audience: ‘Three or four years ago.’] Which was it, three? or four? [Congregation: ‘Four.’] Yes, four. Where was it? [Congregation: ‘Minneapolis.’] *What then did the brethren reject*

³⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1013

³⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 96

at Minneapolis? [Some in the Congregation: "The loud cry."] What is that message of righteousness? The Testimony has told us what it is; the loud cry—the latter rain. Then what did the brethren in that fearful position in which they stood, *reject at Minneapolis?* They rejected the latter rain—the loud cry of the third angel's message.

"Brethren, isn't it too bad? Of course the brethren did not know they were doing this, but the Spirit of the Lord was there to tell them they were doing it, was it not? But when they were rejecting the loud cry, 'the teaching of righteousness,' and *then the Spirit of the Lord, by His prophet, stood there and told us what they were doing--what then? Oh, then they simply set this prophet aside with all the rest.* That was the next thing. Brethren, it is time to think of these things. It is time to think soberly, to think carefully...

"You know who it was. I do not mean for you to look to somebody else. You know whether you yourself were at it or not. And, brethren, the time has come to take up tonight *what we there rejected.* Not a soul of us has ever been able to dream yet the wonderful blessing that God had for us at Minneapolis and which we would have been enjoying these four years, if hearts had been ready to receive the message which God sent. We would have been four years ahead, we would have been in the midst of the wonders of the loud cry itself, tonight. Did not the Spirit of prophecy tell us there at that time that the blessing was hanging over our heads? Well, brethren, you know. Each one for himself. We are not to begin to examine one another, let us examine ourselves. Each one for himself knows what part he had in that thing, and the time has come to root up the whole business. Brethren, the time has come to root up the whole thing."³⁰²

NO VOTE TAKEN?

It is often said that the Church did not reject the 1888 message because there was never a vote taken. A.V. Olson in his book *From Crisis to Victory*, says, "No action whatever was taken by vote of the delegates to accept or reject it."³⁰³ Leroy Froom supports this in his book *Movement of Destiny*.³⁰⁴ Where did such an idea come

³⁰² Alonzo T. Jones, "The Third Angel's Message - 9", *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, 1893, Vol. 5, p. 183

³⁰³ A.V. Olson, *From Crisis to Victory*, p. 36

³⁰⁴ Leroy E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, pp. 233, 370, 373

from? The answer to this is in the historical forward to the book *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, by the board of trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate in 1962. Under the heading “The General Conference of 1888,” the trustees wrote, “There is no record of the discourses which were presented at the conference by others than Ellen G. White, for it was not the custom of that time to publish the addresses. A *General Conference Bulletin* was issued, but it was a simple sheet carrying news about the events of the conference and presenting the business proceedings. *No action was taken on the biblical questions discussed.*”³⁰⁵ Was this the truth or was it a lie?

In his eleventh sermon at the 1893 General Conference Session, A. T. Jones suggests there was a vote taken. “Some of these brethren, since the Minneapolis meeting, I have heard, myself, say ‘amen’ to preaching, to statements that were utterly heathen and did not know but that it was the righteousness of Christ. Some of those who stood so openly against that *at that time* and *voted with uplifted hand against it* and since that time I have heard say ‘amen’ to statements that were as openly and decidedly papal as the papal church itself can state them.”³⁰⁶ According to Jones, there was a vote taken, and those who opposed the message voted against it.

As the children of Israel failed to trust in God to lead them into the Promised Land, so the Seventh-day Adventist Church failed to accept the message of righteousness by faith. The fact that we are still here, proves beyond a doubt that we have been wandering in the wilderness, just as ancient Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. For over hundred and twenty years we have been waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When the message is finally accepted, then this spiritual blessing will be ours. But this message and the latter rain must be the subject of a later chapter.

Chapter Summary

1. Ancient Israel failed to enter the Promised Land because of

³⁰⁵ Ellen G. White Estate, Historical Forward to *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. xxiv-xxv

³⁰⁶ Alonzo T. Jones, “The Third Angel’s Message -11”, *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, 1893, Vol. 5, p. 244

- unbelief.
2. Modern Israel also failed to enter into the Promised Land because they too harbored a spirit of unbelief in a message that was sent them.
 3. Just as Joshua and Caleb fearlessly stood for the truth, so God's two messengers, A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, presented the truth of righteousness by faith.
 4. When God's people accept the message that was rejected, then the light of the fourth angel will lighten the world and the latter rain will be poured out.

Chapter 9

An Uprising

“And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind.”

—Numbers 16:28

You will recall from the previous chapter that the people charged Moses with leading them into the wilderness to die, and in the heat of the moment they chose another leader to lead them back to Egypt. God quickly put a stop to this and as result of their rebellion He sent judgments upon His people.

“The judgments visited upon the Israelites served for a time to restrain their murmuring and insubordination, but the spirit of rebellion was still in the heart and eventually brought forth the bitterest fruits. The former rebellions had been mere popular tumults, arising from the sudden impulse of the excited multitude; but now a deep-laid conspiracy was formed, the result of a determined purpose to overthrow the authority of the leaders appointed by God Himself.”³⁰⁷

“Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of

³⁰⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 395

Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?³⁰⁸

“Korah, the leading spirit in this movement, was a Levite, of the family of Kohath, and a cousin of Moses; he was a man of ability and influence. Though appointed to the service of the tabernacle, he had become dissatisfied with his position and aspired to the dignity of the priesthood. The bestowal upon Aaron and his house of the priestly office, which had formerly devolved upon the first-born son of every family, had given rise to jealousy and dissatisfaction, and for some time Korah had been secretly opposing the authority of Moses and Aaron, though he had not ventured upon any open act of rebellion. He finally conceived the bold design of overthrowing both the civil and the religious authority. He did not fail to find sympathizers. Close to the tents of Korah and the Kohathites, on the south side of the tabernacle, was the encampment of the tribe of Reuben, the tents of Dathan and Abiram, two princes of this tribe, being near that of Korah. These princes readily joined in his ambitious schemes. Being descendants from the eldest son of Jacob, they claimed that the civil authority belonged to them, and they determined to divide with Korah the honors of the priesthood.”³⁰⁹

“Korah and his fellow conspirators were men who had been favored with special manifestations of God's power and greatness. They were of the number who went up with Moses into the mount and beheld the divine glory. But since that time a change had come. A temptation, slight at first, had been harbored, and had strengthened as it was encouraged, until their minds were controlled by Satan, and they ventured upon their work of disaffection. Professing great interest in the prosperity of the people, they first whispered their discontent to one another and

³⁰⁸ Numbers 16:1-3

³⁰⁹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 395

then to leading men of Israel. Their insinuations were so readily received that they ventured still further, and at last they really believed themselves to be actuated by zeal for God.

“They were successful in alienating two hundred and fifty princes, men of renown in the congregation. With these strong and influential supporters they felt confident of making a radical change in the government and greatly improving upon the administration of Moses and Aaron.

“Jealousy had given rise to envy, and envy to rebellion. They had discussed the question of the right of Moses to so great authority and honor, until they had come to regard him as occupying a very enviable position, which any of them could fill as well as he. And they deceived themselves and one another into thinking that Moses and Aaron had themselves assumed the positions they held. The discontented ones said that these leaders had exalted themselves above the congregation of the Lord, in taking upon them the priesthood and government, but their house was not entitled to distinction above others in Israel; they were no more holy than the people, and it should be enough for them to be on a level with their brethren, who were equally favored with God's special presence and protection.”³¹⁰

With the support of the leading princes, Korah and his friends had no problem gaining favor from the people since they were still disappointed after being told they would never enter the Promised Land. “The state of feeling among the people favored the designs of Korah. In the bitterness of their disappointment, their former doubts, jealousy, and hatred had returned, and again their complaints were directed against their patient leader. The Israelites were continually losing sight of the fact that they were under divine guidance. They forgot that the Angel of the covenant was their invisible leader, that, veiled by the cloudy pillar, the presence of Christ went before them, and that from Him Moses received all his directions.

“They were unwilling to submit to the terrible sentence that they must all die in the wilderness, and hence they were ready to seize upon every pretext for believing that *it was not God but Moses who was leading them and who had pronounced their doom.* The best efforts of the meekest man upon the earth could not quell the

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 396-397

insubordination of this people; and although the marks of God's displeasure at their former perverseness were still before them in their broken ranks and missing numbers, they did not take the lesson to heart. Again they were overcome by temptation."³¹¹

God's messengers have always been rejected by the majority. Just as Moses was rejected by the people, so too the prophets down through the ages have had to endure reproach and rejection. In the events surrounding the 1888 General Conference Session, God sent two messengers (not prophets), A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, with a precious message and they too were also rejected, just like the prophets in the past were.

"The next work of the conspirators was with the people. To those who are in the wrong, and deserving of reproof, there is nothing more pleasing than to receive sympathy and praise. And thus Korah and his associates gained the attention and enlisted the support of the congregation. The charge that the murmurings of the people had brought upon them the wrath of God was declared to be a mistake. They said that the congregation were not at fault, since they desired nothing more than their rights; but that Moses was an overbearing ruler; *that he had reprovved the people as sinners, when they were a holy people*, and the Lord was among them.

"Korah reviewed the history of their travels through the wilderness, where they had been brought into strait places, and many had perished because of their murmuring and disobedience. His hearers thought they saw clearly that their troubles might have been prevented if Moses had pursued a different course. They decided that all their disasters were chargeable to him, and that their exclusion from Canaan was in consequence of the mismanagement of Moses and Aaron; that if Korah would be their leader, and would encourage them by dwelling upon their good deeds, instead of reprovving their sins, they would have a very peaceful, prosperous journey; instead of wandering to and fro in the wilderness, they would proceed directly to the Promised Land."³¹²

People like to hear smooth things. This is why God's prophets are never popular with the people of their day. Paul says, "For the

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 395-396

³¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 397-398

time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”³¹³ In this rebellion and the previous uprising when the people of God decided to choose another leader, we find a similar parallel.

ELLEN WHITE REJECTED

At the 1888 General Conference Session, Ellen White was not happy with the way the Conference was proceeding. In 1892 she wrote, “When I purposed to leave Minneapolis, the angel of the Lord stood by me and said: ‘Not so; God has a work for you to do in this place. The people are acting over the rebellion of *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*. I have placed you in your proper position, which those who are not in the light will not acknowledge; *they will not heed your testimony*; but I will be with you; My grace and power shall sustain you. It is not you they are despising, but the messengers and the message I send to My people. They have shown contempt for the word of the Lord. Satan has blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment; and unless every soul shall repent of this their sin, this unsanctified independence that is doing insult to the Spirit of God, they will walk in darkness. I will remove the candlestick out of his place except they repent and be converted, that I should heal them. They have obscured their spiritual eyesight. They would not that God would manifest His Spirit and His power; for they have a spirit of mockery and disgust at My word. Lightness, trifling, jesting, and joking are daily practiced. They have not set their hearts to seek Me. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling, and unless they repent they shall lie down in sorrow. Thus saith the Lord: Stand at your post of duty; for I am with thee, and will not leave thee nor forsake thee.’ These words from God I have not dared to disregard.”³¹⁴

Not only would they reject Ellen White’s testimony, but they would also resort to criticizing her. “When I plainly stated my faith there were many who did not understand me and they reported that *Sister White had changed*; Sister White was influenced by her son W. C. White and by Elder A. T. Jones. Of

³¹³ 2 Timothy 4:3

³¹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1067

course, such a statement coming from the lips of those who had known me for years, who had grown up with the third angel's message and had been honored by the confidence and faith of our people, must have influence.

*"I became the subject of remarks and criticism, but no one of our brethren came to me and made inquiries or sought any explanation from me. We tried most earnestly to have all our ministering brethren rooming in the house meet in an unoccupied room and unite our prayers together, but did not succeed in this but two or three times. They chose to go to their rooms and have their conversation and prayers by themselves. There did not seem to be any opportunity to break down the prejudice that was so firm and determined, no chance to remove the misunderstanding in regard to myself, my son, and E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones."*³¹⁵

Of those who rejected Ellen White's testimony of righteousness by faith, two men in particular stand out. These were Uriah Smith and George Ide Butler.

URIAH SMITH

Uriah Smith had been a long-time supporter of Ellen White. On December 31, 1890, Ellen White wrote, "Brother Smith was with us in the rise of this work. He understands how we—my husband and myself—have carried the work forward and upward step by step, and have borne the hardships, the poverty, and the want of means. With us were those early workers. Elder Smith, especially, was one with my husband in his early manhood. He knows how we were pressed about for want of means—that our diet was of a very meager sort. Turnips were used for potatoes, because potatoes were too costly to come upon our table. We worked without wages, only using the means positively necessary to live, and our furniture was composed of such things as bottomless chairs that had to be resealed—prepared for use with canvas seats. He knows that we all acted our part bravely, to accommodate ourselves to the situation uncomplainingly while in Rochester, New York, and at different places where we were located. We know how much it cost us to lay the foundation for the work to be advanced onward and upward in our publishing

³¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 173

work to its present prosperity.

“We have stood shoulder to shoulder with Elder Smith in this work while the Lord was laying the foundation principles. We had to work constantly against one-idea men, who thought correct business relations in regard to the work which had to be done were an evidence of worldly-mindedness, and the cranky ones who would present themselves as capable of bearing responsibilities, but could not be trusted to be connected with the work lest they swing it in wrong lines. Step after step has had to be taken, not after the wisdom of men but after the wisdom and instruction of One who is too wise to err and too good to do us harm. There have been so many elements that would have to be proved and tried. I thank the Lord that Elders Smith, Amadon, and Batchellor still live. They composed the members of our family in the most trying parts of our history.”³¹⁶

Not only was Smith a long-time supporter of Ellen White, but he was very influential in the Church. He was a writer, teacher, editor, poet and hymn writer. He “was elected the first secretary of the General Conference when it organized in 1863. He also was treasurer of the General Conference for one year and taught Bible for several years at Battle Creek College. He is probably best known today as author of *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*. As editor of the *Review*, Smith became ‘pastor’ to many Adventists who were isolated and could not regularly attend church services. His wit and his scholarship were evident in hundreds of articles and editorials. His public speaking also blessed many thousands.”³¹⁷

Even though this great man had shared a great part of the burden in establishing the Seventh-day Adventist Church and even defended Ellen White’s writings throughout the years, he was led to reject her over the issues that rose out of the 1888 General Conference Session, just as Korah, a prominent man who was influential among the children of Israel, rebelled against Moses.

In a rather lengthy paragraph to Smith, Ellen White wrote on December 31, 1890, “Do you refuse to fall on the rock? If so, there is not the slightest assurance in your case that you will ever recover

³¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 788

³¹⁷ <http://www.whiteestate.org/pioneer/Smith.asp>. Retrieved February 15, 2010

yourself out of the snare of the devil. *Your attitude has encouraged a state of things in our churches which you have not measured.* The result of your course and your working on the same line since you left Minneapolis has made the carrying out of the work given me of God to do fifty fold harder than it need to have been. *You have barred my way,* but O, how little did you know the real result of your work. This has been opened before me. When you have stated that Sr. White was influenced by W. C. W., A. T. Jones, and E. J. Waggoner, you have *planted in hearts infidelity that has been nourished and has borne fruit.* You will not be pleased to reap the harvest. Satan takes everything of this character and makes it a living active agent in destroying faith in the very work the Lord would have them to do. Every soul that fully takes your words and believes them are correctly represented by the words of Christ, 'I would that thou were either cold or hot, so then because that thou art lukewarm, I will spew thee out of my mouth.' Decided opposition would have done me less harm. *A lack of faith in the messages God has given me to bear of the order represented is decided unbelief to all intents and purposes.* There is not one bit of savor in such a faith, and the faith of Elder Butler is of the same order, valueless, having no savor, I count nothing upon you or him to harmonize with me in my work given me of God. Your very position is a decided negative to the efforts I may make as God shall move upon me by his holy Spirit. I have not felt grieved as far as my personal self is concerned, but when the work that the Lord has given me is of such a character that faith needs to be constantly cherished because of the warnings, reproofs and searchings of the hearts, and the laying bare of hidden sins is not pleasant and agreeable to the natural heart, and many give a bare assent to truth when they are not sanctified through the truth. They do not in Spirit represent Christ. They are surface workers, and delude themselves with the idea that they are christians. So effectually does this delusion take possession of heart and mind that the sharp arrows of the Lord fail to penetrate the armor of self righteousness in which they are encased. The spell is so strong that they will listen to the truth, the most earnest and powerful, even to the very portraying of the delusions which are upon them without any thought of self-examination to see if it means them. This is the class our Saviour found most difficult to arouse. The most authoritative teachings were heard and listened to as if they

heard not. Thus it is with many, many in this generation. *There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the spirit of God are heeded. What better course to please the enemy and grieve the spirit of God could be pursued than that which has been pursued by you, my brother, a teacher in Israel.* You have had quite a number fully engaged with you in the work, men in responsible positions, presidents of conferences, ministers and workers, that have *formed a confederacy to question, to criticize, to say, 'Report and we will report it.'* The position these men have occupied and the influence this position had given them has caused many to doubt, who will never be settled again and the deceptions and delusions of these last days will overcome them, because heaven's divine illumination is powerless to set them in order for they have decided from the example given them. It makes no difference whether they believe or disbelieve, so if any reproof comes to them, which they wish not to believe, they will say, 'O, Sr. White is influenced. Some one has told her these things. *If Elder Smith who knows all about the testimonies says this is only her own opinion and her own judgment, and he does not accept the teachings of the testimonies, and he such a good man, I will follow his example and I will risk it.'* This is a very unwise thing to do, yet many are doing this and have done it. I know that the spirit of the Lord was holding me here in Battle Creek that all might have my evidence whether it was of God or of the Devil. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' As in the days of Christ some have overlooked the very kind of evidence God has given them and have said show us a sign, work some miracle if you are right."³¹⁸

In her conclusion to Uriah Smith, Ellen White wrote, "I have many things written for you, but I have said What good will it do. *My brethren have trifled and caviled and criticised and commented and demerited, and picked and chosen a little and refused much until the testimonies mean nothing to them.* They put whatever interpretation upon them that they choose in their own finite judgment and are satisfied. I would, if I had dared given up this field of conflict long ago, but something has held me. But I will

³¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 794

not choose my way or my will. In the life of Christ in the time of his greatest trial, one of his disciples betrayed and another thrice denied him, and all forsook him and fled. If the Master who was without the taint of sin endured this, then shall I expect any better portion? O, how many tried to find witness against Christ. The most cruel, and the most incurable thing is bigotry and prejudice and it lives upon the earth. But I leave all this in the hands of God. I feel cut loose from many of my brethren, they do not understand me or my mission or my work, for if they did they could never have pursued the course they have done. I love to have the ones who feel they need help, poor, hungry, starving souls.”³¹⁹

In another letter written to Smith on January 6, 1891, Ellen White wrote, “You write that you have said that you would have not controversy with Sr. White. Better, far better, have had this controversy openly than under cover, for this controversy has been and there has not been harmony between us since the Minneapolis meeting. You have been exceedingly stubborn, and this stubbornness has been as described in the word of God ‘For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.’ This stubbornness, my dear brother, can be brought under control only by your falling upon the Rock and being broken. It is a terrible snare to you. It makes you unwilling to confess your wrongs, and every wrong passed over without humble confession will relieve [leave] you and Elder Butler and every soul who pursues the same course in blindness of mind and hardness of heart. The spirit of God is grieved and Satan triumphs. It is not because we do not have evidence, but that your own will rises against God's will, and it is God who has a controversy with you. He will remove the candlestick out of its place except you repent.

“Dear Bro. Smith, please to make a surrender to God this time. Make no reserve, and then you will receive the blessing of God. Then peace will come to your soul. You are standing, and have been standing, *in opposition to the work of God for the past two years, you have done more than any man living to cast doubt and unbelief of the testimonies of the spirit of God.* Now I beseech of you, break and lift the stumbling block. I was shown at Minneapolis that the

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 800

Lord *would come in to their families and would visit for the things that there transpired, with affliction and death unless they stood firm between God and his people.* You remember I said in the tabernacle before Elder Butler, yourself, and those present. I had things to say to Elder Butler, but ye cannot bear them now. It was this; his stubbornness and unbelief was sinful and God would bring his afflicting hand heavily upon him if he did not repent and have another spirit, and if he still held his perversity and stubbornness, he would come nearer still to him in affliction. And this he would do to the ones to whom he had given light and they had closed their eyes and ears, and confederated together to make of none effect the warnings and messages of light and truth for his people.

“I have greatly feared for you, my brother. I fear still. I beg of you for Christ’s sake, make thorough work for I know the displeasure of the Lord is against you; against Elder Farnsworth, and many others I might name, who have in face of great light and evidence held fast to their own spirit and walked in the sparks of their own kindling. God says, Unless they repent, they shall lie down in sorrow.”³²⁰

The result of Korah, Dathan and Abiram’s rebellion ended in destruction of their families. “And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.”³²¹ So too Ellen White warned Smith that the “Lord would come in to their families and would visit for the things that there transpired.”

For over two years Smith had opposed Ellen White and led many others to do the same. Just as Korah had led his friends and the two hundred and fifty princes to speak against Moses, so Uriah Smith had done the same. If it had not been for the rebukes he received from Ellen White, at which many today would cringe, Uriah Smith might have been lost forever. Fortunately, God was able to reach his stubborn heart and on January 8, 1891, Ellen

³²⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 846-848

³²¹ Numbers 16:31-33

White could write of him, “Brother Smith has fallen on the Rock, and is broken, and the Lord Jesus will now work with him. He took my hand as he left the room, and said, ‘If the Lord will forgive me for the sorrow and burdens I have brought upon you, I tell you this will be the last. I will stay up your hands. The testimonies of God shall hold this place in my experience.’ It is seldom that Elder Smith sheds a tear, but he did weep, and his voice was choked with the tears in it.”³²²

GEORGE BUTLER

Another strong opposer of Ellen White was George Ide Butler. At the time of the 1888 General Conference Session at Minneapolis, Butler was the General Conference President. Consequently, he bore a lot of influence in the Church. Butler was elected president of the Iowa Conference in 1865 after the defection of Snook and Brinkerhoff,³²³ two men who had opposed the ministry of Ellen White.³²⁴ Now, in 1888, Butler finds himself also opposing Ellen White.

On October 9, 1888, Ellen White wrote to Mary her daughter in law, “Today, Friday at nine o'clock, I read some important matter to the conference and then bore a very plain testimony to our brethren. This had quite an effect upon them. Elder Butler has sent me a long letter, *a most curious production of accusations and charges against me*, but these things do not move me. I believe it was my duty to come. I worry nothing about the future, but try to do my duty for today.”³²⁵

In another letter to her daughter-in-law on November 4, 1888, Ellen White describes the condition of Butler. “A sick man's mind has had a controlling power over the General Conference Committee and the ministers have been the shadow and echo of Elder Butler about as long as it is healthy and for the good of the cause. Envy, evil surmisings, jealousies have been working like leaven until the whole lump seemed to be leavened.

“Elder Butler, we think, has been in office three years too long and now all humility and lowliness of mind have departed from

³²² Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 852

³²³ <http://www.whiteestate.org/pioneer/butler.asp>. Retrieved February 15, 2010

³²⁴ See chapter 7 for more details about Snook and Brinkerhoff.

³²⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 66

him. He thinks his position gives him such power that his voice is infallible. To get this off from the minds of our brethren has been a difficult matter. His case will be difficult to handle but we trust in God.³²⁶

In August of 1892, Ellen White wrote to Uriah Smith and comments about Elder Butler, “I have had the deepest interest in Elder Butler. You know how he decidedly refused to listen to anything I might say, because he was deceived and blinded by reports that had no foundation in truth. You were influenced in the same way. Both of you have had evidence that the Lord was still using Sister White as he had done; this has had some influence with you, but not enough with Elder Butler to lead him to retract one thing he has said and done to counteract my influence. Now the Lord is acquainted with this whole matter. There is pride of heart, there is prejudice, there is resistance to the Spirit of God, and this crops out on every occasion where there is a chance.”³²⁷

On October 7, 1890, in a letter to O. A. Olsen, Ellen White wrote concerning the course that Smith, Butler and others had taken. “I consider the position and work of *Elders Butler, Farnsworth, Smith, and numerous others, is to unsettle the faith of the people of God by things which they say but which they ought not to say, and things left unsaid which they ought to say. And this state of things—unbelief, prejudice, and Pharisaism—is leavening the church.* God has spoken, but they hear not His voice. They have had all the evidence that will ever be given them in the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit of God attending the messages given, but they have closed their eyes lest they shall see, and hardened their hearts lest they shall feel. The Spirit of God has been grieved, and they are so dull of comprehension that they know it not.”³²⁸

On December 6, 1890, Ellen White wrote to her sons Willie and Edson White. In the letter she describes how close she had been to Smith and how much she had esteemed Butler. But sadly she had to write how much grief these men had brought her. “I have loved Brother Smith next to my own husband and children,

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 183

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1005

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 717

because he has had a part in the work for so many years. I have highly esteemed Elder Butler. But these men have left me alone—these men, to whom the Lord has spoken several times that they should stand united with my husband and myself in closest union till the close of time. They have caused me such sadness and grief of spirit as I cannot describe. I felt my husband's death, oh, how keenly God alone knows, but I have felt the cruel course of these men toward the work of God He has given me to do, more keenly than the death of my husband.”³²⁹

One wonders how men who had been so prominent in the work for so many years could decline to a level where they had caused God's prophet so much grief. Their course was very similar to Korah and his friends. You will recall that they were leading men in Israel and had been favored with *special manifestations of God's power and greatness*. They had been a part of those who went up into the mount with Moses and there beheld the glory of God. Just as they had turned against God's messenger, so Smith and Butler turned against Ellen White.

To conclude the letter to her children, Ellen White wrote that these men could not be saved in their present attitude. “I have sorrow in my heart continually on their account because they will not, cannot, be saved in their present attitude. They persistently hold to the course of wrong they in their blindness have taken, and until they shall see and confess their errors they stand in no better place before God than other ministers who have resisted the Spirit of God and done despite to the Spirit of grace. I know their position perfectly. It is kept before me in many ways, until the only relief I can get is to keep away from Battle Creek where the influence of these things is prevailing and active. May the Lord help me to move wisely.”³³⁰

As with Smith, Butler eventually saw the way in which he was heading and finally confessed his wrong. In 1902 Ellen White could write, “The Lord has proved and tested and tried him, as He did Job and as He did Moses. I see in Elder Butler one who has humbled his soul before God. He has another spirit than the Elder Butler of younger years. He has been learning his lesson at

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 741

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

the feet of Jesus.”³³¹ However, even though these two great men repented, the influence they spread while in rebellion affected many people.

WIDESPREAD REJECTION OF ELLEN WHITE

One such example of how Smith and Butler’s rejection of the testimonies affected people can be seen in the following letter:

“Dr. Douse told me the conversation that went on between Lizzie Lay herself and some of the Sabbathkeepers who do not know me. She stated that their family *did not place any particular faith now in Sister White’s testimony*. She said Elder Smith, Elder Butler, Elder Canright, and mentioned other names of the elders, did not any longer regard the testimonies as they once did but they *considered Sister White’s work and influence was a thing of the past*. We had got beyond the need of the testimonies. She claimed to know that she had good authority for her statements. She said a reproof was given to their family which was not true. Dr. Lay heard what his wife and girls said and he told Sister Douse not to let their words have any influence upon them. He said he was embarrassed to make the statement that his wife and children were not in a clear spiritual state, and he wished her to understand that he believed every word of the testimonies and those referring to their family he knew to be true, every word of them.”³³²

Satan was certainly trying his best to make of no effect the testimonies of Ellen White. In the next paragraph, Ellen White writes, “*This statement is what I meet everywhere in regard to Brother Smith, Elder Butler, Wm. Gage, and several others whose names I cannot remember*. I felt sad to have such impressions going out. Those who have been reproofed fasten upon this doubting, unbelieving position of our leading men and feel at liberty to say the testimonies given for them were not true. Dr. Douse was a Seventh-day Baptist and but a short time in the faith. She told them that it was the testimonies of Sister White that were the means of her conversion to present truth, and *when she gave up the testimonies she should give up all the rest*, for the testimonies have their place in the third angel’s message.”³³³

³³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 85

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 683

³³³ *Ibid.*, 684

EXILED TO AUSTRALIA

In 1891, three years after the 1888 General Conference Session in which Ellen White had stood up against many leading brethren, she found herself traveling across the seas to Australia. In the words of Arthur L. White in his book, *Ellen G. White: A Brief Biography*, he explains that Ellen White was called to go to Australia. "At the General Conference session of 1891, Mrs. White was presented with an urgent call to visit Australia to give counsel and assist in church work in that pioneer region. Responding to this appeal, she reached Australia in December, 1891, accompanied by her son, Elder W. C. White, and several of her assistants. Her presence in Australia was much appreciated by the new believers, and her messages of counsel regarding the developing work contributed much to firmly establishing denominational interests in this southern continent. Here again, on her visit to the church's publishing house, Mrs. White recognized printing presses as among those shown her in vision in January, 1875."³³⁴

Is this what really happened? Did God really call Ellen White to go to Australia? Or was there a more sinister plot by those in leading positions who were now opposed to her? In a letter to O. A. Olsen, the General Conference president, on December 1, 1896, Ellen White describes what really happened. "I have not, I think, revealed the entire workings that led me here to Australia. Perhaps you may never fully understand the matter. *The Lord was not in our leaving America. He did not reveal that it was his will that I should leave Battle Creek. The Lord did not plan this, but he let you all move after your own imaginings.* The Lord would have had W. C. White, his mother, and her workers remain in America. We were needed at the heart of the work, and had your spiritual perception discerned the true situation, *you would never have consented to the movements made.* But the Lord read the hearts of all. *There was so great a willingness to have us leave, that the Lord permitted this thing to take place.* Those who were weary of the testimonies borne were left without the persons who bore them. Our separation from Battle Creek was to let men have their own

³³⁴ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White®: A Brief Biography*. <http://www.whiteestate.org/about/egwbio.asp#australia>. Retrieved February 16, 2010

will and way, which they thought superior to the way of the Lord.”³³⁵

Isn't it strange that Arthur White would not refer to this letter in his biographical books on Ellen White? One has to wonder why such important information was not mentioned.

Ellen White knew the real reason for her being moved to Australia. In contrast to what we have been led to believe by people such as Arthur White, she was not *called to Australia*, but was *exiled to Australia*. No doubt the leaders had hoped that by removing her to the other side of the earth, they would silence her testimonies. But how sadly mistaken they were, for even though she was now far away from Battle Creek, God still used her in directing the work.

Chapter Summary

1. Korah, Dathan and Abiram rose up against Moses and influenced many leading princes in Israel to reject him.
2. Just as Moses was rejected by leading men in Israel, so too was Ellen White rejected by the General Conference president, Uriah Smith, and many other leaders within the Seventh-day Adventist church.
3. Ellen White was exiled to Australia because the leaders at the heart of the work wanted to silence her testimonies and rebukes.

³³⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1622

Chapter 10

Rebuked, but Not Forsaken

“So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill.”

—Deuteronomy 1:43

After their rebellion at Kadesh-barnea, the children of Israel were led back into the wilderness. There they wandered in that dreary place for thirty-eight years. “‘The space,’ says Moses, ‘in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord swore unto them. For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.’ Deuteronomy 2:14, 15.”³³⁶

While Israel wandered in the wilderness for all those years, “the people were constantly reminded that they were under the divine rebuke. In the rebellion at Kadesh they had rejected God, and God had for the time rejected them. Since they had proved unfaithful to His covenant, they were not to receive the sign of the

³³⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 406

covenant, the rite of circumcision. Their desire to return to the land of slavery had shown them to be unworthy of freedom, and the ordinance of the Passover, instituted to commemorate the deliverance from bondage, was not to be observed.”³³⁷

Circumcision was a sign of the covenant of God’s grace. God’s covenant has always been one of righteousness by faith, which includes putting off sin. “And he [Abraham] received the *sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith* which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.”³³⁸ “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.*”³³⁹

The Passover was a feast that not only commemorated the deliverance from Egypt, but it also pointed forward to the death of Christ on Calvary. “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*”³⁴⁰ By celebrating the Passover, the children of Israel acknowledged that just as they were delivered from slavery, so Jesus would deliver them from sin. After turning back into the wilderness, Israel was forbidden to circumcise their children or keep the Passover. This showed that their rebellion had caused their covenant with God to be broken and their hope in a Savior, to some extent, was lost sight of. It wasn’t until they had crossed the Jordan that the covenant of grace was renewed and the “reproach of Egypt” was rolled away from them.³⁴¹ It was then that the children of Israel could again be circumcised and keep the Passover.³⁴²

DIVINE REBUKE

As the children of Israel came under the divine rebuke because of their constant rebellion, similarly God’s last day Church came under divine forbearance. As early as 1882, six years before the rejection of the righteousness by faith message that would have led

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 406

³³⁸ Romans 4:11

³³⁹ Colossians 2:11

³⁴⁰ 1 Corinthians 5:7

³⁴¹ See Joshua 5:9

³⁴² See Joshua 5:7,10

modern Israel into the Promised Land, the people of God had fallen into a lukewarm state known as Laodicea. “I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies has been steadily increasing *as the people backslide from God*. It is all through our ranks, all over the field. But few know what our churches are to experience. *I saw that at present we are under divine forbearance, but no one can say how long this will continue*. No one knows how great the mercy that has been exercised toward us. But few are heartily devoted to God. There are only a few who, like the stars in a tempestuous night, shine here and there among the clouds.

“Many who complacently listen to the truths from God's word are dead spiritually, while they profess to live. For years they have come and gone in our congregations, but they seem only less and less sensible of the value of revealed truth. They do not hunger and thirst after righteousness. They have no relish for spiritual or divine things. They assent to the truth, but are not sanctified through it. Neither the word of God nor the testimonies of His Spirit make any lasting impression upon them. Just according to the light, the privileges, and opportunities which they have slighted will be their condemnation. Many who preach the truth to others are themselves cherishing iniquity. The entreaties of the Spirit of God, like divine melody, the promises of His word so rich and abundant, its threatenings against idolatry and disobedience—all are powerless to melt the world-hardened heart.

“*Many of our people are lukewarm*. They occupy the position of Meroz, neither for nor against, neither cold nor hot. They hear the words of Christ, but do them not. If they remain in this state, He will reject them with abhorrence. Many of those who have had great light, great opportunities, and every spiritual advantage praise Christ and the world with the same breath. They bow themselves before God and mammon. They make merry with the children of the world, and yet claim to be blessed with the children of God. They wish to have Christ as their Saviour, but will not bear the cross and wear His yoke.”³⁴³

In a more direct statement that could not be misunderstood, the messenger of the Lord wrote in 1893, “Those who claim to believe the truth do not possess that power that God would bestow upon them if they really believed, and were striving for

³⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 76

conformity to His image. *The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst.* If Christ were formed within, the hope of glory, conformity to His image would be seen, and the church trials which separate the members from Christ would disappear.”³⁴⁴

On December 18, 1888, Ellen White wrote, “*The rebuke of God is upon us* because of our neglect of solemn responsibilities. The testimonies given by God have not been heeded by those who professed to believe them; and as the result, *his blessings have been withdrawn.* When Satan has gained control of the mind, words of warning have no effect.”³⁴⁵

Again in 1888, as a result of the General Conference Session at Minneapolis, Ellen White wrote, “I was confirmed in all I had stated in Minneapolis, that a reformation must go through the churches. Reforms must be made, for spiritual weakness and blindness were upon the people who had been blessed with great light and precious opportunities and privileges. As reformers they had come out of the denominational churches, but they now act a part similar to that which the churches acted. We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out. While we will endeavor to keep the ‘unity of the Spirit’ in the bonds of peace, we will not with pen or voice cease to protest against bigotry.”³⁴⁶ The spiritual condition of the Church must have been in a poor condition for Ellen White to have even contemplated another coming out.

THE CHURCH NEEDED TO REPENT

As Israel wandered in the wilderness for thirty-eight years longer than they should have, so God’s last day Church has been wandering in the wilderness far too long. On April 21, 1903, Ellen White wrote, “Who can truthfully say: ‘Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world’? I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: ‘Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? How is the

³⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, Vol. 1, p. 99

³⁴⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 18, 1888, par. 1

³⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 356

faithful city become an harlot!' My Father's house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking.

"Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself. When she resists the evil and chooses the good, when she seeks God with all humility and reaches her high calling in Christ, standing on the platform of eternal truth and by faith laying hold upon the attainments prepared for her, *she will be healed*. She will appear in her God-given simplicity and purity, separate from earthly entanglements, showing that the truth has made her free indeed. *Then her members will indeed be the chosen of God, His representatives.*"³⁴⁷

GOD HAS NOT FORSAKEN HIS CHURCH

At this point in our study, we need to be careful we do not end up losing our faith in God's appointed Church and jump ship, thinking the one we are on will sink. Sure, there are holes throughout the boat that are taking in water, and it may appear the boat will sink, but let us consider the parallel of Israel's journey and see how God dealt with a sinking ship back then.

The first point we notice as we study the parallel of Israel is that God didn't lead offshoots into that goodly land. In His anger He did say, "And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they."³⁴⁸ Some may use this text as support for leaving the Seventh-day Adventist Church and starting another organization. They may also use Ellen White to justify their action, as did many in her day, but the truth of the matter is that God did not forsake His people. Are we to believe that Moses was more wise than God by the response he gave? Of course not. God was testing Moses, just as He did when the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf. Moses' response to God was, "Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest

³⁴⁷ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 250

³⁴⁸ Numbers 14:11,12

up this people in thy might from among them;) And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness."³⁴⁹

The same would be true of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. If God forsook it completely and chose another organization, what would this say about God? What would it say about the truth that He has revealed to this Church? What would it say about the prophet He led to guide and direct this Church? The honor of God was at stake in leading ancient Israel to the Promised Land and the honor of God and His truth is at stake now too. This is why the Seventh-day Adventist Church will remain God's Church. All other offshoots He has not led.

GOD DOES NOT LEAD OFFSHOOTS

After the people had rebelled at Kadesh, God instructed Moses to tell the people, "Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness."³⁵⁰

Instead of obeying the word of God, the children of Israel chose to defy His command and in a sense started their own movement. "And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we

³⁴⁹ Numbers 14:13-16

³⁵⁰ Numbers 14:29-32

have sinned.”³⁵¹

Was God in this offshoot movement? No. Moses said to them, “Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.”³⁵²

Instead of walking by faith, those who were rebellious tried to enter the Promised Land in their own strength. They presumed that God would be with them, even though they had just rejected Him. Many who leave the Seventh-day Adventist Church for whatever reason and start another organization or group also commit this same sin, for God has never disowned His Church. “God has a church upon the earth, who are his chosen people, who keep his commandments. He is leading, not stray off-shoots, not one here and one there, but a people. The truth is a sanctifying power; but the church militant is not the church triumphant. There are tares among the wheat... The gospel net draws not only good fish, but bad ones as well, and the Lord only knows who are his.”³⁵³

The parallel of ancient Israel shows us the outcome of separating from God’s appointed Church. Often the result is total disaster. “Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.”³⁵⁴ Please notice that those who stayed with Moses in the camp, which God had appointed, did not suffer loss. The same is true of God’s modern day Church.

In 1893, just five years after the rejection of the 1888 message, a group calling themselves “*The Loud Cry of the Third Angel*,” started an offshoot which taught that the Church was Babylon. They produced a pamphlet that used parts of Ellen White’s testimonies to prove their view. You will recall that in 1888 the message rejected was the third angel’s message which if accepted would

³⁵¹ Numbers 14:40

³⁵² Numbers 14:41-44

³⁵³ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, September 12, 1893, par. 19

³⁵⁴ Numbers 14:45

have brought the loud cry. This offshoot based their name and message on that which was rejected in 1888, just as ancient Israel tried to enter the Promised Land based on God's original purpose before they had rebelled. Again we see another parallel fulfilled.

In response to this false movement, Ellen White wrote, "For years I have borne my testimony to the effect that when any arise claiming to have great light, and yet advocating the tearing down of that which the Lord through His human agents has been building up, they are greatly deceived, and are not working along the lines where Christ is working. Those who assert that the Seventh-day Adventist churches constitute Babylon, or any part of Babylon, might better stay at home. Let them stop and consider what is the message to be proclaimed at this time. In place of working with divine agencies to prepare a people to stand in the day of the Lord, they have taken their stand with him who is an accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night. Satanic agencies have been moved from beneath, and they have inspired men to unite in a confederacy of evil, that they may perplex, harass, and cause of the people of God great distress. 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, the institution of this antichristian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed."³⁵⁵

THE CHURCH IS NOT BABYLON

Again, in the same letter we read, "To claim that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Babylon, is to make the same claim as does Satan, who is an accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God night and day... Those who advocate error will say, 'The Lord saith,' 'when the Lord hath not spoken.' They testify to falsehood, and not to truth. If those who have been proclaiming the message that the church is Babylon had used the money expended in publishing and circulating this error, in building up, instead of tearing down, they would have made it evident that they were the people whom God is leading."³⁵⁶

Many today who have left the Seventh-day Adventist Church

³⁵⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 36

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43

and started a new offshoot claim that the quotes we have just read were only applicable back in 1893. However Ellen White wrote, “My brother, if you are teaching that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Babylon, *you are wrong*. God has not given you any such message to bear. Satan will use every mind to which he can attain access, inspiring men to originate false theories, or go off on some wrong tangent, that he may create a false excitement, and thus divert souls from the true issue for this time... It makes me feel sad indeed that you should be deceived in any way by the suggestions of the enemy; for I know the theory that you are advocating *is not truth*. In advancing the ideas you do, you will do great injury to yourself and to others. Do not seek to misinterpret, and twist, and pervert, the testimonies to substantiate any such message of error. *Many have passed over this ground*, and have done great harm. As others have started up full of zeal to proclaim this message, *again and again, I have been shown that it was not truth*.”³⁵⁷ If that wasn’t clear enough, Ellen White writes, “Again I say, The Lord hath *not spoken by any messenger who calls the church that keeps the commandments of God, Babylon*. True, there are tares with the wheat; but Christ said He would send His angels to first gather the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into the garner. I know that the Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized or broken up into independent atoms. *There is not the least consistency in this; there is not the least evidence that such a thing will be*. Those who shall heed this false message and try to leaven others will be deceived and prepared to receive advanced delusions, and they will come to nought.”³⁵⁸

Although ancient Israel rebelled against God, they were still led to the Promised Land, it just took longer than it should have. Even when they were partially rejected in the wilderness God still prospered them. As a nation they grew and became increased with goods.³⁵⁹ God’s modern day Church has followed in the footsteps of ancient Israel and consequently has remained in the world longer than it should have. Like ancient Israel, it too has prospered and become increased with goods even though God is not in its midst. Year after year its membership continues to increase but

³⁵⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, September 12, 1893, par. 16

³⁵⁸ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 68

³⁵⁹ See Deuteronomy 1:10-11

this in itself is no proof that we are obedient to God. There are other churches far larger and richer than the Seventh-day Adventist Church that do not teach the truth and God is not with them.

As a Church, we need to learn from the history of ancient Israel and our own past. If we don't, then we may have to wander in the wilderness longer than we want to. We need the healing that Ellen White spoke of when she said, "*then her members will indeed be the chosen of God, His representatives.*"

Chapter Summary

1. Because of rebellion, ancient Israel was forbidden to enter the Promised Land and were forced to turn back into the wilderness.
2. God's people in 1888 rejected the message of Jones and Waggoner, and were consequently led back into the wilderness.
3. For thirty-eight years Israel wandered in the wilderness and were rejected of God. They were not permitted to perform circumcision or to keep the Passover, both symbols of the covenant of grace.
4. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has likewise suffered under God's forbearance for rejecting the 1888 message. To a great extent, the covenant of grace has not been fully understood.
5. Not content to obey God, many Israelites left the camp where Moses and the ark remained and tried to go up and possess the Promised Land. They were not successful and suffered defeat.
6. Many have left the Seventh-day Adventist Church like those in ancient Israel while claiming to be the ones who accepted the 1888 message. Yet God does not lead offshoots. He raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church and He will lead it into the Promised Land.

Chapter 11

Thirty-eight Years

“Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea, as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed mount Seir many days. And the LORD spake unto me, saying, Ye have compassed his mountain long enough: turn you northward.”

—Deuteronomy 2:1-3

For thirty-eight long years the Israelites wandered in the dreary wilderness. After this period the children of Israel were finally instructed to turn northward. “They were now in sight of the hills of Canaan. A few days' march would bring them to the borders of the Promised Land. They were but a little distance from Edom, which belonged to the descendants of Esau, and through which lay the *appointed route to Canaan*. The direction had been given to Moses, ‘Turn you northward. And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you.’”³⁶⁰

There was only one way that God had approved to enter the Promised Land and that was the appointed route. This route involved a test at Kadesh which if passed, would have seen them

³⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 413

take possession of the Promised Land. Sadly the children of Israel failed when first tested and now after thirty-eight years, they were brought back to the very same place where God would test them again.

“Just before the Hebrew host reached Kadesh, the living stream ceased that for so many years had gushed out beside their encampment. *It was the Lord's purpose again to test His people.* He would prove whether they would trust His providence or imitate the unbelief of their fathers.”³⁶¹ “Again the congregation of Israel was brought into the wilderness, *to the very place where God proved them soon after their leaving Egypt.* The Lord brought them water out of the rock, which had continued to flow until just before they came again to the rock, when the Lord caused that living stream to cease, *to prove his people again,* to see if they would endure the trial of their faith, or would again murmur against him.”³⁶²

Although the first and the second tests at Kadesh appeared to be different, essentially they were the same. Would the Israelites trust in God and through faith obey His word and go and take possession of the Promised Land, or would they distrust Him and murmur? Until they passed this test, they were not ready to enter the Promised Land.

“Before God permitted them to enter Canaan, they must show that they believed His promise. The water ceased before they had reached Edom. Here was an opportunity for them, for a little time, *to walk by faith instead of sight.*”³⁶³ “The cessation of the miraculous flow of water should therefore have been a cause of rejoicing, a token that the *wilderness wandering was ended.* Had they not been blinded by their unbelief, they would have understood this. But that which should have been an evidence of the fulfillment of God's promise was made the occasion of doubt and murmuring. *The people seemed to have given up all hope that God would bring them into possession of Canaan, and they clamored for the blessings of the wilderness.*”³⁶⁴

Have we, like the children of Israel given up hope in the Second Coming? Are we clamoring for the blessings of the world? Sure, we may go to church each Sabbath and sing praises to God,

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 413

³⁶² Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p. 309

³⁶³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 414

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 413

but what are we striving for in our life? Where are our priorities? Is our desire first to serve God, or are we too busy with the cares of this life?

When God brought upon the children of Israel the same test He had brought to their fathers after leaving Egypt, what was their response? Had they learned to trust in Him? Were they ready to now enter the Promised Land through faith? Sadly we are told, “But the first trial developed the same turbulent, unthankful spirit that had been manifested by their fathers. No sooner was the cry for water heard in the encampment than they forgot the hand that had for so many years supplied their wants, and instead of turning to God for help, they murmured against Him, in their desperation exclaiming, ‘Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!’ (Numbers 20:1-13); that is, they wished they had been of the number who were destroyed in the rebellion of Korah.”³⁶⁵

Just like their fathers, the children of Israel possessed the same rebellious spirit and were quick to murmur against God and His prophet Moses. As a result, Moses finally lost his temper and brought dishonor upon God. This gave the children of Israel a reason to support their suspicions that Moses was not led of God. “On every occasion of difficulty or trial the Israelites had been ready to charge Moses with having led them from Egypt, as though God had had no agency in the matter. Throughout their journeyings, as they had complained of the difficulties in the way, and murmured against their leaders, Moses had told them, ‘Your murmurings are against God. It is not I, but God, who has wrought in your deliverance.’ But his hasty words before the rock, ‘shall we bring water?’ were a virtual admission of their charge, and would thus confirm them in their unbelief and justify their murmurings.”³⁶⁶

As a result of their rebellion, the place where they abode became known as Meribah-Kadesh³⁶⁷—the waters of strife.³⁶⁸ Have we seen a fulfillment to this parallel in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Until now, Israel’s journey through the wilderness was accurately fulfilled in the nineteenth

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 414

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 419

³⁶⁷ Deuteronomy 32:51

³⁶⁸ Psalms 106:32

century. But the second test at Kadesh was thirty-eight years after the first, towards the end of their journeys. Therefore to find its parallel, it would make sense that it would be closer to the time when Jesus returns in our own day.

To find a fulfillment, we need to first recognize both tests at Kadesh were essentially the same. Therefore, a parallel to Meribah-Kadesh would be very similar to the parallel of Kadesh-barnea. In chapter eight we found the parallel to Kadesh-barnea was the rejection of the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. We should expect then the parallel to Meribah-Kadesh to reject that same message. As the test at Kadesh-barnea was God's *appointed route to Canaan*, so the 1888 message was God's appointed way to the heavenly Canaan. Therefore, the fulfillment of the second test at Meribah-Kadesh, the very same place as the first test, must also be seen as God's appointed way to the heavenly Canaan. As the first test was defended by two faithful men—Caleb and Joshua—so the 1888 message was defended by two men—Jones and Waggoner. The second test at Meribah-Kadesh was also defended by two—Moses and Aaron. Therefore, we should expect the fulfillment of this test to be defended by two men. Another identifying point we should expect to see is that the fulfillment of the second test should be remembered as a time of strife, just as it was with ancient Israel. Does such a time exist in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

THE 1888 MESSAGE REJECTED A SECOND TIME

“The year was 1950. The place was the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, where the forty-sixth session of the General Conference convened from July 10 to 22. Among the more than 850 delegates to ‘this great world conference’ came these two missionaries from the Southern African Division who were home on their first furlough after serving for a number of years in the East African Union Mission.”³⁶⁹ These two young men were Robert J. Wieland and Donald K. Short. “One was a mission director in Kenya at a station which at the time professed the largest membership in Africa, while the other served as mission

³⁶⁹ D. K. Short & R. J. Wieland, *Faith on Trial*, p. 5. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/22830461/Faith-on-Trial> or http://www.specialtyinterests.net/faith_on_trial.html

field president in Uganda.”³⁷⁰

In the account of their leaving Africa to return to America, both Wieland and Short conclude that it was a *coincidence they went on furlough together*.³⁷¹ Both men had very little contact with each other during their missionary efforts in east Africa. With history to look back on and a greater understanding of the journey of the Israelites to the Promised Land, we can conclude it was more than a coincidence, but rather providence.

Before both men attended the forty-sixth General Conference Session, they first spent some time in Washington studying at the Theological Seminary. Short took a course in church history while Wieland, who was from Uganda, spent time studying theology. During that class, Wieland and Short wrote that “...he [Wieland] heard some (to him) troubling concepts. When he discussed the matter with the Seminary president, he was told he must forthwith leave—being perhaps the only ordained minister ever so expelled from the seminary.”³⁷² As a result of this Wieland spent the winter months of his furlough researching the history of 1888 and its message.

In his attempt to gain a greater understanding of what Ellen White had written regarding 1888, Wieland was denied access to many of Ellen White’s unpublished writings by the White Estate.³⁷³ It wasn’t until 1988 that these unpublished writings were eventually released.³⁷⁴

Once at the General Conference session, both Wieland and Short were impressed to write a four page letter on July 11 to the members of the General Conference Committee after listening to the opening address by General Conference president, J. L. McElhany.³⁷⁵ They had also heard Elder L. K. Dickson declare, “...in the Sabbath worship service preceding the session that ‘we must make a right turn at this session where we took a wrong turn in 1888.’” These two authors sensed that world conditions were in

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 6

³⁷⁴ *Ministry Magazine*, December 1988, p. 29 www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/1988/MIN1988-12.pdf. Retrieved February 21, 2010

³⁷⁵ D. K. Short & R. J. Wieland, *Faith on Trial*, p. 8. Wieland and Short report that this address was read by his secretary, Elder A. W. Cormack as Elder McElhany was not able to attend due to sickness.

crisis; the new atomic age might usher in another world war; it's time to get serious."³⁷⁶

The letter that Wieland and Short wrote touched on a number of subjects, but its focus was primarily on the dangers that Seventh-day Adventism was preaching another Christ. Tied in with this theme was Spiritualism, Kellogg's apostasy and departure into Baal worship as a consequence of not discerning the light of righteousness by faith revealed in 1888.³⁷⁷

On the last day of the conference, July 20, 1950, the two missionaries received a response to their letter. Sadly, just as the 1888 message had been rejected by the majority, so the General Conference Committee rejected the dangers and warnings that had been presented to them. In the letter they were told "it seems that both of you are passing through a spiritual conflict in relation to this movement of which you are a part." In closing, the Conference Committee had written, "Brethren, you are on dangerous ground. You are on the path that Satan trod in your spirit of accusation which led to his being cast out of heaven.... We cannot see that God has placed you in His church as a critic of your brethren, but we want to help you and save you to your work in Africa."³⁷⁸

Between August 3, 1950 and September 13, 1950, Wieland and Short each wrote separate replies to the General Conference, and following their letters, a small committee was organized to interview the two missionaries. "During the meeting the secretary of the White Estate affirmed positively that the presentation of righteousness by faith at the 1888 General Conference 'was accepted.' Those who had initially opposed the message made their confessions within five years and the opposition ceased."³⁷⁹ This new view of 1888 had been growing in the Church, despite early writers, including a retired General Conference president, teaching the opposite.³⁸⁰

In 1947, ten years after Bunch had published his lectures,

³⁷⁶ D. K. Short & R. J. Wieland, *Faith on Trial*, p. 8

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8,9. The full letter can be read from page 79 to 86

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11

³⁸⁰ In 1927, A. G. Daniels, retired General Conference president wrote, *Christ Our Righteousness*, in which he supported Ellen White's view that the church had rejected the 1888 message. In 1937, Taylor G. Bunch also supported this view in his book, *The Exodus and Advent Movement in Type and Anti-Type*.

supporting the idea that the Church rejected the message in 1888 in his book, *The Exodus and Advent Movement in Type and Anti-Type*, the Review and Herald printed L. H. Christian's book, *The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts*. This book is available at the Adventist Archives.³⁸¹ In the chapter entitled, "*The Minneapolis Conference and the Great Revival*," Christian asserts that the 1888 General Conference session was a great victory for the Church. "The General Conference session at Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1888 is a notable landmark in Seventh-day Adventist history. It was really like crossing a continental divide into a new country. Some smiters of the brethren calling themselves reformers have tried to make out that the session was a defeat; whereas, the truth is that it stands out as a *glorious victory* and the occasion and the beginning of larger and better things for the advent church. At no other gathering in our entire history has the Lord in so marked a manner brought such light and victory to His people through Bible study and the Spirit of prophecy. We all need to know what happened in Minneapolis."³⁸² This new view was the complete opposite to that of Daniels and Bunch and worse still, it denied the many letters and testimonies of Ellen White regarding the event. We looked at some of those quotations we looked in chapter eight.

Two years later in 1949, church historian A. W. Spalding, in his book, *Captains of the Host*, also supported this new idea that the Church had not rejected the 1888 message, albeit in a more subtle way. "But the eighties and the nineties saw the revival and restatement in power of the indispensable, prime doctrine of Christianity, that justification and sanctification are through the reception of Christ in the life. That teaching was sorely needed then: and even though sent through imperfect channels, it became an inspiring message which rescued the church from the danger of legalism, and opened minds to the sublime reaches of the gospel. The last decade of the century saw the church developing, through this gospel, into a company prepared to fulfill the mission of God . . . so now it was aroused by the revived message of justification by faith."³⁸³

³⁸¹ <http://www.adventistarchives.org/docs/TFOSG/TFOSG/index.djvu>

³⁸² L. H. Christian, *The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts*, p. 219

³⁸³ A. W. Spalding, *Captains of the Host*, pp. 601, 602

If the Church gained a great victory in and after 1888 by accepting the message, why are we still here? Remember Ellen White had said the loud cry of the fourth angel's message had started to sound back then as a result of the 1888 message. If the Church was developing under the message of justification by faith, why did God allow it to lose both the Battle Creek Sanitarium and the Review and Herald building when they burned to the ground in 1902? Why did Kellogg in the early 1900s bring in a false gospel which we are told was the alpha of apostasy? Far from going forward in victory, the evidence shows the Church was in fact going deeper into apostasy and had it not been for the hand of God through the guidance of His messenger, Ellen White, who knows what would have happened to the Church.

1888-RE-EXAMINED

After their meeting with the committee, "The authors [Wieland and Short] knew they must explain themselves as clearly as possible or face dismissal from the ministry."³⁸⁴ They then set about writing a manuscript which later became known as "*1888 Re-examined*." "Their manuscript in two parts delivered to the Special Committee contained some five hundred EW exhibits, and in its finished form ran to 204 pages legal size. It was outlined, written, and typed over a period of six weeks, yet contained far more than the committee had anticipated. It had been written in Florida and Takoma Park, was typed by paid stenographers and duplicated commercially, partly in Washington and partly at Southern Missionary College. It had no title page, no date, and no authors listed. The presentation was specifically written for this Special Committee of the GC, who were given fifteen mimeographed copies. The authors wanted them to have clear, full evidence of their deepest convictions."³⁸⁵

In the preparation of their manuscript, the authors had to rely primarily on the published writings of Ellen White such as found in *Testimonies to Ministers*. The White Estate had denied them access to the vault that contained all of Ellen White's unpublished writings. However the two authors were able to source many citations from unpublished Ellen White materials from retired

³⁸⁴ D. K. Short & R. J. Wieland, *Faith on Trial*, p. 12

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12

workers. In their account of what happened, they write, “Our using these unpublished materials had even evoked from the White Estate a threat of possible legal action against us.”³⁸⁶ It would seem that those who had control over the unpublished writings didn’t want them circulated. Of course, we can only speculate as to why such a wealth of information on the most divisive General Conference Session in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was withheld.

On December 6, 1951, over a year later, Wieland and Short finally received a response from the Defense Literature Committee of the General Conference. It began with, “The manuscript gives every evidence of earnest, diligent and painstaking effort; but we feel concerned over what appears to us to be a very critical attitude concerning the leadership, the ministry, and the plans of work in God’s cause. All through the manuscript are aspersions and remarks which, if read by our workers and believers, would hardly make for confidence in either the leadership in God’s church, or even in the church itself. The reader is left with the impression that buried in the denominational archives are documents which are being withheld from the people, documents which in your opinion should be quite freely circulated.”³⁸⁷

In their final remarks, the Defense Literature Committee wrote, “We appreciate the fact that you referred the question to the General Conference for study. That was right and in harmony with the Spirit of prophecy counsels. In the light of the foregoing facts, however, and in view of the responsibility of reading and appraising your manuscript, which responsibility was laid upon us by the General Conference officers, we cannot but feel that if you accept this counsel which we offer in response to what we believe was your sincere desire for the help of the brethren, you will not wish to press your rather critical views nor to circulate them further. The grave danger in such an attitude is that it usually reacts unfavorably to one’s own spiritual welfare, and might easily

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14

³⁸⁷ A. L. Hudson, *A Warning and its Reception*, p. 245

This book was originally downloaded from www.maranathamedia.com but since then they have changed their site. You can now find it at the Prophetic Parallels website at http://www.propheticparallels.com/book_1/Resources/A_Warning_and_Its_Reception-A.L._Hudson.pdf

lead to spiritual disaster.”³⁸⁸

BAAL WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

One of the issues the committee took offense to in Wieland’s and Short’s manuscript was their pointing out Ellen White’s prediction that Baal worship would be the religion of many Seventh-day Adventists as a consequence of rejecting the 1888 message. Ellen White had written, “The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means; the seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers... There has been a departure from God among us, and the zealous work of repentance and return to our first love essential to restoration to God and regeneration of heart has not yet been done. Infidelity has been making its inroads into our ranks; for it is the fashion to depart from Christ, and give place to skepticism. With many the cry of the heart has been, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ Baal, Baal, is the choice. *The religion of many among us will be the religion of apostate Israel, because they love their own way, and forsake the way of the Lord.* The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, *that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God,* has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and *rejected.*”³⁸⁹

The committee’s letter stated, “You have asserted and at some length that many of our ministers are presenting a false christ in their preaching, and also in their books and tracts, and that in doing so they are guilty of Baal worship just as was Israel of old. While recognizing that our workers are but fallible men, and that some of them do not always present the story of the Cross, and what Christ Jesus accomplished for men as fully as they should, we do take exception to the charge as you have applied it, to the Seventh-day Adventist ministry as a whole. Our ministry, in the large majority of cases are, we believe, presenting the great truths

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 255

³⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 467

involved in the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Out of this message grows the Cross with its saving power, changing men, and operating in men to be obedient to God. Such a charge that the ministry is in any sense of the word, following the pattern of Baal worship, is entirely false and unfounded. It is our conviction that this charge is not only without foundation, but that in making it, you have done a gross injustice to many of our trusted, honored, and Spirit-filled workers. Such charges remind us of those who, in the days of the Saviour, charged Him with casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Our earnest counsel to you is not to stand as critics of your brethren. It is well always to remember the words of Jesus concerning the mote and the beam.³⁹⁰

In the early 1950s, Wieland's and Short's conviction that Baal worship was creeping into the Church was correct as we will see in later chapters. Whenever the truth of righteousness by faith is rejected, Baal worship will take its place, as it did after 1888.

After thirty-eight years in the wilderness, one would have thought the children of Israel would have learned from their past and not repeated the same sin as their fathers. But the rebellion that was in their fathers' hearts existed in theirs also, and when brought to the same place, they failed the test as well. History was repeated. The same thing happened with modern Israel. By 1950, the church leadership had denied the church had rejected the 1888 message. They had come to a point where they believed the exact opposite. How could God's last day church accept the message of righteousness by faith when they had come to the conclusion that they had never rejected it?

In 1952, both Wieland and Short wrote back to the General Conference a four page response. "We acknowledge the General Conference to be the highest body God has placed on earth and therefore the matter is now their responsibility—being the properly constituted watchmen upon the walls of Zion.... While we make this statement of submission to the General Conference we also wish to be frank in saying that we do not believe the reply as given to us will bear analysis. Therefore to go into your file before it is closed on this matter we submit the following and quite needless to say time will soon prove how 'false and

³⁹⁰ A. L. Hudson, *A Warning and its Reception*, p. 254

unfounded' or how dreadfully true our convictions are."³⁹¹

When Wieland and Short prepared their original "1888 Re-examined" document with no title, date or authors, they never intended it to leave the confines of the General Conference. If this had been the case, the issue may have blown over and the leadership in the General Conference could have relaxed. However this did not happen. The document managed to find its way into the hands of people outside the General Conference and from there, it was duplicated without permission and circulated around the globe. "Lay members who saw it viewed official attempts to suppress it as an exercise of 'kingly power' and a denial of the principles of Christian liberty. Official condemnation of the manuscript unsupported by convincing evidence precipitated among them an unprecedented loss of confidence in the leadership of the church, the more readers were convinced that the basic thesis of the manuscript was supported by Ellen White and historical evidence, the more astounded they were by persistent General Conference rejection of it. This breakdown of leadership credibility became especially evident in the Australasian Division."³⁹²

According to Wieland and Short, by 1957 the General Conference was receiving many letters inquiring why they had rejected the manuscript since its basic thesis was supported by Ellen White. They were pressed to "make a reasonable and credible reply to the manuscript."³⁹³ This put the authors into a difficult position, as it appeared they had precipitated this agitation, something they had tried to avoid from the beginning.

FURTHER REJECTION

In September 1958, the General Conference released a document entitled, "*Further Appraisal of the Manuscript 1888 Re-examined.*" In it they stated, "That in the light of these findings the conclusions set forth in the document could not be accepted and consequently copies of the manuscript should not be distributed and further, the authors should recall the copies they had hastened into the field before it had been reviewed."³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ D. K. Short & R. J. Wieland, *Faith on Trial*, p. 18

³⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 20

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 21

³⁹⁴ A. L. Hudson, *A Warning and its Reception*, p. 257

Regarding their use of the Spirit of Prophecy, the writers of the *appraisal* wrote, "In presenting specific items of Spirit of prophecy counsel directed to the church, its leaders, or its institutions, as exhibits to support a line of argument, it is vitally important that the statements quoted were written by Ellen White to apply to the situation delineated. *A thorough knowledge of denominational history, together with a recognition of the relationship of counsels and events and a strict integrity are needed by one so using E. G. White materials.*"³⁹⁵

Wieland and Short would continue their correspondence with the president of the General Conference for many years after 1958. However, the Church never admitted that it had ever rejected the 1888 message. Officially the Church at its highest level again resisted the message God had sent through Jones and Waggoner and instead, attacked the messengers, trying to prove they had no authority to use Ellen White. Just like ancient Israel, the leadership of the Church in the 1950s had failed the second test that would have led them into the heavenly Canaan. Instead, we were led back into the wilderness just as ancient Israel was because of unbelief.

PARALLELS FULFILLED

In identifying the 1950s as the time when modern Israel was brought back to the borders of the Promised Land, do we find adequate fulfillment of the types? Both the first test at Kadesh-barnea and the second test at Meribah-Kadesh were essentially the same. In the fulfilled parallel we have noted the first test was the rejection of the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. In the 1950s the same message was rejected. In fact, the leadership was so blinded, that they had come to believe the church had never rejected the message in 1888.

In another remarkable fulfillment, the message of the 1950s, like that of 1888 was heralded by two faithful men. Both of these men had known each other in college, but once in Africa at their mission posts, they had no contact with each other except one workers' meeting in their Union. It was by the providence of God that both men would go on furlough together and eventually attend the forty-sixth General Conference session and later

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 264

present a manuscript pointing out the 1888 message and how it had been rejected.

The 1888 General Conference has become known as the most divisive session the church has ever had. The repercussions of rejecting the heaven sent light meant that Adventism would eventually be plagued with Kellogg's alpha of apostasy. As a result of rejecting the same light, the 1950s has become known as probably the most divisive time in the history of Adventism because of a book that was published known as *Questions on Doctrine*. Woodrow W. Whidden, professor of historical and systematic theology notes, "While the original [1957 edition] turned out to be a watershed factor when it came to Seventh-day Adventist/Evangelical relations, it also proved to be *one of the most controversial publishing events in the history of Adventism*."³⁹⁶ Historian George Knight has also noted that *Questions on Doctrine* "easily qualifies as the most divisive book in Seventh-day Adventist history."³⁹⁷ In the next chapter we will take a closer look at this book and its repercussions on Adventism.

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS

The time that spanned the two tests at Kadesh was thirty-eight years. The only other time the Bible mentions a thirty-eight year period is in John 5:1-9. In those verses we read the story where Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the second Passover. When He came to Bethesda, He "...saw one case of supreme wretchedness. It was that of a man who had been a helpless cripple for thirty-eight years. His disease was in a great degree the result of his own sin, and was looked upon as a judgment from God. Alone and friendless, feeling that he was shut out from God's mercy, the sufferer had passed long years of misery."³⁹⁸

Such was the compassion of Jesus that "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?"³⁹⁹ "Jesus does not ask this sufferer to exercise faith in Him. He simply says, 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.' But the man's faith takes hold upon that word.

³⁹⁶ Woodrow W. Whidden, *Ministry Magazine*, August, 2003, p. 14 www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/2003/MIN2003-08.pdf

³⁹⁷ <http://god.andrews.edu/>

³⁹⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 202

³⁹⁹ John 5:6

Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Without question he sets his will to obey the command of Christ, and all his muscles respond to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man. Jesus had given him no assurance of divine help. The man might have stopped to doubt, and lost his one chance of healing. But he believed Christ's word, and in acting upon it he received strength."

400

This is the story of the church in the wilderness and God's modern day church. As Jesus saw this case of supreme wretchedness, so He sees His Church, feeble and defective. What is more significant is this poor man had suffered thirty-eight years, the exact time Israel had wandered in the wilderness between the two Kadesh's. The cripple had suffered this long because of his own sin. So too the children of Israel had wandered in the wilderness all those years because of their rebellion against God. But the good news is that Jesus meets this man where He is and commands him to rise. Likewise, Jesus brought ancient Israel back to Kadesh, and in a sense was saying to arise, go in and take possession of the Promised Land. In the 1950s He did the same thing when He used Wieland and Short to repeat the 1888 message. Had the message been accepted by ancient Israel and modern Israel, the Church would have taken hold of Christ's strength and gone in and possessed the Promised Land. Sadly, this never happened.

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY PASSED

"Had the people, when brought into trial, trusted in God, the Captain of the Lord's host would have led them through Edom, and the fear of them would have rested upon the inhabitants of the land, so that, instead of manifesting hostility, they would have shown them favor. But the Israelites did not act promptly upon God's word, and while they were complaining and murmuring, *the golden opportunity passed.*"⁴⁰¹ "Had they in this manner passed through Edom, as God had purposed, the passage would have proved a blessing, not only to themselves, but to the inhabitants of the land; for it would have given them an opportunity to become

⁴⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 202-203

⁴⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 422

acquainted with God's people and His worship and to witness how the God of Jacob prospered those who loved and feared Him. But all this the unbelief of Israel had prevented. God had given the people water in answer to their clamors, but He permitted their unbelief to work out its punishment. Again they must traverse the desert and quench their thirst from the miraculous spring, which, had they but trusted in Him, they would no longer have needed.

“Accordingly the hosts of Israel again turned toward the south, and made their way over sterile wastes, that seemed even more dreary after a glimpse of the green spots among the hills and valleys of Edom.”⁴⁰² How true this was for the Seventh-day Adventist Church after the 1950s.

Chapter Summary

1. The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for thirty-eight years because of their rebellion at Kadesh-barnea.
2. At the end of the thirty-eight years, God brought the Israelites back to Kadesh and tested them with the same test, but in a different way. Kadesh was the appointed route to the Promised Land.
3. As the children of Israel failed the test at Meribah-Kadesh, so the Seventh-day Adventist Church failed the same test in the early 1950s by rejecting the 1888 message of righteousness by faith.
4. If the children of Israel had been faithful, they would have entered the Promised Land before the forty-years had expired. So too, Jesus would have come if the message of righteousness by faith had been accepted in the 1950s.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 424

Chapter 12

Serpents in the Camp

“And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.”

—Numbers 21:5

As the children of Israel were turned back into the wilderness, “...they continued their journey toward the south, their route lay through a hot, sandy valley, destitute of shade or vegetation. The way seemed long and difficult, and they suffered from weariness and thirst.”⁴⁰³ They had been so close to entering the Promised Land, but because of their rebellion they were sent to wander in the wilderness again. None knew for how long they would have to wander in the wilderness this time because of their unbelief. As a result, the people became discouraged.

“By continually dwelling on the dark side of their experiences, they separated themselves farther and farther from God. They lost sight of the fact that but for their murmuring when the water ceased at Kadesh, they would have been spared the journey around

⁴⁰³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 428

Edom. God had purposed better things for them. Their hearts should have been filled with gratitude to Him that He had punished their sin so lightly. But instead of this, they flattered themselves that if God and Moses had not interfered, they might now have been in possession of the Promised Land. After bringing trouble upon themselves, making their lot altogether harder than God designed, they charged all their misfortunes upon Him. Thus they cherished bitter thoughts concerning His dealings with them, and finally they became discontented with everything. Egypt looked brighter and more desirable than liberty and the land to which God was leading them."⁴⁰⁴

"And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread."⁴⁰⁵

"What ingratitude! This people were partaking of the bread of Heaven. 'Man did eat angel's food.' They were fed every day by God's constant bounty. Yet all the tokens of his love and care failed to inspire their hearts with thankfulness and childlike trust. Did not He who made man know what was best adapted to meet the wants of his people? He had promised that if they would be obedient to his voice there should not be a feeble one in all their tribes. *But the food which he provided did not meet their fancy.* And in their murmurings *they uttered falsehoods*, by saying that they had no bread nor water; they had both, provided by a daily miracle."⁴⁰⁶

In that dreary wilderness the children of Israel were not happy with the bread that God had given them. They came to Moses, God's appointed leader, and complained about how they loathed the manna. As a result of their rebellion and murmuring, "the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died."⁴⁰⁷

FALSE DOCTRINE

The parallel to this story is very clear. In the Bible, bread is a symbol of Jesus and His word. Jesus said, "I am that bread of

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ Numbers 21:5

⁴⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, October 28, 1880, par. 2

⁴⁰⁷ Numbers 21:6

life.”⁴⁰⁸ He also resisted temptation with the words, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”⁴⁰⁹ It is through the words of Jesus, as recorded in the Bible that we can find the truth. Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”⁴¹⁰ Concerning the truth, we are told, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”⁴¹¹ The freedom here spoken about is freedom from error and the guilt and practice of sin. Freedom in knowing God as a friend and a Father who cares for His children. Jesus said, “...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”⁴¹²

In commenting upon the bread of life, Mrs. White wrote, “‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,’ are the words of our Saviour. *Errors in doctrine are multiplying and twining themselves with serpentlike subtlety around the affections of the people.* There is not a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied. *The great truths of prophecy, showing our position in the history of the world, have been shorn of their beauty and power by the clergy, who seek to make these all-important truths dark and incomprehensible.* In many cases the children are drifting away from the old landmarks.”⁴¹³

When the people of God loath the truth found in His word, which the manna symbolized, God sends them serpents. In the Bible, Satan is identified as the “great dragon... *that old serpent,* called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.”⁴¹⁴ But, Satan does not come openly to the people of God. Just as he used a serpent to deceive Eve, so he uses other means to deceive God’s people. In His rebuke to the leaders of His day, Jesus reveals just what the serpents that God sends symbolizes. “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”⁴¹⁵ Jesus was speaking to the leaders of the church. When the love of the truth is loathed, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who

⁴⁰⁸ John 6:48

⁴⁰⁹ Matthew 4:4

⁴¹⁰ John 17:17

⁴¹¹ John 8:32

⁴¹² John 6:63

⁴¹³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 330

⁴¹⁴ Revelation 12:9

⁴¹⁵ Matthew 23:33

believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”⁴¹⁶

In the days of Jeremiah, this symbolism was repeated with a slight difference. When the rebellion of Israel was so great that God had to send a pagan nation to destroy Jerusalem, including the great temple that Solomon had built, the people of God were carried away into Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied, “For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.”⁴¹⁷ The people had become so corrupt in the eyes of God that Jeremiah wrote, “Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD. How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?”⁴¹⁸

As Israel had been called out of Egypt, the seat of false religion, so in Jeremiah’s day they were taken back to the seat of false religion, this time Babylon. And what was the condition of the people at that time? They were guilty of spiritual pride. They believed themselves to be wise and comforted themselves that they had the law of God. But, even though they had the law of God, they rejected His word. This condition is known as Laodicea, and it just so happens to represent God’s last day Church, particularly after rejecting the 1888 message. Mrs White wrote in 1889, “We thank the Lord with all the heart that we have precious light to present before the people, and we rejoice that we have a message for this time which is present truth. The tidings that Christ is our righteousness has brought relief to many, many souls, and God says to his people, ‘Go forward.’ *The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition.* How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts, but it is this very fervor of

⁴¹⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12

⁴¹⁷ Jeremiah 8:17

⁴¹⁸ Jeremiah 8:7-9

love that makes God's people the light of the world. The True Witness says of a *cold, lifeless, Christless church*, '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.' Mark the following words: '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.' Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. *They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God*; and still he has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted his grace, abused his privileges, slighted his opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity. With Pharisaic pride they have vaunted themselves till it has been said of them, 'Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.'⁴¹⁹

CHRIST NOT IN OUR MIDST

As Seventh-day Adventists, most of us are well aware that we are the church of Laodicea, yet at the same time we act as though Jesus is *in* our midst. But where does the book of Revelation picture Jesus? That's right, He is on the outside knocking on the door. Sadly, as individuals we are stopping Jesus from coming into our lives, and corporately we have stopped Jesus from coming into the Church. This is why in 1898 Mrs. White could write, "Those who claim to believe the truth do not possess that power that God would bestow upon them if they really believed, and were striving for conformity to His image. *The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst.* If Christ were formed within, the hope of glory, conformity to His image would be seen, and the church trials which separate the members from Christ would disappear."⁴²⁰

Because of spiritual pride and rebellion, God sent serpents

⁴¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 387

⁴²⁰ Ellen G. White, *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, Vol. 1, p. 99

which symbolized Babylon, the seat of Satan's counterfeit religion. The book of Revelation reveals that spiritual Babylon is the great enemy of God and His people. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."⁴²¹

In the history of Israel, we learn that as a result of rejecting God's truth, symbolized by the manna, the filthiness of Babylon's fornication which is her false doctrines, comes into the Church by way of the Pharisees—the leadership. As many of the Israelites died from the sting of the serpents, so many in the Church die spiritually from the sting of the serpents false doctrine.

"Because they had been shielded by divine power they had not realized the countless dangers by which they were continually surrounded. In their ingratitude and unbelief they had anticipated death, and now the Lord permitted death to come upon them. The poisonous serpents that infested the wilderness were called fiery serpents, on account of the terrible effects produced by their sting, it causing violent inflammation and speedy death. As the protecting hand of God was removed from Israel, great numbers of the people were attacked by these venomous creatures."⁴²²

Although this parallel could be applied to many different periods in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, one period stands out the most.

QUESTION ON DOCTRINE

As was pointed out in the previous chapter, in the 1950s, after rejecting Wieland's and Short's call to accept righteousness by faith, the Church released the book, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*. "Published in 1957 as a direct result of the

⁴²¹ Revelation 17:4-6

⁴²² Ellen G. White. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 429

dialogues between evangelicals Walter Martin and Donald Grey Barnhouse and a select group of Adventist leaders, *Questions on Doctrine* was hailed initially as the apology par excellence of Adventism by its writers and promoters. However, when the book came out, it created great uproar among Adventists who questioned whether it accurately represented Adventist theology and the writings of Ellen White, in particular.⁴²³

One of its primary and well known authors, Leroy Edwin Froom, believed the book, “completed the long process of clarification, rectification of misconceptions, and declarations of truth before [the Christian] Church and the world.”⁴²⁴ It just so happens that Froom is one of the most recognized authorities in Adventism on 1888, because of his book, *Movement of Destiny*, published in 1971. Like L. H. Christian, A.W. Spalding, Norval F. Pease and A.V. Olson who went before him, Froom chose to believe that the church did not reject the 1888 message and he condemned Wieland and Short for claiming it had. He even called for them to make a public confession.

“The publication of *Questions on Doctrine* grew out of a series of conferences between a few Adventist spokespersons and Protestant representatives from 1955 to 1956. The roots of this conference originated in a series of dialogues between Pennsylvania conference president, T. E. Unruh, and evangelical Bible teacher and magazine editor Donald Grey Barnhouse. Unruh was particularly concerned because of a scathing review written by Barnhouse about Ellen White's book, *Steps to Christ*. Unruh had sent him a copy of the book in 1949. In the spring of 1955 Barnhouse commissioned Walter Martin to write a book about Seventh-day Adventists. Martin requested a meeting with Adventist leaders so that he could question them about their beliefs.

“The first meeting between Martin and Adventist leaders occurred in March 1955. Martin was accompanied by George Cannon and met with Adventist representatives Le Roy Edwin Froom and W. E. Read. Later Roy Allan Anderson and Barnhouse joined these discussions. Initially both sides viewed each other with suspicion as they worked through a list of 40

⁴²³ <http://qod.andrews.edu/> Retrieved February 24, 2010

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*

questions. Central to these concerns were four alleged items of Adventist theology: (1) the atonement was not completed at the cross; (2) salvation is the result of grace plus the works of the law; (3) Jesus was a created being, not from all eternity; and (4) that Jesus partook of man's sinful, fallen nature at the incarnation."⁴²⁵

Because the 1888 message was rejected, which Wieland and Short called the Church's attention to, God allowed false doctrines to enter the church just as He sent serpents to arrest the attention of ancient Israel. "*God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep.*"⁴²⁶

Regarding *Questions on Doctrine*, "The most problematic topic was the Adventist understanding of the human nature of Christ. Earlier William H. Branson, Adventist General Conference President, had written that Christ 'took upon Himself sinful flesh. (By 1953 the statement had been omitted from his book.) Most Adventists prior to 1950 agreed with this statement. Froom appears to have misled evangelical leaders because he gave the impression to Martin that Adventists had always believed in the sinless human nature of Christ."⁴²⁷

An accurate understanding of the human nature of Christ is essential if we are to correctly understand righteousness by faith. With the publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, Satan was able to lay a foundation that would lead to further heresies. This foundation consisted of a wrong understanding of sin, which leads to a wrong understanding of the human nature of Christ, which results in a wrong understanding of righteousness by faith. Running parallel to this line of thought, *Questions on Doctrine* also subtly introduced an erroneous understanding of the atonement, which also has repercussions on the truth of righteousness by faith. Because these doctrines directly affect the truth of righteousness by faith, we must take the time to carefully consider each one of them.

⁴²⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Questions_on_Doctrine. Retrieved February 24, 2010

⁴²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 707

⁴²⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Questions_on_Doctrine. Retrieved February 24, 2010

NATURE OF SIN

When *Questions on Doctrine* was published, it very subtly introduced a new understanding of sin. This was seen very clearly with the prepublication draft. The final published version was severely edited and many of the obvious errors were removed. The published version reads: “Adam’s sin involved the whole human race. ‘By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,’ declares the apostle Paul (Rom. 5:12). The expression ‘by sin’ shows clearly that he is referring, *not to actual individual sins, but rather to the sinful nature* that we all inherited from Adam. ‘In Adam all die’ (1 Cor. 15:22). Because of Adam’s sin, ‘death passed upon all men’ (Rom. 5:12). (emphasis added)”⁴²⁸

Although this may appear to be correct, it was actually an attack on Adventists’ understanding of the nature of sin. By stating that sin does not refer to individual acts (in thought or deed), but rather a sinful nature, the writers were echoing the concept of original sin. The prepublication draft clearly shows this. In the following quote, the strikethrough text is what was edited out and the italics are what replaced it.

“Adam’s sin involved the whole human race. ‘By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,’ declares the apostle Paul (Rom. 5:12). The expression ‘death by sin’ shows clearly that he is referring, not to actual individual sins, but rather to *original sin* [emphasis in original]—the sinful nature which that we have all inherited from Adam. ~~Even innocent little children die, for ‘I In Adam all die’ (1 Cor. 15:212). By that original~~ *Because of Adam’s* sin ‘death passed upon all men’ (Rom. 5:12). ~~Luther (Commentary on Romans, p. 81), states the position well when he says:~~

~~“Original sin is by Adam’s transgression. This sin we bear as his children and we are guilty on account of it, for with his nature Adam also transfers his sin to all. As he himself became sinful and evil through that sin, so he begets only sinners and evildoers, namely, such as are inclined to all evil and resist that which is good.~~

~~“It was to meet man in his need, and to save the race from eternal death, that God the Eternal Word became incarnate in His Son. Christ lived as a man among men, then died in man’s stead. The substitutionary death of our Lord is the very heart of the~~

⁴²⁸ *Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 406-407

gospel. *When by faith we receive Him, then His death becomes our death—‘If one died for all, then were all dead’* (2 Cor. 5:14). The Scriptures reveal that just as far-reaching as was the effect of original—Adam’s sin, just so far-reaching is the effect of free grace.”⁴²⁹

Raymond Cottrell, in “*General Suggestions on This We Believe*,” which was the third working title for what became *Questions on Doctrine*, wrote: “42.6.3 ‘Original sin.’ This is the first I knew that Adventists believe in ‘original sin,’ at least in the technical theological definition of the word. This term has a technical theological import to which we cannot subscribe which would require sacramental practices such as infant baptism.”⁴³⁰

The ramifications of equating a sinful nature with original sin destroys Adventism’s clear stand on the human nature of Christ and the truth about righteousness by faith, which we will see shortly.

In his book, *Christ’s Human Nature*, Joe Crews recognized the connections between sin, the human nature of Christ and righteousness by faith. He wrote, “I am convinced that Satan has cleverly produced and popularized a disguised error that has led to a *network of related errors*. And they all circulate around the most sacred subject dear to the heart of a committed Christian—righteousness by faith, the incarnation of Jesus, and victory over sin.

“There can be no doubt that this series of erroneous views are related to each other by a convincing chain of human logic and reasoning. If one point is true, then all the other points must necessarily be true also. But if one point is in error, the other points lose their credibility as well.”⁴³¹

The beginning of the chain that produces a series of erroneous views that Crews points out was the doctrine of original sin. “It is very likely that the *chain was started by the interjection into early church theology of the doctrine of original sin*. Beginning with the

⁴²⁹ Larry Kirkpatrick, *Original sin in prepublication draft of Question on Doctrine*. <http://www.greatcontroversy.org/gco/pdf/kir-qod-osin.pdf>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴³⁰ Larry Kirkpatrick, *A wind of doctrine blows through the church: the alternate hamartiology of Questions on Doctrine*, p. 11. http://qod.andrews.edu/docs/16_larry_kirkpatrick.pdf. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴³¹ Joe Crews, *Christ’s-Human-Nature*, p. 3-4 (<http://www.amazingfacts.org/Resources/Download/PBLib/BK-CHN.PDF>)

valid biblical position of man's inherent carnal nature, which predisposes him to sin, the idea gradually evolved that Adam's guilt was also imputed to his descendants. Augustine was responsible more than any other for propagating this view of transmitted guilt. Through Luther and the reformers it found its way into many of the Protestant churches."⁴³²

In defining the different concepts of sin, Norman Gulley wrote in the *Review and Herald*, "Over the years three major views have come to the fore: the Pelagian, the semi-Pelagian, and the Augustinian... The Augustinian idea is that both the effect and guilt of Adam's sin are imputed to the race. In the first two positions (Pelagian and semi-Pelagian) sin is confined to an act. In the third (Augustinian) *sin includes also nature*. In the first two a person *is a sinner because he sins*. In the third a person *is a sinner, therefore he sins*."⁴³³

Gulley then asks the question, how should sin be defined? To this question, he answers, "Within contemporary Seventh-day Adventist thinking, sin is variously defined as breaking the law (act); broken relationship (relationship); and corrupt nature (nature). These definitions offer different answers to the question 'Is man a sinner because he sins, or does he sin because he is a sinner?' But is it possible that sin includes all three definitions? Might sinfulness (nature, broken relationship) and sins (acts) be considered as cause and effect?"⁴³⁴ Finally Gulley concludes he accepts the Augustinian concept of sin. "The Bible does define sin as an act — "transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), or "lawlessness" (NIV, RSV). In fact, there are many Hebrew and Greek words translated by the one English word sin that emphasize sin as an act.

"But is this all there is to sin? Is there evidence that *sin has a deeper dimension—a root system*, so to speak, supporting these acts?

"Yes, there is. The Bible speaks also of *sin as more than an act*."⁴³⁵

As Crews clearly understood, so Gulley recognized the

⁴³² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5

⁴³³ Norman Gulley, *Review and Herald*, January 25, 1990, p. 12 (http://www.adventistarchives.org/docs/RH/RH19900125-V167-04__C/index.djv). Retrieved April 21, 2010

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13

implication of accepting this view of sin. He wrote, "...So if every man is *born a sinner* (i.e., a fallen being, separated from God—needing salvation) as the result of Adam's sin, *how then could Christ enter the race through a human mother and yet be sinless?*"⁴³⁶

LIVING WITHOUT A MEDIATOR

The concept of original sin teaches that man cannot overcome sin because he stands guilty before God, not because of the sins he or she commits, but because they *are* sinful from conception. Such a teaching originates from the father of lies, for it provides a false sense of security to those who believe it. The Bible speaks about those who overcome, but original sin waters this down by saying you can't overcome because even if you don't commit a sinful act (which of course is impossible for those who believe in original sin), you are still sinful.

In contrast to this erroneous view, Ellen White speaks about a time when probation will close and Jesus finishes His work as man's mediator. Then God's people will have to live a life like Jesus lived, free of sin.

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. *Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling.* Through the grace of God and their own diligent efforts, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away sin, among God's people on earth."⁴³⁷

In a more direct statement, the prophet of God wrote, "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 finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of himself,

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13

⁴³⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, January 17, 1907, par. 4. See also *Great Controversy*, p. 425

‘The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.’ 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.*”⁴³⁸

Such a teaching is not without support from the Bible. In Revelation we read of that time when probation closes, “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.*”⁴³⁹ Further we read of those who pass through the time of trouble after probation closes, “And 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... These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. *And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*”⁴⁴⁰

In the Old Testament God showed His people the plan of salvation through types or examples in the sanctuary service. A sinner could only be cleansed of his sin through an atoning sacrifice⁴⁴¹ and the mediation of the priest on his behalf as he brought the sin into the sanctuary.⁴⁴² Without a sacrifice and a mediator there could be no forgiveness of sin. When probation closes, Ellen White tells us that not only will there be no mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, but there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin.

“As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. *There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God.* While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the

⁴³⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 14, 1912, par. 8. See also *Great Controversy*, p. 623

⁴³⁹ Revelation 22:11

⁴⁴⁰ Revelation 14:1, 4-5

⁴⁴¹ Leviticus 4:4, 17:11

⁴⁴² Leviticus 4:5-7

people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent.”⁴⁴³

“When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man’s behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there *will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin*. 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: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ Revelation 22:11. Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth.”⁴⁴⁴

During this time when there is no longer a mediator in heaven, the people of God will reflect the image of Jesus fully. “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*.”⁴⁴⁵

So fully can mankind reflect the image of Jesus, that Mrs. White wrote that mankind can reach a condition of sinlessness. She wrote, “Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God’s commandments *will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression*. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts, including the one relating to the observance of the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, the day that He blessed and sanctified, ‘because that in it He had rested from all His work’(Gen. 2:3).”⁴⁴⁶ Of course, those who reach this condition will never think they have reached it. The Bible says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”⁴⁴⁷ Now if the doctrine of original sin is correct, how can people reach such a state of *sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression*, for the doctrine teaches we are sinful even if we don’t commit a sin? It just doesn’t fit, because it is not the truth.

⁴⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 280

⁴⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201

⁴⁴⁵ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 71

⁴⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 8. p. 99

⁴⁴⁷ 1 John 1:8

CAN WE OVERCOME?

The doctrine of original sin destroys man's assurance that he can overcome even as Jesus overcame. For example, one of Adventism's most influential teachers and writes, Edward Heppenstall⁴⁴⁸ "opposed Andreasen's form of historic Adventism on such issues as the human nature of Christ and the atonement. He emphasized, as did *Questions on Doctrine*, the atonement on the cross with a continuing ministry in heaven in the antitypical Day of Atonement. Beyond that, he stressed such teachings as the helplessness of human beings to do good of their own selves, justification by faith in relation to the entire plan of salvation, the *impossibility of humanly achieving what some people think of as sinless perfection*, the fact that Jesus was not just like other children of fallen Adam and the new covenant experience."⁴⁴⁹

Heppenstall taught, "From the Word of God it is this spiritual maturity and stability that is possible in this life. To teach from the Bible uses of this word that ultimate sinless perfection is possible to inherently sinful man here on earth is not supported by the Word of God, *and is denied by the very nature of man himself*. This does not deny that there is growth towards perfection. Sin does not reign, but it does remain in terms of the limitations of human nature as we know it on this earth. It takes into consideration, *even after the close of probation*, that as people grow old the arteries harden, the mental and physical systems slow down and therefore the responses are not what they were in the full strength of youth."⁴⁵⁰

In his study "*Some Thoughts on Original Sin*," Gerhard Pfandl, summarizes the current position among Adventism, "Thus the general consensus of Adventist scholars, as expressed in this book, defines sin as an act (1 John 3:4) as well as a state (Ps 51:5; Eph 2:3). We inherit a sinful nature (SIN) which, unless checked by the Holy Spirit, entices us to commit individual acts of

⁴⁴⁸ Edward Heppenstall was the number one influential Adventist writer/teacher, taking a score of 33%. <http://spectrummagazine.org/files/archive/archive16-20/18-1bull.pdf>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴⁴⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Heppenstall. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴⁵⁰ Edward Heppenstall, *Some Theological Considerations of Perfection*, <http://biblicalresearch.gc.adventist.org/documents/perfection%20Heppenstall.htm>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

transgression (sins).⁴⁵¹ Four pages later, Pfandl writes, “While some believe that sin is only a wilful or negligent violation of God’s will, our study of Scripture has shown that *sin is also a state into which we are born (original corruption)*. This sinful state will remain with us until the end, though by God’s grace we can overcome every temptation to sin.”⁴⁵²

There is no Bible verse that teaches there are two kinds of sin, such as Pfandl implies. This distinction between SIN and sin is totally foreign to the Bible. The Bible gives us only one true definition of sin. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”⁴⁵³ In support of this, Ellen White wrote, “Our *only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is ‘the transgression of the law;’* it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.”⁴⁵⁴ Again this was repeated in 1897, “The *only definition of sin given in God’s Word, is transgression of the law.*”⁴⁵⁵ And if that wasn’t clear enough, Mrs. White wrote it a third time. “It is the privilege of every sinner to ask his teacher what sin really is. Give me a definition of sin. We have one in 1 John 3. ‘Sin is the transgression of the law.’ *Now this is the only definition of sin in the whole Bible.*”⁴⁵⁶

At least three times Ellen White confirmed that sin is not a state we are born into, but an act against God’s law. Some will argue that the Bible says in Romans 14:23 that, “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” but this is not defining sin. It explains an act of sin. For example, we can say stealing is sin but it is not the definition of sin. Sin is far broader than stealing. It encompasses every act that transgresses God’s law, whether in thought, word or deed.

Some will also argue that in Psalm 51:5, David taught that man is born a sinner. We can come to this conclusion when reading some modern Bible translations. For example, the Good News Bible reads, “I have been evil from the day I was born; from the

⁴⁵¹ Gerhard Pfandl, *Some thoughts on original sin*, p. 18

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 22

⁴⁵³ 1 John 3:4

⁴⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 492

⁴⁵⁵ Ellen G. White, *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, March 2, 1897, par. 32

⁴⁵⁶ Ellen G. White, *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 1, p. 228

time I was conceived, I have been sinful.”⁴⁵⁷ Another modern translation interprets the Psalm as, “Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me.”⁴⁵⁸ Both of these translations are not faithful to the original Hebrew and force a false interpretation on its reader. The King James Version (or many other Bible versions for that matter) which is a literal translation reads, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”⁴⁵⁹

You will notice this is remarkably different from the two versions mentioned above. Notice David does not say he was a sinner or guilty of sin from birth. So what did David mean?

“Where else could David have been born except in iniquity and sin? His mother and father were sinners, and he was born in pain because of the sin of Adam and Eve. David was born in a sinful world to sinful parents. If a child would happen to be born in a family of thieves, where thievery was practiced and taught by the parents, he would be born in thievery. Would this in itself make him a thief? Likewise, to be born in sin does not automatically constitute one a lost and condemned sinner. It does mean that one's circumstances from birth are extremely undesirable, and that one is most likely to end up a sinner.”⁴⁶⁰

In another attempt to support the erroneous view of original sin, its advocates look to Romans 5. However, “The clearest summary of the entire chapter is verse 18. ‘Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life....’ Because of Adam's sin all men were truly condemned. Because of his rebellion, Adam was subject to immediate annihilation (the second death), and the entire human race was thereby subject to the same condemnation and annihilation. But the second half of the verse tells us that Christ reversed that penalty for the same all men condemned by Adam. In other words, the corporate condemnation brought by Adam is cancelled by the corporate justification brought by Christ. Because of His atoning death, all men have been freed from Adam's

⁴⁵⁷ Psalm 51:5 (Good News Bible)

⁴⁵⁸ Psalm 51:5 (God's Word)

⁴⁵⁹ Psalm 51:5 (King James Version)

⁴⁶⁰ Dennis Priebe, *Are All Men Condemned at Birth?* www.greatcontroversy.org/documents/sermons/pri-birt.html. Retrieved February 28, 2010

condemnation.

“Inspiration tells us that Christ's death ‘restored the whole race of men to favor with God’ (1SM 343). e. J. Waggoner commented on this verse nearly a hundred years ago. ‘As the condemnation came upon all, so the justification comes upon all... the free gift comes upon all’ (ST, March 12, 1896).

“This straightforward understanding of Romans 5 completely destroys the false concept of original sin which has misled Christians for most of the Christian centuries. This chapter says absolutely nothing about being sinners by nature. In fact, it says that we have been freed from whatever condemnation Adam brought into the world. Because Christ is the true head of the race, although we are born with all the effects of sin in and upon us, we are not born either guilty or condemned.”⁴⁶¹

Clearly we can see that by rejecting the truth that we once held on the nature of sin, it is impossible to correctly understand what righteousness by faith is. The next link in the chain of error that we need to look at, which was introduced in *Questions on Doctrine*, is the human nature of Christ.

HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST

Questions on Doctrine was the first real push in Adventism to introduce the idea that Jesus did not take upon himself a fallen nature. This new idea was a natural result of redefining what sin was.

Woodrow W. Whidden in *Ministry* notes, “The traditional critics of QOD will be gratified to know that Knight has pulled no punches, especially when it comes to exposing the way L. E. Froom and his colleagues were ‘less than transparent’ about the denomination's long-held (since the 1890s) consensus on the ‘post-Fall’ humanity of Christ. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Knight also suggests that Froom and his colleagues gave a false impression as they developed the notorious ‘Appendix B,’ entitled ‘Christ's Nature During the Incarnation,’ which consists of Ellen White statements.

“Knight claims that the controversial heading, which says Christ ‘Took Sinless Human Nature,’ was ‘problematic in that it

⁴⁶¹ Dennis Priebe, *To Sin or Not to Sin*. <http://www.greatcontroversy.org/documents/articles/pri-tosi.html>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

implied that this was Ellen White's idea when in fact she was quite emphatic in repeatedly stating that Christ took 'our sinful nature' and that 'He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin.'⁴⁶²

In describing how Froom and his colleagues managed to introduce the erroneous view that Christ took unfallen human nature, Herbert E. Douglass writes in *Ministry*, "Froom took a poll of Adventist leaders and discovered that 'nearly all of them' felt that Christ had our sinful nature. Further, the recently retired General Conference president, W. H. Branson, wrote in the 1950 edition of his *Drama of the Ages* that Christ in His incarnation took 'upon Himself sinful flesh.'

"But Froom and Anderson nevertheless affirmed in what appeared to George Knight to be a 'less than transparent' way that 'the majority of the denomination has always held' the humanity of Christ 'to be sinless, holy, and perfect' despite the fact that certain writers had occasionally gotten into print with contrary views. Unfortunately, this is what they told Walter Martin.

"Froom and Anderson kept the new General Conference president well informed. One of Froom's letters acknowledged that in QOD 'some of the statements are a bit different from what you might anticipate.' He went on to suggest that their approach was necessary in view of the backgrounds and attitudes of the Evangelicals."⁴⁶³

On the subject of the human nature of Christ, Ellen White pointed out why it is important that we have a correct understanding on this subject:

"We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself as something for which He was particularly adapted, by His particular divine nature, for He stood before God as man's representative and tempted as man's substitute and surety. *If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter.* The work of Christ was to take from the claims of Satan his control of man, and He could do this only in the way that He came--a man, tempted as a man,

⁴⁶² Woodrow W. Whidden, *Ministry*, August 2003, p. 14. <http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/2003/MIN2003-08.pdf>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴⁶³ Herbert E. Douglass, *Ministry*, p. 17. www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/2004/MIN2004-08.pdf. Retrieved February 28, 2010

rendering the obedience of a man. . . . Bear in mind that Christ's overcoming and obedience is that of a true human being. *In our conclusions, we make many mistakes because of our erroneous views of the human nature of our Lord. When we give to His human nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, we destroy the completeness of His humanity.* His imputed grace and power He gives to all who receive Him by faith. The obedience of Christ to His Father was the same obedience that is required of man."⁴⁶⁴

When the church was united on the belief that Jesus took fallen human nature, it was able to teach that *the obedience of Christ to His Father was the same obedience that is required of man.* But since 1957 and the publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, this view is now only held by a minority in the church. As a result, sin is indulged in more readily in the Church.

THE NATURE OF CHRIST NOT IMPORTANT?

In a keynote address to the Annual Council, 2007, General Conference president, Jan Paulsen said, "I think there is a reason for why we have chosen generous language in describing our position as a church on the nature of Christ. The uniqueness of Jesus Christ (Wholly God and wholly man – no one else matches the 'only-begottenness' of that One) leads us to say that." He added, "I have to tell you I just cannot imagine a post-modern person in Europe, a business man in Asia or Latin America, any more than a farmer in Africa will care one iota whether Christ had the nature of man before the fall or after the fall. The realities of the world in which we live have other concerns which occupy us."⁴⁶⁵

In conclusion, Paulsen said, "such discussions often focus on the possibility of living a victorious Christian life. However, he added, such victory will not be attained by 'settling the precise human nature of Christ; it will be by experiencing the 'power of His resurrection.' *It will not be by the power of His example;* it will be by the 'power of His resurrection,' for in that lies the power to live a new life."⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 139

⁴⁶⁵ Jan Paulsen, *Adventist Review*, <http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=1427>. Retrieved February 28, 2010

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Nobody would question the power of the resurrection. “The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead. Christ declares that even now the power which gives life to the dead is among them, and they are to behold its manifestation. *This same resurrection power is that which gives life to the soul ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’* Ephesians 2:1. *That spirit of life in Christ Jesus, ‘the power of His resurrection,’ sets men ‘free from the law of sin and death.’* Philippians 3:10; Romans 8:2. The dominion of evil is broken, and through faith the soul is kept from sin. He who opens his heart to the Spirit of Christ becomes a partaker of that mighty power which shall bring forth his body from the grave.”⁴⁶⁷ However, if one doesn’t understand the power of Christ’s example in that He overcame sin while taking upon Himself fallen nature, and instead is lead to believe that Jesus was quite different to us and had an advantage, then the power of His resurrection is going to have no influence at all. We need to remember Mrs. White’s warning that *if Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter.*

In contrast to Elder Paulsen’s explicit statement that *it will not be by the power of His example*, Mrs. White writes, “In our behalf Christ met the specious temptations of Satan and *left to us an example as to how to overcome Satan in the conflict.*”⁴⁶⁸ “He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, cannot be overcome. Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace. This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sin, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin. *How thankful ought we to be for the gift of Christ’s example!*”⁴⁶⁹ “Christ prepared the way for the ransom of man by His own life of suffering, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, and by His humiliation and final death. He brought help to man that he might, *by following Christ’s example, overcome on his own account, as Christ has overcome for him.*”⁴⁷⁰

Even though the majority of church leaders deny the truth

⁴⁶⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 209

⁴⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant*, p. 274

⁴⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, January 28, 1909, par. 13

⁴⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 272

about Christ's human nature, the truth is still the truth, and in God's providence this truth has never been denied officially by the world church, even though books like *Questions on Doctrine* which had the full support of the General Conference president have risen to challenge it.

BIBLE AND SPIRIT OF PROPHECY SUPPORT FOR CHRIST TAKING MAN'S FALLEN NATURE

In the Bible this truth is supported in verses such as, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."⁴⁷¹ "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; *but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."⁴⁷² "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures), Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh*."⁴⁷³ "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, *condemned sin in the flesh*. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."⁴⁷⁴ "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, *leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps*."⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷¹ Hebrews 2:14-18

⁴⁷² Hebrews 4:15,16

⁴⁷³ Romans 1:1-3

⁴⁷⁴ Romans 8:3,4

⁴⁷⁵ 1 Peter 2:21

The evidence for Jesus taking fallen human nature is even more evident in the writings of Ellen White. Because there are so many of them, they will be quoted without any comments.

“Christ's life represents a perfect manhood. Just that which you may be, He was in human nature. He took our infirmities. *He was not only made flesh, but He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.* His divine attributes were withheld from relieving His soul anguish or His bodily pains (Letter 106, 1896).”⁴⁷⁶

“The example He has left must be followed. *He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature,* that He might know how to succor those that are tempted.”⁴⁷⁷

“Jesus also told them that they should have a part to act, to be with him, and at different times strengthen him. *That he should take man's fallen nature,* and his strength would not be even equal with theirs.”⁴⁷⁸

“Satan again rejoiced with his angels that he could, by causing man's fall, pull down the Son of God from His exalted position. He told his angels that when Jesus should *take fallen man's nature,* he could overpower Him and hinder the accomplishment of the plan of salvation.”⁴⁷⁹

“It was in the order of God that Christ should *take upon himself the form and nature of fallen man,* that he might be made perfect through suffering, and himself endure the strength of Satan's fierce temptations, that he might understand how to succor those who should be tempted.”⁴⁸⁰

“Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those he wished to save. In him was no guile or sinfulness; he was ever pure and undefiled; *yet he took upon him our sinful nature.* Clothing his divinity with humanity, that he might *associate with fallen humanity,* he sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world.”⁴⁸¹

“What a sight was this for Heaven to look upon! Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, *took our nature in its*

⁴⁷⁶ Ellen G. White, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1124

⁴⁷⁷ Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 181

⁴⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, p. 25

⁴⁷⁹ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 152

⁴⁸⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, p. 39

⁴⁸¹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 15, 1896, par. 7

deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. *God was manifest in the flesh.*"⁴⁸²

"In taking upon Himself *man's nature in its fallen condition,* Christ did not in the least participate in its sin."⁴⁸³

"Though He had no taint of sin upon His character, yet He condescended to *connect our fallen human nature with His divinity.* By thus taking humanity, He honored humanity. Having *taken our fallen nature,* he showed what it might become, by accepting the ample provision He has made for it, and by becoming partaker of the divine nature."⁴⁸⁴

"Think of Christ's humiliation. He *took upon himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin.*"⁴⁸⁵

"Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of *taking upon Himself our fallen nature,* the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal."⁴⁸⁶

"The humanity of Christ reached to the very depths of human wretchedness and *identified itself with the weaknesses and necessities of fallen man,* while His divine nature grasped the Eternal."⁴⁸⁷

"The love that Christ manifested can not be comprehended by mortal man. It is a mystery too deep for the human mind to fathom. Christ did in reality *unite the offending nature of man with his own sinless nature,* because by this act of condescension he would be enabled to pour out his blessings in behalf of the fallen race. Thus he has made it possible for us to partake of his nature. By making himself an offering for sin, he opened a way whereby human beings might be made one with him. He placed himself in man's position, becoming capable of suffering. The whole of his earthly life was a preparation for the altar."⁴⁸⁸

"He bore the cross of self-denial and self-sacrifice. *He passed over the ground where Adam fell.* Our first parents were placed in Eden, and surrounded with everything that would lead them to obey God. *Christ assumed our fallen nature,* and was subject to

⁴⁸² Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 253

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 256

⁴⁸⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 134

⁴⁸⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Youth's Instructor*, December 20, 1900 par. 7

⁴⁸⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 112

⁴⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *Confrontation*, p. 38

⁴⁸⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, July 17, 1900 par. 8

every temptation to which man is subject.”⁴⁸⁹

DID ELLEN WHITE SUPPORT THE QOD VIEW?

With all of this evidence from inspiration, the writers of *Questions on Doctrine* still managed to convince Barnhouse and Martin that only a small segment of Adventism actually believed Christ took fallen human nature. This was because they twisted the words of Ellen White like many have done with Paul’s writings in the New Testament. Quotes such as: “We should have no misgivings in regard to the *perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ*”⁴⁹⁰ were used to “prove” that Jesus had a sinless nature. However this conclusion violates the English language. If we would correctly understand Ellen White’s use of the words, sinful, sinless, sinfulness and sinlessness, we must first know how the dictionary defines the suffix’s these words use.

The suffix *-ful* means 1) full of such as prideful, 2) characterized by such as peaceful, 3) having the qualities of such as masterful or 4) tending, given, or liable to such as helpful.⁴⁹¹ Ellen White used this suffix when she taught that Jesus took upon Himself our sinful nature. In other words, He fully took man’s degenerate, fallen nature. It does not mean He was full of sin, because as we have already seen, having a sinful nature does not mean we are guilty of sin. We are predisposed to sin, but sin is an act (outwardly or in the mind) of violating God’s law. Jesus never in thought or deed violated the law of God.

The suffix *-less* means 1) destitute of, such as not having witless or childless. 2) unable to be acted on or to act (in a specified way), for example, dauntless or fadeless.⁴⁹² It means to be without and incapable of. A fearless person does not fear and is incapable of fearing. This is why Ellen White never refers to Jesus having a sinless human nature. If He did, it would mean He was incapable of sinning which is contrary to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.

The last suffix we need to examine is *-ness*. The dictionary defines this as a state, condition, quality or degree such as goodness.⁴⁹³ Sinfulness would mean someone is in a state of sin

⁴⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 2, p. 235

⁴⁹⁰ Ellen G. White, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1181

⁴⁹¹ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ful>. Retrieved June 6, 2010

⁴⁹² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/less>. Retrieved June 6, 2010

⁴⁹³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ness>. Retrieved June 6, 2010

whereas sinlessness would be the opposite. Ellen White applied this last word to the human nature of Christ, because it accurately describes His sinless condition in our sinful nature. She never confused these words like many do today. “Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those he wished to save. In him was no guile or *sinfulness*; he was ever pure and undefiled; yet he took upon him our *sinful nature*.”⁴⁹⁴ Notice in this quote the use of the words *sinfulness* and *sinful*. Christ had no *sinfulness* but yet He took our *sinful nature*.

There are many statements in the writings of Ellen White that clearly support this understanding of the word *sinlessness*. These include:

“When enlightened by the Spirit of God, the believer beholds the perfection of Jesus, and beholding this perfection, he rejoices with joy unspeakable. In self he sees sin and helplessness; *in the Redeemer sinlessness and infinite power*.”⁴⁹⁵

“Satan charged God with possessing the attributes that he himself possessed. Christ came to this world to reveal God’s character as it really is. He is the perfect representation of the Father. *His life of sinlessness, lived on this earth in human nature*, is a complete refutation of Satan’s charge against the character of God.”⁴⁹⁶

“‘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.’ He laid off His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, *that He might live in our behalf a life of sinlessness*, and on the cross make an atonement for our transgressions.”⁴⁹⁷

For Jesus to be our Saviour, He had to surrender His life unto death. If He was going to die, then He must take a nature that was subject to death. However, His divine nature was not subject to death. Likewise, the nature of unfallen angels are not subject to death. Even the nature of unfallen Adam was not subject to death. The only nature that is subject to death in all the universe is fallen nature. This is the nature that Christ had to take in order to redeem fallen man.

⁴⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 15, 1896, par. 7

⁴⁹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 124

⁴⁹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Bible Training School*, Oct. 1, 1902, par. 2

⁴⁹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, August 9, 1905, par. 1

Jesus also had to prove that fallen human nature was able to obey God's law. There was no question that unfallen nature could fall to sin. One third of the angels proved this.⁴⁹⁸ The universe also knew that fallen nature found it very easy to disobey the law of God. However the great controversy has never been about whether unfallen or fallen men are capable of disobeying. Two thirds of angels are a testimony that they can keep God's law. "What the universe needed to see, in the vindication of God's law and character was that it was possible for a being bearing a fallen nature to keep God's law. Jesus demonstrated this, not only to fallen mankind, not only to the accuser, but also to the whole Universe."⁴⁹⁹

THE ATONEMENT

Another fundamental understanding of Adventism that sets us apart from the rest of Christendom, which was subtly attacked in *Questions on Doctrine*, is our understanding of the atonement. Seventh-day Adventists base their understanding of the atonement on the sanctuary service of the Old Testament. "Important truths concerning the atonement were taught the people by this yearly service [the daily and yearly services of the sanctuary]."⁵⁰⁰

Ellen White and our pioneers were led to understand that *the atonement* meant more than simply the death of Christ on the cross. "In the sin offerings presented during the year, a substitute had been accepted in the sinner's stead; *but the blood of the victim had not made full atonement for the sin. It had only provided a means by which the sin was transferred to the sanctuary.* By the offering of blood, the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed the guilt of his transgression, and expressed his faith in Him who was to take away the sin of the world; *but he was not entirely released from the condemnation of the law.* On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering for the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, above the tables of the law. Thus the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were

⁴⁹⁸ Revelation 12:4

⁴⁹⁹ Kevin Tregenza, *He Took it for Us*, p. 9 www.propheticparallels.com/book_1/Resources/He_took_it_for_us.pdf

⁵⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355

satisfied. Then in his character of mediator the priest took the sins upon himself, and, leaving the sanctuary, he bore with him the burden of Israel's guilt. At the door of the tabernacle he laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat 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.' And as the goat bearing these sins was sent away, they were, with him, regarded as forever separated from the people. Such was the service performed 'unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.' Hebrews 8:5.⁵⁰¹

Describing the atonement in more the detail, Ellen White wrote, "As Christ at His ascension appeared in the presence of God to plead His blood in behalf of penitent believers, so the priest in the daily ministration sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice in the holy place in the sinner's behalf.

"The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary *until the final atonement*; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement.

"In the great day of final award, the dead are to be 'judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' Revelation 20:12. Then by virtue of the *atonement blood of Christ*, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed, from the record of sin. In the type, this *great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins*, was represented by the services of the Day of Atonement--the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, which was accomplished by the removal, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, of the sins by which it had been polluted.

"As in the *final atonement* the sins of the truly penitent are to be blotted from the records of heaven, no more to be remembered or come into mind, so in the type they were borne away into the wilderness, forever separated from the congregation."⁵⁰²

Prior to the 1950s, Seventh-day Adventists believed that the atonement was not complete at the cross. However, the authors of

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 355-356

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 357-358

Questions on Doctrine state the atonement was complete at the cross and the benefits of the blood was applied when Jesus returned to heaven.

“When, therefore, one hears an Adventist say, or reads in Adventist literature—even in the writings of Ellen G. White—that Christ is making atonement now, *it should be understood that we mean simply that Christ is now making application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement He made on the cross*; that He is making it efficacious for us individually, according to our needs and requests. Mrs. White herself, as far back as 1857, clearly explained what she means when she writes of Christ's making atonement for us in His ministry:

“The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement. *Early Writings*, p. 260.”⁵⁰³

WAS THE ATONEMENT COMPLETE AT THE CROSS?

If one takes the time to read *Early Writings*, they will notice that Ellen White applied the atonement to the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary five times and one time her meaning can be interpreted the same as the other five, or as referring to the death of Christ. The first occurrence states, “In like manner I saw that Jesus regarded with the deepest compassion the disappointed ones who had waited for His coming; and He sent His angels to direct their minds that they might follow Him where He was. He showed them that this earth is not the sanctuary, but that He must enter the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary *to make an atonement for His people* and to receive the kingdom from His Father, and that He would then return to the earth and take them to dwell with Him forever.”⁵⁰⁴

The second occurrence states, “Jesus sent His angels to direct the minds of the disappointed ones to the most holy place, where He had gone to cleanse the sanctuary *and make a special atonement for Israel*. Jesus told the angels that all who found Him would

⁵⁰³ *Seventh-day Adventist Answer Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 354, 355

⁵⁰⁴ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 244

understand the work which He was to perform.”⁵⁰⁵

The third occurrence states, “The blood of Jesus was then shed, which was to be offered by Himself in the heavenly sanctuary. As the priest entered the most holy once a year to cleanse the earthly sanctuary, so Jesus entered the most holy of the heavenly, at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, in 1844, *to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation*, and thus to cleanse the sanctuary.”⁵⁰⁶

The fourth occurrence states, “The third angel closes his message thus: ‘Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ As he repeated these words, he pointed to the heavenly sanctuary. The minds of all who embrace this message are directed to the most holy place, where Jesus stands before the ark, making His final intercession for all those for whom mercy still lingers and for those who have ignorantly broken the law of God. *This atonement is made for the righteous dead as well as for the righteous living*. It includes all who died trusting in Christ, but who, not having received the light upon God’s commandments, had sinned ignorantly in transgressing its precepts.”⁵⁰⁷

The fifth occurrence, which was the one quoted in *Questions and Doctrine* states, “The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, *to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement*. But the Jews were left in total darkness. They lost all the light which they might have had upon the plan of salvation, and still trusted in their useless sacrifices and offerings. The heavenly sanctuary had taken the place of the earthly, yet they had no knowledge of the change. Therefore they could not be benefited by the mediation of Christ in the holy place.”⁵⁰⁸

The sixth occurrence states, “Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, *having*

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 251

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 253

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 253

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 259

*made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins.*⁵⁰⁹

It is very clear from these six references Ellen White was shown that the atonement included the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. One of those times the meaning could be taken as either referring to His death or His ministry in heaven. However, to single out the one and imply that this is what Ellen White believed, without considering the other five as the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* have done, is not being honest with Mrs. White's writings. When asked, does the church believe the atonement was not complete at the cross, our answer should be unequivocally, yes. However, *Questions on Doctrine* tries to dodge the question by the following answer:

"Some of our earlier Seventh-day Adventist writers, *believing that the word 'atonement' had a wider meaning* than many of their fellow Christians attached to it, expressed themselves as indicating that the atonement was not made on the cross of Calvary, but was made rather by Christ after He entered upon His priestly ministry in heaven. They believed fully in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of men, and they believed most assuredly that this sacrifice was made once for all and forever, but they preferred not to use the word 'atonement' as relating only to the sacrificial work of Christ at Calvary... Their concept was that the sacrifice of Jesus provided the means of the atonement, and that the atonement itself was made only when the priests ministered the sacrificial offering on behalf of the sinner. Viewed in this light, it will be seen that the *question after all is a matter of definition of terms*. Today, not meeting the same issues that our earlier writers had to meet, we believe that the sacrificial atonement was made on the cross and was provided for all men, but that in the heavenly priestly ministry of Christ our Lord, this sacrificial atonement is applied to the seeking soul."⁵¹⁰

This answer twists the truth and teaches a complete atonement on the cross. The danger of such a teaching is that we are led to believe our sins have been blotted out at the cross. Have you ever heard the phrase, "*it was all done at the cross*"? The implication is that Jesus' work for sinners was finished at the cross and all we need to do is accept His sacrifice and we will be saved. It also

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 280

⁵¹⁰ *Seventh-day Adventist Answer Questions on Doctrine*, p. 348

implies that the investigative judgment is not necessary because it was all complete at the cross.

This however, is not in accordance with the Bible model of the sanctuary or the writings of Ellen White. You will recall that Ellen White stated, “In the sin offerings presented during the year, a substitute had been accepted in the sinner's stead; *but the blood of the victim had not made full atonement for the sin. It had only provided a means by which the sin was transferred to the sanctuary.*”⁵¹¹ Thus, when we properly understand the sacrificial phase of the atonement, we know that our sins have not been blotted out, but transferred to the heavenly sanctuary. They remain there until Jesus cleanses the sanctuary, which is the final phase of the atonement.

THE FORD APOSTASY

The introduction of *Questions on Doctrine* into the Seventh-day Adventist Church was like the serpents that entered the camp of Israel. Instead of dying physically like those in ancient Israel, the bite of these false doctrines have been killing modern Israelites spiritually. The full manifestation of these false doctrines in the Adventist Church surfaced in the late 1970s and 1980s through Dr. Desmond Ford. He was probably one of Adventism's most popular theologians of the time, particularly in Australia and New Zealand.

According to one writer, “It is arguable that *Questions on Doctrine* had a part in preparing the ground for the Desmond Ford theological crisis spiking at the end of the decade.”⁵¹² Seen by many as a reformist in Adventism, “On 27 October 1979 Ford delivered an address to the Association of Adventist Forums held at Pacific Union College, in which he outlined the major problems that he perceived with the doctrine [of the investigative judgment].”⁵¹³ According to *Ministry*, Ford received an applause at the conclusion of his presentation signifying a “general acceptance and appreciation of his remarks by that particular

⁵¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355

⁵¹² Larry Kirkpatrick, A wind of doctrine blows through the church: the alternate hamartiology of *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 25-26. http://qod.andrews.edu/docs/16_larry_kirkpatrick.pdf. Retrieved March 2, 2010

⁵¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glacier_View_controversy. Retrieved March 2, 2010

audience” but also notes “his open challenge to the church’s longstanding interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and the investigative judgment, as well as the implications of his view for the role and teachings of Ellen White, created a stir in Adventist circles.”⁵¹⁴ As a result, “On December 20, 1979, the *Adventist Review* published the announcement that Dr. Ford was to be given a six-month [paid] leave of absence to do research for a position paper on the sanctuary doctrine.”⁵¹⁵

At the end of the six months, Dr. Ford had written a 991-page document entitled, “*Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment.*” The document challenged the Church on a number of issues, including the Bible’s teaching of the investigative judgment, the year-day principle and the authority of Ellen White in doctrinal matters. “In August 1980, a group of Adventist theologians and administrators convened at Glacier View Ranch in Colorado to examine Ford’s views. According to *Time*, he ‘made the case that White’s ‘sanctuary’ explication of 1844 no longer stood up in the light of the Bible, and that ‘investigative judgment’ undercut the whole basis of Protestantism: belief in salvation by God’s grace apart from good works.’”⁵¹⁶ “At the time, scholar Raymond Cottrell stated it was the most significant Adventist meeting of its type since the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference Session.”⁵¹⁷

A SHAKING IN ADVENTISM

It was only a matter of time before Ford lost his credentials with the Church. This resulted in a tremendous shaking time for Adventism. “Peter Ballis, professor of sociology at Monash University and a former Adventist himself, counted 182 pastors in Australia and New Zealand who left between 1980 and 1988, equivalent to ‘an astonishing 40 percent of the total ministerial workforce’ in those countries.”⁵¹⁸ So tumultuous was that time for the Church that he called it “ ‘the most rapid and massive exit of Adventist pastors in the movement’s 150-year history’ (although

⁵¹⁴ *Ministry*, October 1980, p. 5

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desmond_Ford. Retrieved March 2, 2010

⁵¹⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glacier_View_controversy. Retrieved March 2, 2010

⁵¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desmond_Ford. Retrieved March 2, 2010

he cautions that the fallout may have involved more than one factor). He estimates 12,000 lay people left during the 1980s. It is further speculated that a significant number of current ministers privately agree with Ford but refrain from speaking publicly on the issue for fear of losing their employment. Many in the Adventist church feel that the events of 1980 represent a major milestone in the theological development of the church, and that the effects of this controversy continue to be felt today.”⁵¹⁹

Although the primary issue in 1980 was over the investigative judgment, Ford had for years been teaching the errors introduced in *Questions on Doctrine*. Geoffrey J. Paxton, a minister in the Anglican Church of Australia writes in his book, *The Shaking of Adventism*, “To conclude this aspect of the 1960's, we must draw attention to the positive gains that were made toward the realization of the Advent movement's objective: (1) The reality of original sin became embedded in Adventist theology among such scholars as Heppenstall and Ford. (2) The corollary of this position was a clear repudiation of the possibility of moral perfection in this life—an embracing of the *simul justus et peccator* (at the same time righteous and a sinner) of the Reformers. In these two features there took place a breakthrough into Reformation theology such as had not been seen in the history of the Adventist Church since her inception.”⁵²⁰

In the same chapter, Paxton details just what kind of theology Ford taught in the 1960s. “One theologian within Adventism in the 1960's who showed a steady reliance upon the perspective of the Reformation was an Australian, Dr. Desmond Ford. In examining the teaching of Ford, it must be said that he showed a praiseworthy consistency in Reformation theology during a period of change. As we have already noted, Ford was *explicit in his affirmation of the doctrine of original sin*. He taught this consistently through the 1960's and into the 1970's. Ford also strongly repudiated perfectionism as being contrary to the gospel. Likewise, he maintained the Protestant view of forensic justification and the Protestant stance on the *sinlessness of Christ's human nature*. He not only espoused the gospel aspect of the

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁰ Geoffrey J. Paxton, *The Shaking of Adventism*, chapter 6 “Pain and Progress: The 1960's.” <http://www.presenttruthmag.com/7dayadventist/shaking/6.html>. Retrieved March 2, 2010

Brinsmead teaching of the 1960's (i.e., that Christ is our righteousness in heaven in the hour of the judgment), but he did so along with a clear Reformation perspective on perfectionism. Thus, it would not be far from the truth to say that, already in the 1960's, Dr. Ford anticipated the clear Reformation stream that was to emerge within Adventism in the 1970's."⁵²¹

These errors that were brought into the church in the 1950s through *Questions on Doctrine* and promoted by Ford in the 1960s led to two distinct views of the gospel in the Adventist church. Paxton writes, "The 1970's is the period when, for the first time, two consistent streams of thought on the gospel emerge in Adventism. One stream carries the Christological gains of the 1950's and the soteriological gains of the 1960's to their logical end. The other stream retreats from those gains into pre-1950 Adventism. *This division brings Adventism to the threshold of an unprecedented shaking.*"⁵²²

The gospel stream that had its roots in *Questions on Doctrine* became known as the "new theology." At its core it teaches we are born sinners and therefore will continue to sin until Jesus returns. Like Dr. Ford taught, it emphasizes that everything was complete at the cross. The result being that there is no need for an investigative judgement. Although teachers of the new theology may appear to teach that a life of victory is essential for Christians, in reality this is impossible because of the fundamental flaws in accepting original sin and the sinless human nature of Christ. The result is a gospel that has no power for the Christian life and ends in spiritual death.

THE REMEDY

In the wilderness, the children of Israel learned the remedy for their predicament. "Moses was divinely commanded to make a serpent of brass resembling the living ones, and to elevate it among the people. To this, all who had been bitten were to look, and they would find relief. He did so, and the joyful news was sounded throughout the encampment that all who had been bitten might look upon the brazen serpent and live. Many had already died, and when Moses raised the serpent upon the pole,

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*

⁵²² *Ibid.*

some would not believe that merely gazing upon that metallic image would heal them; these perished in their unbelief. Yet there were many who had faith in the provision which God had made. Fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters were anxiously engaged in helping their suffering, dying friends to fix their languid eyes upon the serpent. If these, though faint and dying, could only once look, they were perfectly restored.⁵²³

When speaking with Nicodemus that memorable night, Jesus said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."⁵²⁴ When we understand the gospel, then there is a power that leads to spiritual life. Paul wrote, "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."⁵²⁵

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. 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... The uplifted Saviour is to appear in His efficacious work as the Lamb slain, sitting upon the throne, to dispense the priceless covenant blessings, the benefits He died to purchase for every soul who should believe on Him... The efficacy of the blood of Christ was to be presented to the people with freshness and power, that their faith might lay hold upon its merits. As the high priest sprinkled the warm blood upon the mercy seat, while the fragrant cloud of incense ascended before God, so while we confess our sins and plead the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, our prayers are to ascend to heaven, fragrant with the merits of

⁵²³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 430

⁵²⁴ John 3:14,15

⁵²⁵ Romans 1:16,17

our Saviour's character. Notwithstanding our unworthiness, we are ever to bear in mind that there is One that can take away sin and save the sinner. Every sin acknowledged before God with a contrite heart, He will remove. This faith is the life of the church. As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness by Moses, and all that had been bitten by the fiery serpents were bidden to look and live, so also the Son of man must be lifted up, that 'whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'⁵²⁶

The gospel includes more than just our justification from the condemnation of sin as Paxton and Ford believe. It incorporates both justification and sanctification. "Justification by faith is the article of our true standing in the sight of God. Sanctification through the Holy Spirit binds up man's will and purpose with the will and purpose of God. *If we have not these features in our experience, the church will be sickly and feeble.* The safety of God's people is in coming to His living Word. When no human authority is put before this Word, then will men *unite in gospel harmony*, for the doing of the Word binds heart to heart, causing the workers to blend as one in Christ Jesus. The living oracles are fresh and beautiful. To study them is to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God."⁵²⁷

To show how important sanctification is, Ellen White wrote, "Our crucified Lord is pleading for us in the presence of the Father at the throne of grace. His atoning sacrifice we may plead *for our pardon, our justification, and our sanctification.* The lamb slain is our only hope."⁵²⁸ Further she wrote, "God has chosen men from eternity to be holy. 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.' God's law tolerates no sin, but demands perfect obedience. The echo of God's voice comes to us, ever saying. Holier, holier still. And ever our answer is to be, Yes, Lord, holier still. *Holiness is within the reach of all who reach for it by faith*, not because of their good works, but because of Christ's merits. Divine power is provided for every soul struggling for the victory over sin and Satan.

"Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition, *that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of*

⁵²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 92

⁵²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 13, p. 191

⁵²⁸ Ellen G. White, *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 71

heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification.”⁵²⁹

The answer to ancient Israel in their time of need was the uplifted Saviour. So too the answer to modern Israel’s problems lie in the uplifted Saviour. Sadly many in ancient Israel did not discern the importance of this and in their rebellion they lost their life. The same has happened in modern Israel. Not only did Adventism witness a mass exodus from the Church in the 1980s, but now the teachings of Ford that were rejected back then are alive and well among God’s people and as a result, the spiritual condition of the church has become *sickly and feeble*. This will become more evident in later chapters.

Chapter Summary

1. As Ancient Israel loathed the manna God had given them, so beginning in the 1950s, Seventh-day Adventists loathed the message of righteousness by faith by rejecting the message of Wieland and Short.
2. Manna was the food God had provided for His people. It was to sustain them until they reached the Promised Land. The truths of God’s Word, particularly the message of righteousness by faith is the message that will see modern Israel through to the heavenly Canaan.
3. Because the Israelites rejected the manna, God sent serpents into the camp. Likewise, because Adventism rejected the true message of salvation as presented in the righteousness by faith message, so He allowed false doctrines into the Church.
4. The serpents had a devastating effect on ancient Israel. So too the false doctrines presented in Questions on Doctrine led many to leave the Church and caused a permanent division within Adventism.
5. The remedy for ancient Israel was to look to Jesus as symbolized by the brazen serpent. The remedy remains the same for modern Israel. We need to look unto Jesus for

⁵²⁹ Ellen G. White, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 908

both our justification and sanctification—the message of righteousness by faith.

Chapter 13

Apostasy at the Jordan

“Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day.”

—Deuteronomy 4:3-4

“**W**ith joyful hearts and renewed faith in God, the victorious armies of Israel had returned from Bashan. They had already gained possession of a valuable territory, and they were confident of the immediate conquest of Canaan. Only the river Jordan lay between them and the Promised Land. Just across the river was a rich plain, covered with verdure, watered with streams from copious fountains, and shaded by luxuriant palm trees. On the western border of the plain rose the towers and palaces of Jericho, so embosomed in its palm-tree groves that it was called ‘the city of palm trees.’”⁵³⁰

The recent victories had given Israel a new found optimism. Nothing was able to stand in their way, so they thought. They had wandered in the wilderness for forty years because of their

⁵³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 453

unbelief at Kadesh-barnea, but now having destroyed Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, the king of Bashan, the Israelites could see the salvation of the Lord. When true faith is exercised, nothing is impossible with God. The words of Caleb so long ago could now be understood, “for we are well able to overcome it.”⁵³¹

However, there is always the danger that when we are blessed we forget the One blessing us. Paul warns us, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”⁵³² And again he warns, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”⁵³³

While camped at Shittim, the children of Israel would soon learn this lesson. “...amid these attractive surroundings they were to encounter an evil more deadly than mighty hosts of armed men or the wild beasts of the wilderness. That country, so rich in natural advantages, had been defiled by the inhabitants. In the public worship of Baal, the leading deity, the most degrading and iniquitous scenes were constantly enacted. On every side were places noted for idolatry and licentiousness, the very names being suggestive of the vileness and corruption of the people.”⁵³⁴

This should have been a warning to the people, but because they were now confident that God was with them, they failed to realize the dangers around them. “It was when the Israelites were in a condition of outward ease and security that they were led into sin. They failed to keep God ever before them, they neglected prayer and cherished a spirit of self-confidence. Ease and self-indulgence left the citadel of the soul unguarded, and debasing thoughts found entrance. It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. It is thus that Satan still seeks to compass the ruin of the soul.”⁵³⁵

So corrupt were their surroundings that they “... exerted a polluting influence upon the Israelites. Their minds became familiar with the vile thoughts constantly suggested; their life of ease and inaction produced its demoralizing effect; and almost unconsciously to themselves they were departing from God and

⁵³¹ Numbers 13:30

⁵³² 1 Corinthians 10:12

⁵³³ Hebrews 3:12

⁵³⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 453

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 459

coming into a condition where they would fall an easy prey to temptation.”⁵³⁶

There must have been a tarrying time at Shittim for we are told that, “The period of waiting was employed by Moses in preparing the people for the permanent occupation of Canaan. In this work the great leader’s time and attention were fully occupied; but to the people this period of suspense and expectation was most trying, and ere many weeks had elapsed, their history was marred by the most frightful departures from virtue and integrity.”⁵³⁷

As Moses was preparing for the event that had been the hope of Israel for the past forty years, “the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.”⁵³⁸ The Moabites were descendants of Lot. “Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.”⁵³⁹ This would mean they were distant relatives of the children of Israel.

Fearful that Israel would destroy them as they did the Ammonites, the Moabites called for a union with the Midianites. “And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.”⁵⁴⁰ “In this purpose the people of Moab were joined by the Midianites, to whom they were closely united by the ties of *nationality and religion*.”⁵⁴¹

The Midianites were descendants of Abraham’s concubine, Keturah. “Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.”⁵⁴² They were therefore more directly related to Israel than were the Moabites. Notice that the Moabites and Midianites were closely related through *nationality and religion*.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 453

⁵³⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1880, par. 3

⁵³⁸ Numbers 25:1

⁵³⁹ Genesis 19:36-37

⁵⁴⁰ Numbers 22:4

⁵⁴¹ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1880, par. 8

⁵⁴² Genesis 25:1-2. See also 1 Chronicles 1:32

INFILTRATION

“At first there was little intercourse between the Israelites and their heathen neighbors, *but after a time* Midianitish women began to steal into the camp. Their appearance excited no alarm, and so quietly were their plans conducted that the attention of Moses was not called to the matter. It was the object of these women, in their association with the Hebrews, to seduce them into transgression of the law of God, to *draw their attention to heathen rites and customs*, and lead them into idolatry. *These motives were studiously concealed under the garb of friendship*, so that they were not suspected, even by the *guardians of the people*.”⁵⁴³

If the people of God had been attacked openly they would have discerned their danger and taken steps to defend themselves. But Satan knew their faith was too strong to be overcome by brute force, so he used a method that rarely fails. Under the garb of friendship he was able to lead Israel to commit “the most frightful departures from virtue and integrity.”⁵⁴⁴

Slowly but surely, the presence of Midianitish women began to have an effect on the children of Israel. “At Balaam's suggestion, a grand festival in honor of their gods was appointed by the king of Moab, and it was secretly arranged that Balaam should induce the Israelites to attend. He was regarded by them as a prophet of God, and hence had little difficulty in accomplishing his purpose. *Great numbers* of the people joined him in witnessing the festivities. *They ventured upon the forbidden ground, and were entangled in the snare of Satan. Beguiled with music and dancing*, and allured by the beauty of heathen vestals, they cast off their fealty to Jehovah. As they united in mirth and feasting, *indulgence in wine beclouded their senses and broke down the barriers of self-control*. Passion had full sway; and having defiled their consciences by lewdness, they were persuaded to bow down to idols. They offered sacrifice upon heathen altars and participated in the most degrading rites.”⁵⁴⁵

Thus great numbers of God's people were seduced into giving up their fidelity to God and joined the people of Moab in their apostate worship of Baal. So widespread was this apostasy “that the apostasy became national.”⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

“It was not long before the poison of licentiousness and idolatry had spread like a deadly infection through the congregation of Israel. The people seemed to be infatuated. *The rulers and leading men were among the first to step over the line*; and so general was the defection, that it is recorded in the Sacred Word, that ‘Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor.’ Alas that the people who had been so signally protected from Satan’s power, should now deliberately walk into the net which he had laid for them!”⁵⁴⁷

THE OMEGA OF APOSTASY

We now come to a difficult and tender subject. We cannot be faithful to the Word of God and pass over the apostasy at the Jordan, and the lessons it holds for Seventh-day Adventists. Throughout this book we have repeatedly seen the striking fulfillment of modern Israel, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with Israel’s history. If this is true, then we need to realize the apostasy that took place at the very borders of the Promised Land will be fulfilled by modern spiritual Israel. This should not surprise us, for Ellen White spoke of this time as the omega of apostasy. Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet and so this apostasy would be the very last apostasy, just as Israel’s apostasy at the borders was the last apostasy before they entered the Promised Land. “Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature.”⁵⁴⁸

Before we go into detail regarding certain aspects of the omega of apostasy, the author would like to assure his readers that it would be more pleasing to pass over the apostasy at the Jordan and focus on Israel’s positive experiences. Nobody likes to have their sins pointed out and the author understands that pointing out the apostasy that exists in the Church will offend some. It is not my intention to offend. Although the Church is unequivocally in apostasy, it is still God’s last day remnant Church. There may be plenty of tares in the Church, but God still has His faithful people there who will one day stand for the truth while the tares are shaken out.

⁵⁴⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1880, par. 3

⁵⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 197

As Israel camped by the Jordan, they were eager to enter the Promised Land. You will recall they had just gained a victory against the mighty Ammonites and they looked set for a speedy entry into the land that God had promised them. As a result, they were in a condition of ease. It has been pointed out numerous times in this study that modern Israel, the Seventh-day Adventist church, is also in a condition of ease, known as the Laodicean condition.

While the children of Israel were on the very borders of the Promised Land, the Moabites feared they would be destroyed, so called for the Midianites to unite with them. Both Moab and Midian were related to Israel. The Moabites were the oldest, being descendants of Lot. The Midianites were more closely related to Israel because Abraham was their father. As Israel represented God's true church, the Moabites and Midianites must represent a false system of worship. The Moabites worshipped the god Chemosh.⁵⁴⁹ It was known as the destroyer, subduer, or the fish-god.⁵⁵⁰ Chemosh was essentially the same as Baal. "There seems to be no good reason for denying that Chemosh was a "baal," and that the names "Baal-maon" (Moabite Stone, line 30) and "Baal-peor" (Num. xxv. 3; Hosea ix. 10) apply to what was practically the same god as Chemosh."⁵⁵¹

We don't have to look too far to find the parallels of Moab and Midian. Because Moab was older and a more distant relative to Israel than Midian was, and because it worshipped Chemosh the fish-god, we find a fitting parallel in the Roman Catholic Church. As the sun god had different names in different cultures, so the fish-god also had different names. The Philistines called their fish-god Dagon.

Alexander Hislop writes in his book, *The Two Babylons*, p. 215, "Dagon, the fish-god, represented that deity as a manifestation of the same patriarch who had lived so long in the waters of the deluge. As the Pope bears the key of Janus, so he wears the mitre of Dagon. The excavations of Nineveh have put this beyond all possibility of doubt. The Papal mitre is entirely different from the mitre of Aaron and the Jewish high priests. That mitre was a

⁵⁴⁹ See Numbers 21:29; Jeremiah 48:7, 13, 46

⁵⁵⁰ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Chemosh>. Retrieved March 7, 2010.

⁵⁵¹ <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=419&letter=C>. Retrieved March 7, 2010

turban. The two-horned mitre, which the Pope wears, when he sits on the high altar at Rome and receives the adoration of the Cardinals, is the very mitre worn by Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines and Babylonians.”

To further show the connection between Catholicism and the worship of the fish-god, Hislop writes, “... about the very time when the Bishop of Rome was invested with the Pagan title of Pontifex, the Saviour began to be called Ichthys, or ‘the Fish,’ thereby identifying Him with Dagon, or the Fish-god; and that, ever since, advancing step by step, as circumstances would permit, what has gone under the name of the worship of Christ, has just been the worship of that same Babylonian divinity, with all its rites and pomps and ceremonies, precisely as in ancient Babylon.”⁵⁵²

If Catholicism parallels Moab, then Midian who united with Moab and who was more closely related to Israel must represent the Protestant churches. Catholicism is also a much older religion than Protestantism, just as Moab was older than Midian. Another identifying point that supports these parallels is the Bible’s description of who Israel committed whoredom with. “And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.”⁵⁵³

In her description of the apostasy at the Jordan, Ellen White only mentions the Midianite woman. “...and then the most beautiful Midianitish women should entice the Israelites to transgress the law of God, and corrupt themselves, and also influence them to offer sacrifice to idols.”⁵⁵⁴ This would indicate that the Bible’s description of the daughters of Moab were actually the Midianite women. Ellen White identifies the Midianitish women as harlots. “He [Zimri] publicly appeared before the people leading a *Midianitish harlot*, one of high standing, a daughter of a chief house in Midian, in the sight of Moses and the congregation.”⁵⁵⁵

A woman in the Bible represents a church.⁵⁵⁶ The book of

⁵⁵² Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 252

⁵⁵³ Numbers 25:1,2

⁵⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1. 326

⁵⁵⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 17, 1887, par. 11

⁵⁵⁶ Jeremiah 6:2

Revelation portrays two women, the first is a pure church⁵⁵⁷ and the second is an apostate church.⁵⁵⁸ In the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, John describes the apostate church as the mother of harlots.⁵⁵⁹ “Babylon is said to be ‘the mother of harlots.’ By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.”⁵⁶⁰ Therefore the daughters of Moab, the Midianitish harlots are a type of the daughters of Catholicism—the Protestant churches. You will remember Ellen White mentioned that the Moabites and Midianites were closely related through *nationality and religion*.

CATHOLICISM AND PROTESTANTISM INFILTRATES ADVENTISM

If the Midianites who were working with the Moabites represent Protestantism uniting with Catholicism, then Mrs. White’s description of the Midianites entering into the camp of Israel takes on a whole new meaning. You will recall she wrote, “Midianitish women [apostate Protestantism] began to steal into the camp [Seventh-day Adventist Church]. Their appearance [false teachings, dialogs etc.] excited no alarm, and so quietly were their plans conducted that the attention of Moses [the faithful leaders] was not called to the matter. It was the object of these women [apostate Protestantism], in their association with the Hebrews [Seventh-day Adventists], to seduce them into transgression of the law of God [forsake the Sabbath], to draw their attention to heathen rites and customs [forsake the gospe^{F61}], and lead them into idolatry [worship of false gods]. These motives were studiously concealed under the garb of friendship [ecumenism], so that they were not suspected, even by the guardians of the people [leadership].”⁵⁶² Obviously such a statement needs supporting evidence. This will be provided as we

⁵⁵⁷ Revelation 12

⁵⁵⁸ See Revelation 12:1, 17:1-5

⁵⁵⁹ Revelation 17:4,5

⁵⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 328

⁵⁶¹ “When the early church became corrupted by departing from the *simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs*, she lost the Spirit and power of God.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 443

⁵⁶² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

continue.

SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

Balaam was unable to curse Israel while they remained faithful to God. He knew that if he could lead Israel to forsake God, they would not be protected. This was the purpose of leading Israel to unite and commit whoredom with Moab. This made them guilty of spiritual adultery. When a church commits spiritual adultery it violates its marriage with Christ and chooses another. Jeremiah the prophet describes this condition as backsliding:

“The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which *backsliding* Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and *committed adultery* with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD. And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion*⁵⁶³

As the ten northern tribes backslid and committed idolatry with the surrounding nations, they committed adultery and God had to give them a bill of divorce which meant they were led into captivity by the Assyrians. When the true worship of God is

⁵⁶³ Jeremiah 3:6-20

compromised, then His people have committed spiritual adultery. Ellen White writes, “All false worship *is spiritual adultery*.”⁵⁶⁴

FALSE WORSHIP

Part of what influenced Israel to commit whoredom with Moab was the music associated with their worship. “Beguiled with music and dancing, and allured by the beauty of heathen vestals, they cast off their fealty to Jehovah.”⁵⁶⁵ Like ancient Israel, Adventism has become infatuated with a false style of worship. It is commonly known today as contemporary worship or celebrationism. This kind of worship is very popular in charismatic Protestant and Catholic churches.

Contemporary music, drama and, to a lesser extent, speaking in tongues plague our churches and cause the holy angels to weep.⁵⁶⁶ In describing a social meeting that Ellen White was shown she writes, “A view of one such company was presented to me, where were assembled those who *profess to believe the truth*. One was seated at the instrument of music, and *such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep*. There was mirth, there was coarse laughter, *there was abundance of enthusiasm and a kind of inspiration*; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create. This is an enthusiasm and infatuation of which all who love God will be ashamed. It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action. I have reason to think that some who were engaged in that scene heartily repented of the shameful performance.”⁵⁶⁷ If this kind of music and atmosphere causes the angels to weep, what must it be like when this happens in our worship services?

For further discussion on the issue of contemporary worship, please see appendix A.

⁵⁶⁴ Ellen G. White, *Sermons and Talks*, p. 184

⁵⁶⁵ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

⁵⁶⁶ For example of tongues entering our churches, Ed Christian writes in the *Adventist Review* the following:

“If the initial excitement dies because members aren't training new believers, it's sometimes tempting to manufacture excitement. *A few Adventist attempts at growing mega-churches have adopted such questionable charismatic practices as speaking in tongues and being 'slain' in the Spirit*. This has always had a disastrous effect on growth in Adventist contexts.” <http://adventistreview.org/2003-1542/story4.html>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁶⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 514

FALSE DOCTRINES

In their apostasy, Israel “united in mirth and feasting, *indulgence in wine* beclouded their senses and broke down the barriers of self-control.”⁵⁶⁸ Wine is a symbol of false doctrine. “The theory of eternal torment is *one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abominations of Babylon*, of which she makes all nations drink.”⁵⁶⁹

We have already looked at certain false doctrines that entered the Adventist church in the 1950s, with the publication of *Questions and Doctrine*; namely, the nature of sin, the nature of Christ and the finished atonement at the cross. These false doctrines originated in Catholicism and Protestantism. Before 1950, almost every Seventh-day Adventist believed that Christ took man’s sinful nature without ever sinning, that sin is an act and not a state that we are born into, and that the atonement was not finished at the cross. However since that time, the majority of Adventists are either confused or no longer believe these and other essential doctrines. For example, in an interview with Desmond Ford, he says:

“My theology is not controversial for most SDA scholars, but it is such to dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists whose time for study and research is limited by inclination and skills. Since Glacier View, concession after concession has been made by Church spokesmen in the areas once regarded as heretical in 1980. For example, the Church now officially teaches the ‘*sinlessness*’ of *Christ’s human nature*; the *impossibility of perfection for sinners in this life*; the fact that the *Antichrist is central in the judgment prophecies of Daniel 7 and 8*; that ‘cleansed’ is a mistranslation in Daniel 8:14; that the word ‘days’ is also not to be found in the Hebrew original of that same verse; that the atonement *DID* take place at the cross; that *Christ DID enter the equivalent of ‘the most holy place’ at His ascension and not in 1844*; that the *Lisbon earthquake, the Dark Day, and the falling of the stars in 1833 are not the fulfillment of Bible prophecy*; that Ellen White was not a theologian, never claimed infallibility and relied on faulty sources for her doctrinal formulations; that Ellen White upheld the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice; that she refused to be an arbiter in the

⁵⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

⁵⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, Vol. 1, p. 52

interpretation of prophecy, etc, etc, etc.”⁵⁷⁰

To further show that Ford’s theology is gaining acceptance in the Adventist church, a letter he wrote to Dr. Richard Davidson on September 1, 2002, reveals, “It would be good for Dr. Davidson and others to get copies of the talks recently given at Avondale College by Dr. Fritz Guy and Dr. Norman Young. He would find that the key points of my Glacier View MS were there publicly affirmed in an SDA official gathering, such as the impossibility of proving 1844 as a prophetic date and many other items.”⁵⁷¹

Another “bright light” in Adventism that went out was Dr. Raymond F. Cottrell. He “was a Seventh-day Adventist theologian, missionary, teacher, writer and editor. He was an associate editor of both the Adventist Review and the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary.”⁵⁷² He “also contributed 2,000 pages to the series, the third largest number of manuscript pages of any author. Yet including his editorial work he probably had more input than any other writer into the Commentary.”⁵⁷³ Cottrell was certainly a prominent theologian in the church. But, was his theology correct?

Like Dr. Ford, Cottrell denied the investigative judgment. He wrote, “In the years immediately following October 22, 1844 the traditional sanctuary doctrine was an important asset for stabilizing the faith of disappointed Adventists. Today it is an equally significant liability and deterrent to the faith, confidence, and salvation of biblically literate Adventists and non-Adventists alike. It was present truth following the great disappointment on October 22, 1844. It is not present truth in the year of our Lord 2002. *Quod erat demonstrandum!*”⁵⁷⁴

Cottrell was what is known as a progressive Adventist. He did not actively push his progressive ideas until after his retirement.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷⁰ Dr. Desmond Ford, “Reflections on Adventism - Part One, an interview with Dr. Desmond Ford”, <http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org/library/atodayinterview/part1.cfm>. Retrieved March 7, 2010

⁵⁷¹ Dr. Desmond Ford, *Letter to Dr. Richard Davidson*, September 1, 2002. <http://www.atoday.com/magazine/2002/09/dr-desmond-fords-reply-dr-richard-davidson>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁷² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Cottrell. Retrieved March 7, 2010

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁴ Raymond F. Cottrell, “The ‘sanctuary doctrine’ – Asset or liability?”, <http://www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/1844rc.htm>. Retrieved March 7, 2010. See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Investigative_judgment. Retrieved March 7, 2010

⁵⁷⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Cottrell. Retrieved March 7, 2010

He was the founder and editor of *Adventist Today*, a liberal/progressive Adventist magazine which was first published in 1993. According to Ron Corson in an article published in *Adventist Today*, called "*Progressive and Traditional Adventists Examined*," he points out that Progressive Adventists commonly believe:

1. A differing view of what the investigative judgment is or acknowledgment that the investigative judgment is not biblical. (And as such a differing view of Christ's activities from his ascension to his Second Coming.)
2. An inclusion of other Christians into the category termed the "Remnant."
3. A less rigid understanding of the role of Ellen G. White, ranging from acknowledging that she was not always correct in her teaching and understanding and even to denying her status as Prophet.
4. The Seventh-day Sabbath is for our benefit; true Christians can and do worship on Sunday, and Sunday observance is not now, or later to become, the Mark of the Beast, nor is keeping the Seventh-day Sabbath to be the Seal of God.⁵⁷⁶

It would appear that progressive Adventism is on the increase. "Progressive Adventists tend to hold a different perspective on such areas as the investigative judgment, the prominence given to Ellen White's writings, creationism, and certain prophetic interpretations such as the remnant and Mark of the Beast. *A significant number of Adventist scholars could be considered 'progressive.'* Many progressive Adventists regard the 1980 Glacier View crisis, which centered upon major problems with the investigative judgment doctrine identified by Dr. Desmond Ford, as something of a rallying point."⁵⁷⁷

EVOLUTION

One of the doctrines that belong in the wine cup of Catholicism and many of her Protestant daughters is the belief of

⁵⁷⁶ Ron Corson, <http://www.atoday.com/magazine/2002/11/progressive-and-traditional-adventists-examined>. Retrieved March 7, 2010

⁵⁷⁷ http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Seventh-day_Adventists. Retrieved March 7, 2010

evolution. Although the Adventist church officially rejects evolution, there is alarming evidence that it is becoming an accepted teaching among Seventh-day Adventists.

Fritz Guy is a Seventh-day Adventist Professor of theology and philosophy at La Sierra University in Riverside, California.⁵⁷⁸ “He has worked as a college and university professor, an academic administrator, and a church pastor. In a 1985 survey of North American Adventist academics, Guy tied for fourth place among the Adventist authors who had most influenced them.”⁵⁷⁹ Like Cottrell, Guy is also a progressive Adventist.

In an article entitled, “*Realities for Adventist Theology in the 21st Century*,” Guy expresses his view regarding science and religion. He writes, “While it is true that scientific knowledge is ‘always revisable’ and ‘will almost certainly need to be revised in the light of further research,’ the *fact remains that scientific knowledge is ‘the best information we have’ about the physical world.* As a consequence, ‘religious beliefs cannot remain what they were before the rise of modern science.’⁵⁸⁰ Two pages later he expands on this thought. “In the meantime, the evidence for a long developmental history of the visible universe (something like 13.7 billion years since the ‘big bang’ and often known as ‘stellar evolution’) *has become conclusive, and is accepted by most Adventist scientific and theological scholars.*”⁵⁸¹ He further writes, “This consensus represents a significant development in much Adventist thinking—from a short age of the entire universe to a short age only of life on planet Earth—in spite of its evident tension with a literal reading of Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Exodus 20:11, and with the expressed view of Ellen White. Furthermore, the available empirical evidence regarding Earth’s own biological history is recognized as more compatible with a long scenario of gradual development than with a short scenario of sudden, recent appearance of present life forms. The accumulating evidence has come from various sources—radiometric dating, genetics, comparative anatomy, geology, and paleontology—and it ‘has

⁵⁷⁸ <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/doctrines/au2002conference/guy/guy-bio.htm>. Retrieved 3-3-2010. See also <http://www.lasierra.edu/departments/studies/faculty.html>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁷⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritz_Guy. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁸⁰ Fritz Guy, *Realities for Adventist Theology in the 21st Century*, p. 6

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8

convinced virtually all working biologists' that a 'framework of variation and natural selection is unquestionably correct.'⁵⁸²

Those in our Church who still love the Bible should be asking their leaders why such a man who blatantly denies the plain Word of God is teaching theology in one of our schools. Don't we care about our children?

Evolution is not only confined to the atheistic view of the big bang and natural selection. Many Christians, including Adventists prefer to accept a view that appears to harmonize more with the Bible. One retired pastor wrote in 1984, "In forty years in the Christian ministry I have never preached a sermon on Creation/evolution. I believe there are more important subjects for sermons. Often in discussion groups or personal encounters I have not sidestepped the issue. And when I have taken a stand, it has been on the side of Creation. But I have a 'quarrel' with the creationist. He bases his argument on the first chapter of Genesis. All that is—or ever will be—was created in six days. Period! Neither you nor I were present during those six days. Nor was anyone else. Why, then, can we not give God the glory that He created all things—visible and invisible—without asking how He did it or how long it took? *If He is the Creator, what difference does it make whether He took six days or a thousand years?* With Him, 'one day is ... as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' Does it really matter?"⁵⁸³

On April 30, 2009, a letter written by evangelist David Asscherick to elders Jan Paulsen (General Conference president), Don C. Schneider and Ricardo Graham shocked many faithful Adventists. The letter was in response to La Sierra University teaching naturalistic evolution. Asscherick writes, "This letter concerns the teaching of evolution at La Sierra University. While I am not a formally trained scientist, I am, however, familiar with many of the apologetic, philosophical, and theological issues surrounding the theories of naturalistic evolution. I have made this an area of special study in my life and ministry. So, I feel both comfortable and qualified to speak to the issue, especially in its ecclesiastical ramifications.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

⁵⁸³ Retired pastor, Walla Walla, Washington, "Letters" *Ministry*, September 1984, p.

“It is a matter of incontestable fact that naturalistic evolution is being taught at La Sierra University. This is not in and of itself a bad thing. Evolution should be taught at our denominational universities. But it should be taught as a competing and inimical worldview to the biblical worldview. We need our young people to know what it is they are up against, yes, but when naturalistic evolution is taught as fact or as the preferred and normative worldview, then we can be sure that the enemy has *breached our lines*.

“There is no point in equivocating. I have seen the class materials with my own eyes. Frankly, I think every Seventh-day Adventist deserves to see them. Our people need to know what is happening. Many of them have heard various rumblings, but being the conscientious, confiding, and hopeful people they are, they have generally assumed the very best. We are making capital of their trust.”⁵⁸⁴

Sean Pitman has a copy of the course syllabus on his website.⁵⁸⁵ In Lecture two of Larry McCloskey’s course you will find on slide 12 the admission that “Evolution is supported by an overwhelming and constantly growing amount of scientific evidence.”⁵⁸⁶

A SIGN OF COMPROMISE

Although officially the Seventh-day Adventist Church upholds in article six of its fundamental beliefs a six day creation of the “heavens and the earth and all living things upon the earth,”⁵⁸⁷ subsequent affirmations have somewhat muddied the waters.

A document prepared by the Organizing Committee of the International Faith & Science Conferences 2002-2004 was presented to and received by the General Conference Executive Committee at the Annual Council in Silver Spring, Maryland, October 11, 2004. Point number two of the documents affirmations reads, “We affirm the historic Seventh-day Adventist

⁵⁸⁴ David Asscherick <http://www.educatetruth.com/letters/david-asscherick-email-to-the-general-conference/>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁸⁵ <http://www.detectingdesign.com/>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁸⁶ <http://www.detectingdesign.com/PDF%20Files/Lecture%202.pdf>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁸⁷ <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/fundamental/index.html>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

understanding of Genesis 1 *that life on earth was created in six literal days and is of recent origin.*⁵⁸⁸ To the casual reader, this may appear to be correct, but there is a fundamental flaw with it. The problem with the statement is that the qualifying part of the sentence “*that life on earth was created in six literal days and is of recent origin*” falls short of affirming the earth itself was created in six days. It states that in our understanding of Genesis 1, only life on earth was created in six days. This opens the door for our churches, pastors, teachers and institutions to accept and promote variations of the gap theory which teaches the earth is millions or billions of years old and approximately six thousand years ago, God created life on it. This theory is similar to sitting on the fence. People want to believe what science says about the age of the earth but they also want to believe in a creator God. By compromising, the book of Genesis will eventually be interpreted as being symbolic instead of literal.

The Bible is very clear regarding the origins of this earth. “Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”⁵⁸⁹

Probably one of the clearest verses in the Bible which identifies the time in which it took God to create the earth and everything on it is the fourth commandment, written by God’s own finger. “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”⁵⁹⁰ Notice the commandment says that God created not only life in six days, but He also created the *heavens and the earth*. Therefore the very first verse of Genesis begins on the first day and not billions of years in the past.

As God revealed to mankind their duty to observe the Sabbath and to work six days, so we can be sure that the six days of creation as recorded in Genesis 1 and the seventh day in Genesis 2 are literal days as well. If we fail to read these verses literally, there will come a time when the Sabbath will no longer have any significance to us. This is what Satan wants and this is one of the

⁵⁸⁸ http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main_stat54.html. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁵⁸⁹ Psalm 33:8,9

⁵⁹⁰ Exodus 20:11

reasons why so many of our young people are leaving the Church.

Ellen White warned that through evolution many would lose their faith in the Scriptures. “The warnings of the word of God regarding the perils surrounding the Christian church belong to us today. As in the days of the apostles men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, *evolution*, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths.”⁵⁹¹

If the warnings she refers to were relevant in her day, how much more relevant are they today? “Inferences erroneously drawn from facts observed in nature have, however, led to *supposed conflict between science and revelation*; and in the effort to restore harmony, *interpretations of Scripture have been adopted that undermine and destroy the force of the word of God*. Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation. Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos; and in order to accommodate the Bible to this supposed revelation of science, the days of creation are assumed to have been vast, indefinite periods, covering thousands or even millions of years.”⁵⁹²

God has revealed to us in His Word how and when the earth was created. If we choose to reject this plain revelation and instead choose to accept the theories of man, we will not stop at reinterpreting the creation account. Next on the list will be the Flood, and then other events that seem impossible to our human understanding. The end result will be a loss of faith in the Bible.

HOMOSEXUALITY

Another false teaching, that has taken Protestantism and the Reformed Catholic Church by storm, is homosexuality. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is officially opposed to homosexuality, but as with evolution, its acceptance is gaining popularity.

⁵⁹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 474

⁵⁹² Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 128

“In 1980 SDA Kinship⁵⁹³ held its first national gathering called Kampmeeting (similar to a typical Adventist camp meeting). Three professors from the Adventist Theological Seminary and two pastors were invited to participate. They received permission from the General Conference, with the stipulation that SDA Kinship would not claim that this indicated the church’s acceptance of homosexuality and that Colin Cook also be invited to present his ideas about helping homosexuals find healing.”⁵⁹⁴

According to Kinship, “The three professors were scholars of the Old Testament, the New Testament and Christian theology. They concluded that a simplistic English reading of the few Scriptural references to homosexual acts do not suffice to determine God’s will for people with a homosexual orientation.”⁵⁹⁵

On October 4, 2008, a review of the recently published “*Christianity and Homosexuality*” appeared in the Record—the official paper of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was written by David Potter, coordinator of general studies at Avondale College, Cooranbong, New South Wales. In the review Potter raises the following questions:

“Are same-sex relationships natural? Do homosexuals and heterosexuals deserve equal treatment in the church? Is sexual preference chosen, or is it biologically determined? Are the Leviticus 18 and 20 edicts timeless moral laws that apply equally to Christians as to Israel? Do Paul’s comments on ‘unnatural’ relations (see Romans 1) cover all same-sex relations, or only the perverse practices of the godless Gentiles? These questions and many more are addressed in *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*, edited by David Ferguson, Fritz Guy and David Larson.”⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹³ SDA Kinship International is an organization that promotes homosexuality within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. According to its website, it has well over a 1,000 members in over 20 countries. There website address is <http://www.sdakinship.org>.

⁵⁹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Kinship_International. Retrieved March 8, 2010

⁵⁹⁵ <http://www.sdakinship.org/en/about1.html>. Retrieved March 7, 2010. This was also quoted by Samuel Koranteng-Pipim in *Here We Stand*, p. 544

⁵⁹⁶ David Potter, “Christianity and Homosexuality,” *Record*, Oct. 4, 2008, p. 10. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2008/rec38-08_10_04.pdf. Retrieved March 7, 2010

After raising these questions, Potter then writes, “The reader faces two challenges: first, to properly assess the growing body of literature that suggests *homosexuality is a predisposition*, not a choice; and second, to re-examine what Paul is really saying in Romans 1.”⁵⁹⁷

One has to wonder why the Record would publish such a review of a book that not only disagrees with the official stand of the church, but more importantly is opposed to the Bible. However, that was not the only article that appeared in that issue of the Record which helped to support the homosexual agenda. Nathan Brown’s editorial, *Beyond Assumptions*, leads the reader to think that the issue of homosexuality is not an important moral issue and that we need to be more inclusive just as Jesus was. He writes, “I am tempted to think it is not a major issue. Most of the time I am not directly affected—and we all tend to think with less urgency about issues that don’t bother us directly.

“From a Christian perspective, the Bible says little about the issue of homosexuality—no more than five references, depending how you count them. And there is such a variety of explanations of these verses—urging what they ‘really’ say—covering many shades of meaning. Belying the noise of various Christian activists, *it is difficult to argue homosexuality as a specifically-important moral issue from a biblical perspective.*

“It’s little wonder we would prefer to avoid the difficult questions, whether by our silence or by our dogmatic and perhaps unfeeling adherence to a seemingly simple, black-and-white attitude.

“But then I come across the personal stories of those who have been hurt, confused and excluded by the church. Recognising the personal trauma, loss and heartache of openly acknowledging one’s homosexuality in a conservative Christian community, it seems obvious most of those who have endured such an ordeal *are not homosexual by choice*. If they could choose otherwise, their lives and faith would be so much simpler.”⁵⁹⁸

One of the underlying reasons why homosexuality is becoming an accepted view in the church is because the Bible’s authority is

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁸ Nathan Brown, “Beyond assumptions”, Editorial, *Record*, p. 2. Oct 4, 2008. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2008/rec38-08_10_04.pdf. Retrieved March 7, 2010

being challenged, and to a large degree is being replaced by science, reason, traditions and experiences. According to Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, “Those who seek to neutralize the Biblical witness against homosexuality often do so on the basis of alleged research findings (scientific, statistical etc.), or on the basis of testimonies by homosexuals of their happy, healthy, and fulfilling relationships, instead of on Scripture.”⁵⁹⁹

We are told by those who are “experts” in their field that according to studies of homosexuals, most do not choose that lifestyle, but instead are born homosexual. The implication is similar to the erroneous doctrine of original sin—we are born sinners—therefore we can’t stop sinning. It is argued that if someone is born a homosexual, then all they are capable of becoming is a homosexual. It is then concluded that if God made or allowed us to become a homosexual, then He wouldn’t look unfavorably on us being homosexual. The two articles quoted from the Record use this same argument to lead their readers to think that homosexuality is not a choice, but a predisposition.

A website entitled, “*A Solemn Appeal...To our fellow believers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*,” addresses a public letter to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.⁶⁰⁰ This letter is supported with almost six hundred names at the time of writing—most of whom are Seventh-day Adventists. The letter lists five points that detail their convictions. It is not surprising that the first point refers to so-called scientific evidence to support their case:

“Current scientific evidence supports our conviction that, just as with heterosexuals, a homosexual orientation is determined before birth and/or very soon after, by a complex mix of biological and environmental factors over which a person has no control. To describe people who find themselves attracted to the same sex as sinful, contradicts not only science but the scriptural principles of truth, justice and compassion taught and demonstrated by

⁵⁹⁹ Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, *Here We Stand*, p. 539

⁶⁰⁰ *A Solemn Appeal*. <http://www.asolemnappeal.org/index.php?limitstart=560&lang=en-us>. Retrieved March 8, 2010.

It has been noted since retrieving the information from this website that it has been removed. The original text has been preserved at <http://www.spectrummagazine.org/node/1490> however, the list of names is no longer available.

Jesus.”⁶⁰¹

Our understanding of sin should never be determined by scientific studies. If the Bible says the practice of homosexuality is sinful, then even if every scientist around the world said it wasn't, it would still be sinful.

The letter's last point declares, “We believe the same Jesus who said, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,’ might say today in regard to this issue, ‘Marriage was made for humans, not humans for marriage.’ We believe God wants homosexuals, as well as heterosexuals, to enjoy the many blessings of a monogamous, committed relationship – companionship, support of each other, a greater understanding of God's love, and emotional and sexual intimacy – needs with which He created all of us.”⁶⁰²

As you browse the list of names⁶⁰³ that support this letter, you notice there are many Seventh-day Adventist ministers listed there. Among some of the more prominent ones are Fritz Guy⁶⁰⁴ (Professor of Theology and Philosophy at La Sierra University), Julius Nam (Professor at Loma Linda University and a commissioned minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church) and Ryan Bell (Senior pastor of Hollywood Adventist Church).

Why are pastors who actively promote homosexuality allowed to keep their influential positions in the Church? Has God's Church come to a point where it is now politically incorrect to call sin by its right name? Are we too afraid to be identified as contradicting science and the so called “scriptural” principles of truth, justice and compassion taught and demonstrated by Jesus? How does God feel when He looks at His Church and sees men of great learning, who many Church members look up to for guidance, or Church papers teaching it is all right to practice homosexuality?

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY MADE OF NONE EFFECT

If there is one thing Catholicism and Protestantism hate most

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*

⁶⁰³ It appears the 500 plus names of those who had signed the petition are no longer available from www.asolemnappeal.org website.

⁶⁰⁴ You will recall that Fritz Guy promotes evolution in Adventism and is a supporter of Dr. Desmond Ford.

about Adventism, it is the writings and authority of Ellen White. This is because through Ellen White, God has confirmed all of our doctrinal pillars and none of them can be moved without first removing her.

Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church has at large accepted Ellen White as a prophet, there are sure signs that her authority as a prophet is quickly declining. In previous chapters, we discovered Ellen White's ministry had been rejected by leaders in the Church. It should not be surprising then that this will happen again, especially considering Ellen White predicted this would be the very last deception of Satan. "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish' (Proverbs 29:18). *Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.*"⁶⁰⁵

This prediction indicates that the Spirit of Prophecy will not necessarily be rejected—that Ellen White will still be considered a prophet—but her writings will be made of none effect. We make the Spirit of Prophecy of no effect when we 1) discard its authority and its message 2) when we neglect to read it and 3) when we cast doubt on its relevance for today.

The way in which Satan achieves his objective is very simple. Mrs. White wrote, "There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to *unsettle the faith of the churches in them*, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded."⁶⁰⁶

Satan hates the Spirit of Prophecy. He knows that if God's people follow their warnings and reproofs he will not be able to deceive them. This is why he tries to unsettle their faith in Ellen White and her writings. He has succeeded to a large degree by using a number of methods. You can find in Appendix B more information about how the Spirit of Prophecy is being made of none effect in our churches today.

⁶⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 78

⁶⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 48

ELLEN WHITE NOT A THEOLOGIAN?

You might recall earlier in this chapter a quote from Dr. Desmond Ford where he said in an interview “...that Ellen White was not a theologian, never claimed infallibility and relied on faulty sources for her doctrinal formulations; that Ellen White upheld the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice; that she refused to be an arbiter in the interpretation of prophecy, etc, etc. etc.”⁶⁰⁷ We might ask the question, when did a prophet ever claim infallibility? Or how many of the Bible prophets were theologians. Peter certainly wasn’t, neither was John, James, Matthew, Mark or Luke. Where has the idea come from that if a prophet is not a theologian they should not be considered too seriously?

How does the Bible describe the people God is able to use? “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”⁶⁰⁸ God’s ways are certainly not man’s ways. By choosing the twelve apostles—unlearned men—to take the gospel message to the world, God was able to confound the wise. In their pride of learning, the theologians of the day could not accept that God passed them by. By the influence of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were able to turn the world upside down and declared most wonderful truths.

ELLEN WHITE NOT EQUAL TO BIBLE PROPHETS?

In the process of making of none effect the Spirit of Prophecy, many are now beginning to believe that Ellen White was a prophet, but not in the same sense as the Bible prophets. For example, when Dr. Ford was asked to give his position regarding Ellen White, he answered, “She had the gift of prophecy spoken of in 1 Corinthians 14 which is not identical with that of the canonical writers of Scripture (see 1 Cor. 14:29 and 1 Thess. 5:19-21 for clear statements that the gift in our day—since the completion of the canon—is not infallible). Ellen White never

⁶⁰⁷ Dr. Desmond Ford, “Reflections on Adventism - Part One, an interview with Dr. Desmond Ford”, Interview number 1, <http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org/library/atodayinterview/part1.cfm>. Retrieved March 7, 2010

⁶⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:26,27

claimed infallibility and her writings should be studied as those of a great church leader and pastor but not as a ‘Bible.’”⁶⁰⁹

As much as Dr. Ford might be a highly educated man, his view of the Spirit of Prophecy is not correct. In contrasting the prophets and apostles of Bible times with her own ministry, Ellen White wrote, “In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. *In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit.* There was never a time when God instructed His people *more earnestly* than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.”⁶¹⁰ Ellen White’s writings are more than that of a church leader or pastor. Let us not be deceived. Ellen White warned, “One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan’s banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God’s Spirit.”⁶¹¹

THE BIBLE ONLY

Have you ever heard our leaders and teachers say something like, “Ellen White said we should use the Bible only” or “Ellen White was only a lesser light”? These arguments are Satan’s way of unsettling our faith in the Spirit of Prophecy. Desmond Ford in his interview echoes this same deception, “I have highly valued the writings of Ellen White since my first encounter with them. But for the last fifty years, I have accepted her own warnings that her writings were not to be used as Scripture and that the Bible—and the Bible only—is our source of doctrine.”⁶¹²

Of course, those who reject the truth as given in the Spirit of Prophecy rarely come out and attack Ellen White’s writings. They make out as though they value her writings—even quoting from her—but when it disagrees with their erroneous views, they are quick to discredit her or say we are to use the Scriptures only.

This kind of deception was around even when Ellen White was

⁶⁰⁹ Dr. Desmond Ford, “Reflections on Adventism - Part One, an interview with Dr. Desmond Ford”, Interview number 2, <http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org/library/atodayinterview/part2.cfm>. Retrieved March 9, 2010

⁶¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 661

⁶¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 84

⁶¹² Dr. Desmond Ford, “Reflections on Adventism - Part One, an interview with Dr. Desmond Ford”, Interview number 2, <http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org/library/atodayinterview/part2.cfm>. Retrieved March 9, 2010

alive. She wrote, “The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies, and when these errors come in they claim to *prove all the positions by the Bible*, but they misinterpret the Scriptures. They make bold assertions, as did Elder Canright, and misapply the prophecies and the Scriptures to prove falsehood. And, after men have done their work in weakening the confidence of our churches in the Testimonies, *they have torn away the barrier*, that unbelief in the truth shall become widespread, and there is no voice to be lifted up to stay the force of error.”⁶¹³ She continues in the next paragraph, “This is just as Satan designed it should be, and those who have been preparing the way for the people to pay no heed to the warnings and reproofs of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God will see that a tide of errors of all kinds will spring into life. *They will claim Scripture as their evidence, and deceptions of Satan in every form will prevail.*”⁶¹⁴

We have certainly seen this fulfilled. Those who teach false doctrines in the Seventh-day Adventist Church almost always claim to take their position from the Bible only.

It is interesting that on a *Let's Talk* program with Elder Jan Paulsen, while president of the General Conference, he echoed this same argument when asked the question, “Is it right for some people to quote Ellen White instead of the Bible?” He answered, “We might also ask: Is it right for some people to quote Martin Luther instead of the Bible? Or Max Lucado? Or anyone other than the Bible? Depending on the subject and the occasion, we might choose to quote any number of people.” He then continues, “If we are attempting to present spiritual truth, or if we are discussing a disputed point regarding spiritual things, the Bible is our point of reference. We may bring in other writers if we wish (and anyone with the genuine prophetic gift ought to rank high among them). But we must understand that these are not the source of our beliefs. Ellen White’s own counsel would lead us to make the Bible our main study and to appeal to it as our source of spiritual truth.”⁶¹⁵

According to Elder Paulsen, Ellen White’s writings should only

⁶¹³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 83

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁵ Jan Paulsen, *Let's Talk*, http://letstalk.adventist.org/q_a/adventist_life/ellen_white.html. Retrieved March 9, 2010

rank high among “other writers” when attempting to present the truth. Has the church come to the point where the Spirit of Prophecy is made of none effect? If so, then we can be sure it will not be too long before Jesus returns, for this would be Satan’s last deception.

Elder Paulsen was right that when we present the truth it must be founded in the Bible. However, when these truths are disputed—such as the investigative judgment, the nature of sin, the nature of Christ, etc.—we can certainly use the writings of Ellen White to define for us what the truth is. This is one reason why God has given us the Spirit of Prophecy.

A LESSER LIGHT

In his attempt to discredit the writings of Ellen White, Satan has twisted a statement in the Spirit of Prophecy to imply that Mrs. Whites writings are lesser in value and authority compared with the Bible. However, we know from what she wrote that those who want to use the Bible only, really want to bring in false doctrines. So what did she mean by her writings being a lesser light? In 1903, she wrote:

“Sister White is *not the originator of the thoughts expressed in the books bearing her name*. These books contain the instruction that during her life-time *God has graciously given her to give to the world*. From their pages light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour. It is our work to scatter these books throughout the world. There is in them truth that to the receiver is a savor of life unto life. They are silent witnesses for God. In the past they have been the means in His hands of convicting and converting many souls...The Lord has sent His people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. *Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light*. O, how much good might be accomplished if the books containing this light were read with a determination to carry out the principles they contain. There would be a thousandfold greater vigilance, a thousandfold more self-denial and resolute effort. And many more would now be rejoicing in the light of present truth.”⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, January 20, 1903, par. 8,9

The first point we should notice from this quote is that the context is referring to the books *Christ Object Lessons*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Great Controversy* and *Desire of Ages*. However, it might easily be applied to any of her books that bear her name. Ellen White was not the originator of the thoughts expressed in these books. God was the originator and her books were to go to the world, not just the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The second point to notice is that God has sent His people much light through the books that bear Ellen White's name. Because little heed is given to the Bible, God has had to send a lesser light to point to the greater light. But, does this mean the writings of Ellen White should not be used to define truth?

OLD TESTAMENT A LESSER LIGHT

“With the first advent of Christ there was ushered in an era of *greater light and glory*; but it would indeed be sinful ingratitude to despise and ridicule *the lesser light because a fuller and more glorious light had dawned*. Those who despise the blessings and glory of the Jewish age are not prepared to be benefited by the preaching of the gospel. The brightness of the Father's glory, and the excellence and perfection of his sacred law, are only understood through the atonement made upon Calvary by his dear Son; but even the atonement loses its significance when the law of God is rejected.”⁶¹⁷

The Jewish age was governed by the Old Testament. When Jesus came and made plain the truths of God, a greater light was revealed. New Testament Christians didn't stop reading the Old Testament or relegate it to a secondary source status. It formed the foundation of whatever they taught and was used to prove Jesus was the Messiah.

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we are shown a picture describing this lesser and greater light. John writes, “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”⁶¹⁸ In the book of Genesis, God reveals what the sun and moon are. “And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the *lesser light* to rule the night: he made the

⁶¹⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, August 25, 1887, par. 9

⁶¹⁸ Revelation 12:1

stars also.”⁶¹⁹

John’s description of the woman (the church) in the New Testament era is clothed with the brightness of the sun (the greater light) and it stands on the moon (the lesser light). The moon does not produce its own light. It only reflects the sun’s light. So it is with the Old Testament. It reflects the light of Jesus who is the “bright and morning star.”⁶²⁰ This therefore shows that a lesser light should not be considered of lesser value or authority.

JOHN THE BAPTIST A LESSER LIGHT

To further show that a lesser light is of no lesser value compared with the greater light, Ellen White spoke of this in relation to John the Baptist and Jesus. “The religion of the Jews, in consequence of their departure from God, consisted mostly in ceremony. *John was the lesser light, which was to be followed by a greater light.* He was to shake the confidence of the people in their traditions, and call their sins to their remembrance, and lead them to repentance; *that they might be prepared to appreciate the work of Christ.* God communicated to John by inspiration, illuminating the prophet that he might remove the superstition and darkness from the minds of the honest Jews, which had been, through false teachings for generations, gathering upon them.”⁶²¹

Of John it is written, “And thou, child, shalt be called the *prophet of the Highest:* for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; *To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,* Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, *To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*”⁶²² Jesus said of John, “For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”⁶²³ Yet even this status did not stop the theologians of the day from rejecting John’s message. “For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, *and ye believed him not:* but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye

⁶¹⁹ Genesis 1:16

⁶²⁰ Revelation 22:16

⁶²¹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, April 8, 1873, par. 15

⁶²² Luke 1:76-79

⁶²³ Luke 7:28

had seen it, repented not afterward, *that ye might believe him.*⁶²⁴ He was even accused of having a devil.⁶²⁵

John's mission was to prepare the people to receive Jesus. He was to give a knowledge of salvation and give light to those who were in darkness, and yet he was only a lesser light. His light was essential at that time, and if it was rejected like the theologians and scholars of his day did, then the greater light would not be accepted. This is an important parallel for us today. Those in our midst who reject Ellen White's writings or cast doubt on them and teach that because they are only a "lesser light" they should not be used to define doctrine, are of the same class that rejected John the Baptist and the greater light, Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist did not write a book that was placed in the canon of Scripture. But this does not mean he had less authority than other Bible writers. Remember Jesus said he was the greatest of all the prophets. When asked who he was, John referred people back to the book of Isaiah for the purpose of his mission. The burden of his message originated in the Old Testament writings, yet the truth he bore had been lost sight of by the majority in Israel—including the leaders. So too Ellen White's writings are a lesser light to the Bible. The lesser light always reflects the greater light. Therefore what is revealed in the Bible is revealed in the writings of Ellen White, and vice versa. There is no conflict. The Spirit of Prophecy is of no lesser authority than the Bible. Ellen White was inspired the same way as the prophets of old. Just as John the Baptist pointed people back to the Old Testament, so Ellen White points us back to the Bible and bears the truth that has been lost sight of by the majority of Christianity.

PURPOSE OF THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

God doesn't send prophets to His people as an optional extra for those who want to stand out from the crowd. There was a reason why He sent His last day church the writings of Ellen White. Just as Moses was used to guide and instruct the people of God as they came out of Egypt, so Ellen White was used to guide and instruct the remnant church.

Through Ellen White's writings, God has sent His people

⁶²⁴ Matthew 21:32

⁶²⁵ Luke 7:33

direction. "We must follow the directions given through the Spirit of prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His Word. He has spoken to us through the Testimonies to the church, and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy."⁶²⁶

Ellen White's writings also help to point out our sins. "I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the Testimonies. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.

"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, *that all may be left without excuse.*"⁶²⁷

To insure we are left without an excuse, God has given us simple, direct counsel through the writings of Ellen White. This is

⁶²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 98

⁶²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 605

because many have twisted the Bible and deny the truths contained therein. For example, the Bible is clear that Jesus took fallen human nature, yet most theologians in Adventism today twist the words of Scripture and teach that Jesus took Adams sinless nature before he fell. Because the theologians are “well educated,” many accept their teachings. But how are we to know what is truth, especially when we have become confused on the matter? The answer is simple. God has revealed the truth through Ellen White and it doesn’t matter how much the theologians quote to us from the Bible only, they will always be wrong if they contradict the Spirit of Prophecy. This applies to every issue we face. Remember, false teachers will claim Scripture as their evidence.⁶²⁸

In 1890, Ellen White had to write to brother and sister Garmire regarding a leaflet they had sent out that was promoting false doctrines. They were convinced they had found the truth, but they had been deceived. Their case is very similar to what is happening in Adventism today. Ellen White wrote, “You and your wife and Sister Eastman have said, ‘*Show us from the Bible that we are in error, and we will give it up.*’ *But how can I prove your error by Scripture when you misinterpret and misapply it as you do?*”

“It was this same spirit in the Jews which called forth the words of Christ, ‘Ye are ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God.’ They entertained the idea that Christ at His first advent was to break the Roman yoke from off their necks, and that He would then honor Israel by placing them above every other people on the earth. *And they produced Scripture to sustain them; but they were deceived.* The Old Testament prophecies which relate to the glorious second appearing of Christ, they applied to His first advent, and *many, even the wise and educated, were deceived.* Their error was fatal.

“Several times during our conversation, in which you become very much in earnest, you repeated the sentence, ‘O consistency, thou art a jewel!’ I repeat the same with decided force to you. You say that Anna’s visions place the forming of the image of the beast after probation closes. This is not so. *You claim to believe the testimonies; let them set you right on this point.* The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before

⁶²⁸ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 83

probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. Your position is such a jumble of inconsistencies that but few will be deceived... You have taken the history of the disobedient prophet, as given in the Old Testament, and applied it to Sister White. *You say she is perfectly honest, but she deceived prophet.* For this reason the testimonies of the Spirit of God can have no effect on you... My duty is to make plain statements of my position; for you misinterpret my testimony, wrench it from its true meaning, and ring in my name whenever you think it will *enforce whatever you have to say. But when the testimonies do not harmonize with your theories, I am excused, because I am the false prophet!* There are many ways of evading the truth.”⁶²⁹

“The testimonies either bear the signet of God or that of Satan. A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. By their fruit ye shall know them. God has spoken. Who has trembled at His word?”⁶³⁰

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY DEFINES TRUTH

Ellen White said her writings can set us right on doctrinal issues. Not only do her writings guide and counsel us, but they were instrumental in the establishment of the foundational pillars of truth. “In his teaching Elder _____ showed that the *Spirit of prophecy has an important part to act in the establishment of the truth.*”⁶³¹ “At that time [after the 1844 disappointment] 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. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, *and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.*

“As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be

⁶²⁹ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 15, pp. 14-15

⁶³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 298

⁶³¹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 257

taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. *I was given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays.*⁶³²

Despite what many of our leaders and teachers are telling us today, the Spirit of Prophecy does define what is truth. Of course this truth is founded on the Bible, but it is made plain in the Spirit of Prophecy. "I have much written in the diary I have kept in all my journeys that should come before the people if essential, even if I did not write another line. I want that which is deemed worthy to appear, *for the Lord has given me much light that I want the people to have*; for there is instruction that the Lord has given me for His people. It is light that they should have, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. *This is now to come before the people, because it has been given to correct specious errors and to specify what is truth.* The Lord has revealed many things pointing out the truth, thus saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.'⁶³³

TWO EXTREMES

Although we need to be on guard against rejecting or belittling the Spirit of Prophecy, we also need to be careful we don't twist them to say something they never intended. Ellen White warned that, "Soon every possible effort will be made to discount and pervert the truth of the testimonies of God's Spirit. We must have in readiness the clear, straight messages that since 1846 have been coming to God's people.

"There will be those once united with us in the faith who will search for new, strange doctrines, for something odd and sensational to present to the people. They will bring in all conceivable fallacies, *and will present them as coming from Mrs. White*, that they may beguile souls... There are those who will misinterpret the messages that God has given, in accordance with their spiritual blindness.

"Some will yield their faith, and will deny the truth of the messages, *pointing to them as falsehoods.*

"Some will hold them up to ridicule, working against the light that God has been giving for years, and some who are weak in the

⁶³² Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, pp. 31-32

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, p. 32

faith will thus be led astray.

“But others will be greatly helped by the messages. Though not personally addressed, they will be corrected, and will be led to shun the evils specified... The Spirit of the Lord will be in the instruction, and doubts existing in many minds will be swept away. *The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture.*”⁶³⁴

The last sentence in this quotation is very significant. It teaches us how we should interpret the writings of Ellen White. Some people wrongly quote her as they do the Bible—an isolated verse or sentence to prove a point. Ellen White said this is not how her writings should be used. They will interpret themselves. As with the Bible, there are portions of Ellen White’s writings that, if taken by themselves, may appear to contradict other plainer statements. That is why it is important to consider everything she has to say on a subject. The less plainer statements should be subjected to the majority which cannot be disputed. Then we will not be deceived.

GOD THE AUTHOR OF ELLEN WHITE’S WRITINGS

Many today are being taught in our colleges and churches that only parts of what Ellen White wrote were inspired. Some suggest that God never gave Ellen White a fax roll from heaven and she had to base a lot of what she wrote on other people’s writings, which have proven to be erroneous. However, Ellen White wrote, “As soon as I take my pen in hand *I am not in darkness as to what to write.* It is as plain and clear as a voice speaking to me, ‘I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.’”⁶³⁵ She also wrote, “I cannot at my own impulse take up a work and launch out into it. I have to be impressed by the Spirit of God. I cannot write unless the Holy Spirit helps me. Sometimes I cannot write at all. Then again I am aroused at eleven, twelve, and one o’clock; and I can write as fast as my hand can move over the paper.”⁶³⁶

In describing her work, Ellen White wrote, “I speak that which I have seen, and which I know to be true.”⁶³⁷ She also wrote, “In

⁶³⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, pp. 41–42

⁶³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 49

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49

the night season many things are passing before me. The Scriptures, full of grace and richness, are presented before me. The word of the Lord to me is: ‘Look on these things, and meditate on them. You may claim the rich grace of truth, which nourishes the soul. Have naught to do with controversy and dissension and strife, which bring darkness and discouragement to your soul. Truth is clear, pure, savory. Avoid all council meetings where there is dissension, and where men will neither credit My words and obey My lessons nor heed your counsel. Speak the truth in faith and love, leaving the result with God. *The work is not yours, but the Lord's*. In all your communications, speak as one to whom the Lord has spoken. *He is your authority*, and He will give you His sustaining grace.’⁶³⁸

Regarding the books Ellen White had written, she wrote, “Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world.”⁶³⁹

“When I went to Colorado” she writes, “I was so burdened for you that, in my weakness, I wrote many pages to be read at your camp meeting. Weak and trembling, I arose at three o'clock in the morning to write to you. God was speaking through clay. You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. *I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision*—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.”⁶⁴⁰

As Ellen White looked back over her work, she could write, “I am now looking over my diaries and copies of letters written for several years back... I have the most precious matter to reproduce and place before the people in testimony form. While I am able to do this work, the people must have things to revive past history, that they may see that there is one straight chain of truth, *without*

⁶³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 17, p. 63

⁶³⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, January 20, 1903, par. 8

⁶⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 67

*one heretical sentence, in that which I have written. This, I am instructed, is to be a living letter to all in regard to my faith.*⁶⁴¹

SUMMARY OF THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

In 1906, Ellen White wrote a letter to W. W. Simpson which clearly sums up the importance of the Spirit of Prophecy. She wrote, “The truths given us after the passing of the time in 1844 are *just as certain and unchangeable* as when the Lord gave them to us in answer to our urgent prayers. The visions that the Lord has given me are so remarkable that we know that what we have accepted is the truth. This was demonstrated by the Holy Spirit. Light, precious light from God, *established the main points of our faith as we hold them today*. And these truths are to be kept before the mind. We must arouse from the position of lukewarmness, from being neither cold nor hot. We need increased faith and more earnest trust in God. We must not be satisfied to remain where we are. We must advance step by step, from light to greater light.

“The Lord will certainly do great things for us if we will hunger and thirst after righteousness. We are the purchased property of Jesus Christ. We must not lose our devotion, our consecration. We are in conflict with the errors and delusions that have to be swept away from the minds of those who have not acted upon the light they already have. Bible truth is our only safety. I know and understand that 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. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and *I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error*.

“As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was

⁶⁴¹ Ellen G. White. *Letter 329a*, 1905. See *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 52

given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in *clear, distinct rays*.

“All these truths are immortalized in my writings. The Lord never denies His word. Men may get up scheme after scheme, and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, *will be safe from the many delusions that will come in in these last days.*

“I know that the sanctuary question stands in righteousness and truth, just as we have held it for so many years. It is the enemy that leads minds off on side-tracks. He is pleased when those who know the truth become *engrossed in collecting Scriptures to pile around erroneous theories,* which have no foundation in truth. *The Scriptures thus used are misapplied;* they were not given to substantiate error, but to strengthen truth.

“So you see that it is impossible for us to have any agreement with the positions taken by Brother _____, for no lie is of the truth. His proofs do not belong where he places them, and although he may lead minds to believe his theory in regard to the sanctuary, this is no evidence that his theory is true. We have had a plain and decided testimony to bear for half a century. The positions taken in my books *are truth.* The truth was revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, and we know that Brother _____'s position is not according to the word of God. His theory is a deceiving theory, and he *misapplies Scriptures.* Theories of the kind that he has been presenting, we have had to meet again and again.

“I am thankful that the instruction contained in my books establishes present truth for this time. These books were written under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I praise the Lord with heart and soul and voice, and I pray that He will lead into all truth those who will be led. I praise Him that He has so wonderfully spared my life up to this time, to bear the same message upon the important points of our faith that I have borne for half a century.”⁶⁴²

To conclude this discussion of the Spirit of Prophecy, the words of Ellen White to someone who had rejected her writings are applicable to us today. She wrote, *“If you are thoroughly convinced that God has not spoken by us, why not act in accordance with your*

⁶⁴² Ellen G. White, *Letter 50*, 1906. See *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 8, p. 321

faith and have no more to do with a people who are under so great a deception as this people are? If you have been moving according to the dictates of the Spirit of God you are right and we are wrong. God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. In arraying yourself against the servants of God you are doing a work either for God or for the devil. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' What stamp does your work bear? It will pay to look critically at the result of your course."⁶⁴³

THE LEADERS PROMOTE FALSE WORSHIP

The apostasy at the borders of the Promised Land began with music, dancing and wine, but it ended in a complete departure from God and promoted worship of another god. As Ellen White described the apostasy, she wrote, "*The rulers and the leading men were among the first to transgress, and so many of the people were guilty that the apostasy became national. 'Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor.'*"⁶⁴⁴

If we put that quote into context for today, it would simply mean that the leaders of the church (certainly not all of them as the parallel shows later in the story) would be among the first to push for Sunday worship in the Adventist Church. Most Adventists would scoff at such a conclusion, but Ellen White wrote, "The licentious practice of the Hebrews accomplished for them that which all the warfare of nations and the enchantments of Balaam could not do. They became separated from their God. Their covering and protection were removed from them. God turned to be their enemy. So many of the princes and people were guilty of licentiousness, *that it became a national sin*; for God was wroth with the whole congregation. *The very same Satan is now working to the very same end, to weaken and destroy the people who claim to be keeping the commandments of God, as they are just on the borders of the heavenly Canaan.* Satan knows it is his time. He has

⁶⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 229

⁶⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

but little time left now in which to work, and he will work with tremendous power to ensnare the people of God upon their weak points of character.”⁶⁴⁵

In 1884, Ellen White predicted a time when many Adventists will keep Sunday and this would be promoted by those who hold responsible positions in the church. She wrote, “There is need of a Sabbath reform *among us, who profess to observe God’s holy rest-day*. Some discuss their business matters and lay plans on the Sabbath, and God looks upon this in the same light as though they engaged in the actual transaction of business. Others who are well acquainted with the Bible evidences that the seventh day is the Sabbath, enter into partnership with men who have no respect for God’s holy day. A Sabbath-keeper cannot allow men in his employ, paid by his money, to work on the Sabbath. If, for the sake of gain, he allows the business in which he has an interest to be carried on the Sabbath by his unbelieving partner, he is equally guilty with the unbeliever; and it is his duty to dissolve the relation, however much he may lose by so doing. Men may think they cannot afford to obey God, but they cannot afford to disobey him. Those who are careless in their observance of the Sabbath will suffer great loss.”⁶⁴⁶

After describing this general disregard of the Sabbath among Seventh-day Adventists, Ellen White then makes the following prediction in the next paragraph, “The Lord has a controversy with his professed people in these last days. In this controversy *men in responsible positions will take a course directly opposite to that pursued by Nehemiah*. They will not only ignore and despise the Sabbath themselves, but they will try to keep it from others by burying it beneath the rubbish of custom and tradition. In churches and in large gatherings in the open air, ministers will *urge upon the people the necessity of keeping the first day of the week*. There are calamities on sea and land: and these calamities will increase, one disaster following close upon another; and the little band of conscientious Sabbath-keepers will be pointed out as the ones who are bringing the wrath of God upon the world by their disregard of Sunday.”⁶⁴⁷

According to this prediction, there is going to come a time

⁶⁴⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 17, 1887, par. 9

⁶⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 18, 1884, par. 7

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 8

when men in responsible positions—leaders in the Church, will advocate Sunday worship in our churches. This should not surprise us because ancient Israel was led into this same apostasy just as they were about to enter the Promised Land. A similar event also happened in Ezekiel’s day.

“In the sixth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the Lord revealed to Ezekiel in vision some of the abominations that were being practiced in Jerusalem, and within the gate of the Lord’s house, and even in the inner court... Those who *should have been spiritual leaders among the people*, ‘the ancients of the house of Israel,’ to the number of seventy, were seen offering incense before the idolatrous representations that had been introduced into hidden chambers within the sacred precincts of the temple court... At a gate leading from the outer to the inner court he was shown ‘women weeping for Tammuz,’ and within ‘the inner court of the Lord’s house, . . . at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they *worshiped the sun toward the east.*’ Verses 13-16.”⁶⁴⁸

Even now, we see signs that the Sabbath is being lightly regarded. In the April 3, 2010 edition of the Record, (the official paper of the South Pacific Division), we notice the following flashpoint: “Fremantle church (WA) was empty on Sabbath March 6, because the congregation had walked out into the neighbourhood of Palmyra. Instead of sitting in a pew, listening to the preacher talk about serving the community, church members got out and did it!”⁶⁴⁹ One doesn’t have to guess what the church members were doing in serving the community, as the picture above the flashpoint clearly revealed they were cleaning up rubbish. That is right, the Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church participated in the “Clean Up Australia” day on the Sabbath instead of listening to a pastor preach from the Word of God. According to Pastor Terry Lambert, the senior minister for the Fremantle church, “...cleaning up Australia was a practical way to show our love for the world and for God. ‘Corporately we

⁶⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 448-449

⁶⁴⁹ Terry Lambert, Flashpoint, *RECORD*, April 3, 2010, p. 8. <http://record.net.au/assets/248238>. Retrieved April 17, 2010

wanted to model to our attendees that God has given us the responsibility to be good stewards of our earth's resources. Caring for the environment is a spiritual discipline we incorporate into our daily lives helping us to cooperate more with the Holy Spirit,' says Pastor Terry. 'We are showing our love for God when we serve and love the world like he asks us to.'⁶⁵⁰

There is nothing wrong with cleaning up Australia, but to do this on God's Sabbath is an act of rebellion. What is worse, the official "Clean Up Australia" day was the following day on Sunday, March 7, 2010. One has to wonder why they were not able to wait until Sunday to show their "love for God." If we lightly regard the Sabbath now, what will it be like when those who keep the Sabbath will be persecuted?

ECUMENISM

You may recall Ellen White's comments in *Patriarchs and Prophets* concerning the Midianitish women that stole into the camp, "These motives were *studiously concealed under the garb of friendship*, so that they were not suspected, even by the guardians of the people."⁶⁵¹ When churches develop a friendship with each other they are trying to achieve unity. This unity is known as ecumenism. The Webster's Online Dictionary defines ecumenical as "concerned with promoting unity among churches or religions."⁶⁵²

Jesus prayed four times in John seventeen that His people might be unified as one.⁶⁵³ But unity must be founded on the truth.

"The World Council of Churches (WCC) is the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement, a movement whose goal is Christian unity."⁶⁵⁴ The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not a

⁶⁵⁰ Terry Lambert, "Freo Church Cleans Up", *Fremantle Church website*. http://www.freochurch.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77:freo-church-cleans-up&catid=40:love-the-world&Itemid=183. Retrieved April 17, 2010

⁶⁵¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 454

⁶⁵² Webster's Online Dictionary, <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/ecumenical.html>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

⁶⁵³ John 17:11,21,22,23

⁶⁵⁴ <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we.html>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

member of the WCC, but it is an observer.⁶⁵⁵ Because we are not a voting member, many think the church is not involved in the ecumenical movement. But according to the history of Israel, God's people will be infiltrated by Protestant and Catholic ideas and this will lead the Church to commit spiritual adultery.

Although the Adventist Church may not be a voting member of the WCC, there is plenty of evidence that suggests it is involved in ecumenism to some degree. This is taking place from the local church through to the General Conference.

In the local church, ecumenism is being promoted through uniting with other local Christian churches as much as possible. Our pastors often unite with the local ministers fraternal. Our local churches are invited to unite with other churches on special events such as Easter and Christmas and they are invited to attend other events such as women's or men's meetings. All these tend to break down barriers and create an environment of ecumenism.

In a presentation at the “*Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference*” held at Andrews University on October 24-27, 2007, Russell Standish—one of the participants—revealed that a “popular Seventh-day Adventist youth preacher, Pastor ‘Litch’ Litchfield from the United States conducted an evangelistic series for youth in the Mildura Church, Victorian Conference, Australia.”⁶⁵⁶ The report states that, “At the conclusion the youth were passed a commitment sheet,” which asked if they wanted to participate in a Youth Fellowship Group. If they answered yes to this question, they were required to tick a box indicating which Fellowship Group they would like to contact them. Among the available groups listed were the Anglican, Church of Christ, Living Waters, Red Cliffs Christian Fellowship, Seventh-day Adventist, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, Uniting [Church of Australia] or Other. Why would we recommend people attend another Christian church after an evangelistic series had been held?

At a more corporate level, there are signs that Adventist Church leaders are joining with the ecumenical movement. On

⁶⁵⁵ Bill Knott, “Adventists Observe WCC Assembly”, *Adventist Review*, <http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=373>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

⁶⁵⁶ Russell Roland Standish, “A History of *Questions on Doctrine*—Fidelity or Compromise?” *Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference*, http://god.andrews.edu/docs/03_russell_standish.pdf. Retrieved March 14, 2010

August 6-9, 2007, theological conversations took place at Andrews University between theologians representing the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Adventists) and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA/Evangelicals). A Joint Statement of the World Evangelical Alliance and the Seventh-day Adventist Church was issued as a result.⁶⁵⁷ The introduction of the joint statement stated, “These conversations took place in an atmosphere of amicable Christian fellowship and study, building on the history of increasing fellowship, trust, and cooperation in various countries.” It also mentioned, “The key purposes of these conversations were not to explore any formal joining of organizations, *but, rather to better understand each other’s beliefs and working methods and to explore possibilities of fruitful cooperation among local churches and in national alliances.*”

Just as the Midianites stole into the camp under the guise of friendship, so we notice from this joint statement there has been a history of increasing fellowship, trust, and cooperation between the World Evangelical Alliance and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Why do we have to hold dialogue with other churches and ecumenical alliances to better understand each other’s beliefs? In today’s age of internet technology, anybody can easily find out what the Seventh-day Adventist Church believes.

The joint statement further revealed under the heading of “Areas of Cooperation”: “Having greatly benefited from this experience, the participants also propose that their respective bodies encourage an *on-going process of theological discussion at all levels.*” What started out as a so-called innocent meeting to better understand one other, has paved the way to tackle theological issues in future meetings. What would be the purpose of having ongoing theological discussions when the conversations already pointed out the points of disagreement?

In its press release section, the joint statement declared, “The conversations revealed a common love for the Lord and his Word, and *a large measure of theological agreement.* The Adventist participants could agree wholeheartedly with the WEA Statement of Faith, which focuses on the Bible as the Word of God, the Trinity, the person of Jesus Christ and his saving work,

⁶⁵⁷ <http://www.protestantedigital.com/new/pdf/WEAadventistDialogue.pdf>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

justification by faith, prayer, conversion, sanctification, and the Second Coming of Christ.”

“At the same time several areas of disagreement became apparent. The Adventist teachings regarding the Sanctuary and the pre-Advent judgment, the role and authority of Ellen G. White, the Sabbath as the day of worship for Christians, and human nature and destiny led to spirited exchanges.

“The participants concluded that, despite disagreement over these distinctive Adventist beliefs, the large measure of common ground allows for Adventists and the WEA to cooperate, where advisable, in areas of shared interest.”⁶⁵⁸

To be sure credit is given where it is due, those representing the Seventh-day Adventist Church did uphold the distinct differences between Adventism and Evangelicalism. However, the overall message conveyed is that Adventism is prepared to cooperate with the ecumenical Evangelical movement as much as we possibly can. Isn't this like trying to get as close to sin as possible without actually crossing the line?

We need to remember that the dialogue between Froom, Anderson and the Evangelicals resulted in the book of *Questions on Doctrine*, which denied or watered down some of our most distinctive doctrines. This was designed so we could be accepted by Evangelicals. Will our leaders further surrender the truth so that we can be accepted by Protestantism and Catholicism?

In another joint statement between the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Poland and the Roman Catholic Church, on February 15, 2000, it was declared, “Recognizing each other's autonomy and independence, the document was issued *following 15 years of dialogue aimed at better understanding of the teachings and practice of the Catholic and the Adventist Churches*, as well as improving relations without compromising each other's identity.”⁶⁵⁹ What type of relationship would we want with the Catholic church? How can we improve relations with it and at the same time identify it as the Whore of Revelation and call people out of it?

The statement didn't stop there. In an effort to silence our

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁹ Ray Dabrowski, “ ‘Adventist Church Cannot be Treated as a Sect,’ Say Adventists and Catholics in Poland”, *Adventist News Network*, February 15, 2000, <http://news.adventist.org/2000/02/avetist-church-caot-be-treate-as-a-sect-say-avetists-a-catholics-i-pola.html>. Retrieved March 13, 2010

identifying the Catholic church as Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, it declared, “The statement recognizes that though the Churches can refer to similarities, they also see difference between each other’s ‘doctrine, practice and church policies.’ *However, both sides affirm a need to cultivate respect for each other and learn to understand each other.* The dialogue was ‘conducted on the *basis of partnership*, care to uphold a full identity of both sides, as well as their autonomy and independence, in the spirit of mutual respect and Christian love, and in recognition of the ideals of tolerance and religious freedom.’”

In our effort to be recognized as a genuine Christian church, are we giving up our distinct beliefs and mission? In an effort to be more friendly with Catholicism, “The former General Conference President, Neal Wilson, said in the Pacific Union Recorder: ‘Our work is *not to denounce the Roman Catholic Church.*’ February 18, 1985. That sounds good, but what does he really mean? In a civil court case, Wilson said, ‘Although it is true that there was a period, in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, and the term ‘hierarchy’ was used in a pejorative sense to refer to the papal form of church governance, that attitude on the church’s part was *nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-popery attitude among conservative Protestant denominations* in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which has *now been consigned to the historical trash heap so far as the SDA Church is concerned.*” EEOC vs PPPA and GC, Civil Case #74-2025 CBR, 1975.”⁶⁰

Have we thrown our anti-popery attitude into the historical trash heap? If so, where does this put the book, *The Great Controversy*? Does it belong on the historical trash heap as well? We cannot dally with ecumenism without becoming corrupted. The history of Israel proves this to be true.

To further show that Adventism is involved with the ecumenical movement, it is listed on the National Council of Churches USA (NCC) website site as either a member or a

⁶⁰ Herman Kesten, “Alpha and Omega, Part 1”, *Landmarks Magazine*, April 1999. http://www.stepstolife.org/pbp/view_article.php?article_id=532. Retrieved March 13, 2010

participating non-member.⁶⁶¹ Even if we assume it is a non-member of the NCC, it still shows the Adventist Church is in close association with the NCC. In fact, in the *National Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission Handbook*, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is listed with its website along with many of the other churches that are associated with the NCC. You can also find Seventh-Day Adventist Church listed under the heading on page 31, “Alphabet of the US Ecumenical Landscape.”⁶⁶²

In the NCC news report on September 28, 2007, we find an Adventist representative associating with the NCC. “A recent chapel service at North Park Seminary planned and led by members of the National Council of Churches Committee on Disabilities was deemed unique by planners and participants.

“The Committee on Disabilities, a unit in the Education and Leadership Ministry, led an *ecumenical service* that included a responsive reading of the Psalm by a *Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) lay worker* who has lupus, a disease of the immune system that causes chronic inflammation and pain.”⁶⁶³

Further association with the NCC was also reported on their news page. “Christmas at Cadillac Jack’s, [produced in 2007] a one-hour dramatic presentation, will air Christmas Day on affiliates of the NBC television network, a *presentation of the National Council of Churches in cooperation with the Seventh-Day Adventist Church*. Rose and Joe take an unexpected road trip in his ’56 Chevy looking for Rose’s long-lost daughter. Join them for a heartwarming holiday story of reconciliation and forgiveness. Joseph Campanella, Ruta Lee and Patty Cabrera star in this engaging Christmas drama. Check your local NBC affiliate for the exact time of broadcast in your area.”⁶⁶⁴

Isn’t it ironic that the description of this children’s program tells the story of Adventism as it took an unexpected trip between 1955 and 1956 to convince Evangelical Christians that we were

⁶⁶¹ There doesn’t seem to be any way of identifying whether the Seventh-day Adventist church is a member or non member of the NCC. <http://www.nccusa.org/about/comcomfaithgroups.html>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

⁶⁶² Faith and Order Commission Handbook, 2005. <http://www.nccusa.org/pdfs/FaithAndOrderHandbook.pdf>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

⁶⁶³ <http://www.nccusa.org/news/070928disabilitiescommittee.html>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

⁶⁶⁴ <http://www.nccusa.org/news/081124ncholiday specials.html>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

not a cult? Since that time, Adventism has been on a mission of reconciliation and forgiveness on the stage of church politics.

One last example should be enough to show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is involved with the ecumenical movement. William G. Johnsson, assistant to the president for interfaith relations for the Seventh-day Adventist Church described in *Adventist World* an event that took place in 2007 which he called “A New Ecumenical Wind.” He wrote, “A new wind is blowing across the Christian landscape, one with the potential to transform the ecumenical movement. How should Seventh-day Adventists, with our keen interest in end-time developments, relate to it?”

“November 6-9, 2007, some 250 Christian leaders from more than 70 nations came together in Limuru, Kenya. The extremely diverse group, which gathered under the rubric of the Global Christian Forum (GCF), was a meeting unlike any other in modern times. For the first time Pentecostals and Evangelicals sat down with Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and representatives of the African Instituted Churches. Many of those present called the meeting historic; certainly it was unprecedented.

“The gathering at Limuru took place on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Major changes have occurred in the Christian world since 1948, when the WCC was formed in high hopes of uniting Christians.”⁶⁶⁵

In his description of the event, Johnsson lists three Adventists that attended this historic ecumenical event. “Three Adventists attended: John Graz, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director at the General Conference; John Kakembo, Ministerial director of the East Central Africa Division, which has its headquarters in Nairobi; and I.” He then describes the purpose of the event, “The stated purpose of the GCF was to ‘create an open space wherein representatives from a broad range of Christian churches and interchurch organizations, which confess the triune God and Jesus Christ as perfect in His divinity and humanity, can *gather to foster mutual respect, to explore and address together common challenges.*’ Unlike past ecumenical gatherings I have attended” Johnsson said, “at the GCF the affective (emotional) element played a significant part. Worship services, except for the one conducted by the

⁶⁶⁵ William G. Johnsson, “A New Ecumenical Wind”, *Adventist World*, <http://adventistworld.org/article.php?id=288>. Retrieved March 14, 2010

Orthodox, were lively. Africans brought a distinctive flavor to the gathering.

“For many the high point came on the first day. All attendees joined in preassigned groups of 30 and spent, person by person, about 15 minutes each relating in personal testimony their journey with Jesus Christ. The common elements of divine calling and intervention, regardless of the tradition, were powerful and moving. In these groups the denominational barriers came down; the remaining days built on the goodwill that had been established.”

In concluding his article, Johnsson reaffirmed the Church’s commitment to remaining separate from the ecumenical movement and was quick to note the Adventist Church has never been a member of the World Council of Churches. However, by attending this historic ecumenical event, the Adventist Church clearly desires some involvement with the ecumenical movement. The fact that Dr John Graz, one of the Adventist attendees is a committee member of the global Christian Forum shows just how much the Adventist leadership do not practice what they preach.⁶⁶⁶

WHERE WILL IT ALL END?

In a paper that was presented at the “*Questions on Doctrine* 50th Anniversary Conference,” Russell Standish lists seventeen issues that have arisen due to the *Questions on Doctrine* book.⁶⁶⁷ These include:

1. Seventh-day Adventism is now extremely ecumenical.
2. Not only sins but crimes of many kinds are rampant in our midst.
3. In many congregations self-centred entertainment has replaced worship of our High and Holy Heavenly Father.
4. Sabbath desecration is the rule rather than an exception.
5. Our Adventist Book Centres abound in novels, books produced by the fallen churches of Babylon, perverted Bible translations and books teaching the New Theology.

⁶⁶⁶ <http://www.globalchristianforum.org/committee/>. Retrieved March 1, 2010

⁶⁶⁷ Russell Roland Standish, “A History of *Questions on Doctrine*-Fidelity or Compromise?” *Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference*, http://god.andrews.edu/docs/03_russell_standish.pdf. Retrieved March 14, 2010

6. Many of our scientists and theologians have rejected Genesis chapter one and Exodus 20:11, the latter written by the finger of God.
7. Immorality and divorce are commonplace.
8. Many now openly deny the Roman Catholic Church is the Antichrist.
9. Many deny that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God's Remnant Church of prophecy.
10. The numbers of members imbibing alcohol has greatly escalated.
11. Numerous church members now either pay a devalued tithe or none at all. They are also robbing God with their offerings.
12. Common observance of Palm Sunday and Easter pass unproved.
13. Persecution of fellow Church members standing for Bible truth is widespread.
14. The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are discounted by many since they are promoted as being in error.
15. The acceptance of State Aid for Seventh-day Adventist Education is widespread and Christian education principles eschewed.
16. The Church Manual has superseded Scripture.
17. The Three Angels' Messages and Loud Cry Message are now an inaudible mumble.

In his concluding remarks, Standish said, "Our beloved Church is, in 2007, in dire straits. We are deep, deep in the Omega of Apostasy. 'Deception of almost every kind [is] in the Church.'

"This is a moment in history when we – the attendees at this conference – may covenant together to lead a movement which delivers God's Church and His people from the devastating defeats of *Questions on Doctrine* to the glorious victory of the Latter Rain, and the glory of God's heavenly Kingdom.

"We have 'played the harlot with many lovers.' Let us now heed our Saviour's tender plea, 'Yet return again to me, saith the Lord.'

"Dear, dear Brethren and Sisters. This Church I have loved since my earliest recollections, the Church for which our pioneers suffered and sacrificed so much, for which my ancestors paid a heavy price to join, deserves much better. At this moment of

anniversary, as a heart-broken member, I sincerely wish to examine my own heart as I pray each of us will do.

“My Saviour deserves far better of us in this era of the Second Advent than His Church provided at the First Advent. With each of you I desire heaven more than all else. My sincere prayer is that each one of us, through Christ’s incomparable grace, will tread the Streets of Gold, and stand on the Sea of Glass.”

In this chapter we have focused our attention on some of the apostasies that have entered Adventism. It is not a comprehensive study—such a study would require a book of its own. Although it might be seen as *criticizing the church*, the author would like to assure his readers that despite the apostasy, he believes without doubt the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God’s last day remnant church, just as Israel was God’s church. Despite our defects, the Adventist Church “is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard.”⁶⁶⁸ God has promised to clean His church up. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Summary

1. Just as Israel was in a state of ease at the borders of the Promised Land, so the Seventh-day Adventist Church is in the Laodicean condition described in the book of Revelation.
2. The children of Moab and Midian united in an effort to destroy the children of Israel. Their counterparts today are the Catholic and Protestant churches.
3. The Midianitish women stole into the camp with the purpose of seducing Israel to transgress God’s law. They concealed their motives under the garb of friendship. So too has Protestant and Catholic ideas entered the Adventist church in an effort to lead us to disobey God.
4. The rulers were the first to be taken by the false pretense of friendship. They were responsible for leading many Israelites to commit whoredom with Baal.
5. The children of Israel were beguiled with music and dancing. So too the Seventh-day Adventist Church has

⁶⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 15

- been captivated with contemporary music that has been borrowed from the world.
6. Wine beclouded the senses of those who had ventured onto forbidden ground. Wine represents false doctrine. So too the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been beguiled by false doctrines, particularly those published in *Questions on Doctrine*. Since that time, many other false doctrines have been deceiving our people such as the rejection of the sanctuary and investigative judgment, evolution, homosexuality and the authority of Ellen White.
 7. Satan could not destroy the children of Israel by force, so he allured many of the leaders and people onto his ground. There he enticed them to worship Baal. So too Adventism is being lured into the ecumenical movement and the result, according to Ellen White, will be that some of our leading men will advocate Sunday worship.

Chapter 14

Reformation

“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.”

—Psalm 79:9

After the children of Israel had joined themselves to Baalpeor, Moses was instructed by God to “take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.”⁶⁶⁹

“Their iniquitous practices did that for Israel which all the enchantments of Balaam could not do--they separated them from God. By swift-coming judgments the people were awakened to the enormity of their sin. A terrible pestilence broke out in the camp, to which tens of thousands speedily fell a prey. God commanded that the *leaders in this apostasy be put to death by the magistrates*. This order was promptly obeyed. The offenders were slain, then their bodies were hung up in sight of all Israel that the congregation, seeing the leaders so severely dealt with, might have a deep sense of God's abhorrence of their sin and the terror of His

⁶⁶⁹ Numbers 25:4,5

wrath against them.”⁶⁷⁰

If ever there was a warning to those who are now participating in apostasy—particularly the leaders, this would be it. The children of Israel had come to a point where God had to intervene otherwise the apostasy, if left unchecked, would have brought upon them utter destruction. God allowed the apostasy to happen for a purpose, just as He allows the apostasy in His last day church. This will become evident as we continue.

In the previous quote, we noticed that “by swift-coming judgments the people were awakened to the enormity of their sin.” God only sends judgments upon His people when He can no longer speak to them through blessings. “Every blessing spoke to them of the Giver, but they were indifferent to His love. The forbearance of God was very great toward the children of men; but when they stubbornly persisted in their impenitence, He removed from them His protecting hand. They refused to listen to the voice of God in His created works, and in the warnings, counsels, and reproofs of His word, and thus *He was forced to speak to them through judgments.*”⁶⁷¹

The judgments were also a means of fulfilling the sentence God had given at Kadesh-barnea nearly forty years before. At that time, the people had failed to walk by faith and take possession of the Promised Land. They were a type of those who reject the message of righteousness by faith. “The judgments visited upon Israel for their sin at Shittim, *destroyed the survivors of that vast company, who, nearly forty years before, had incurred the sentence, ‘They shall surely die in the wilderness.’* The numbering of the people by divine direction, during their encampment on the plains of Jordan, showed that ‘of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, . . . there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.’ Numbers 26:64, 65.”⁶⁷²

The judgments that fell upon the children of Israel were caused by their apostasy. They had a twofold purpose. First of all, they awakened the people to the enormity of their sin and secondly,

⁶⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 455

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 587

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 456

they were the means of cleansing the church. Will God send judgments upon the Seventh-day Adventist Church like He did with ancient Israel? Mrs. White writes, “God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will *sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat.*”⁶⁷³

THE SHAKING

God allows heresies to come into His Church for the same purpose he allowed ancient Israel to join themselves with Baalpeor—the separating of the wheat and the chaff. It should not surprise us therefore when we hear or see erroneous teachings taught in the Church. The condition of the Church will become so bad, that in describing its condition in the last days, Ellen White wrote, “Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. *The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall.* It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out--*the chaff separated from the precious wheat.* This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and *arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.*”⁶⁷⁴

This will be a painful time for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, just as it was a painful time for the children of Israel. In the history of Israel, all those who had joined themselves to Baalpeor were to be slain and twenty four thousand people lost their lives as a result of their apostasy.⁶⁷⁵ So in the fulfillment of this parallel, the chaff will be separated from the wheat. It will be a “terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place.”

The time here referred to is the shaking. “The shaking must soon take place *to purify the church.*”⁶⁷⁶ There appears to be at least three stages of the shaking. The first stage began in 1850. Ellen White wrote, “The mighty shaking has commenced *and will go on,* and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and

⁶⁷³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 707

⁶⁷⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 380

⁶⁷⁵ Numbers 25:5, 9

⁶⁷⁶ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p. 284

His cause.”⁶⁷⁷

The second stage of the shaking is caused by rejecting the Laodicean message. “I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be *caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans*. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. *They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.*”⁶⁷⁸

The third stage of the shaking will be caused by persecution when the Sunday law is enforced. Again, Ellen White wrote, “The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. *Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat*. 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.*”⁶⁷⁹

Through apostasy and persecution, God will shake His church until it is completely pure. The apostasy stage was caused by rejecting and rising up against the Laodicean message. This is the parallel of Israel’s apostasy at the borders of the Promised Land.

THE LAODICEAN MESSAGE

The Laodicean message is the straight testimony. There has been much written about it, but the message is so simple that even a child can understand it. John writes, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my

⁶⁷⁷ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 50

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 270

⁶⁷⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 81

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.”⁶⁸⁰ What does it mean to be wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked? Ellen White wrote in 1889, in relation to those who had rejected the 1888 message:

“Mark the following words: ‘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.’ Here is represented a people *who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages*. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. *They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God*; and still he has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted his grace, abused his privileges, slighted his opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity. With *Pharisaic pride* they have vaunted themselves till it has been said of them, ‘Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’”⁶⁸¹

Dear reader, this is the condition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Is it your condition and is it mine? The good news is that if it is, God has provided a remedy.

Perhaps the easiest way to understand this deplorable condition is to consider the remedy Jesus offers. “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.”⁶⁸²

Whereas Laodicea is poor, it is counseled to buy gold. Because it is blind, it is counseled to buy eyesalve and where it is naked, it is counseled to buy white raiment. “The True Witness counsels us to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eyesalve. *The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire is faith and*

⁶⁸⁰ Revelation 3:16,17

⁶⁸¹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, July 23, 1889, par. 12

⁶⁸² Revelation 3:18-19

love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested the more brilliant is its luster. *The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner.* This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ *for a life of willing obedience.* The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which *enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise.*⁶⁸³

The Laodicean message is not hard to understand. We think we have need of nothing because we are rich and increased with goods. However, God is trying to get through to us that we are blind and need to see our true sinful condition. We are also counseled to buy faith and love which is represented by the gold. However, in our blind condition we think we are already rich and do not realize we are actually poor in faith and love. We are also counseled to buy the righteousness of Christ—the white raiment. Without the righteousness of Christ we can never see the kingdom of God and can never obey as Christ obeyed. Because of its blind state, the church of Laodicea does not realize it is naked; it does not possess Christ’s righteousness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

The condition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the same as it was over one hundred and twenty years ago when the message of righteousness by faith was rejected in 1888. The Laodicean message clearly reveals this is the message and shows that the Church is still rejecting it today. Jesus calls for it to repent, for it not only has rejected the message, but in its pride it now believes it never did reject it.

Righteousness by faith has been mentioned throughout this book, but it has not been identified what that message is. There is a reason for that. When Philip asked Jesus to show to them the Father, Jesus answered, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?”⁶⁸⁴ The message of righteousness by faith is revealed in almost every chapter of this book. You only need to look for it. It may not have been described as righteousness by faith, but

⁶⁸³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, p. 88

⁶⁸⁴ John 14:9

nonetheless the message is there.

Righteousness by faith is not just a doctrine, it is an experience. The Laodicean message is the righteousness by faith message. The gold, white raiment and eye-salve are the ingredients of righteousness by faith. The rejection of this message is what has kept Jesus out of our lives and out of the Church for so long.

In one paragraph of a letter written in 1895, Ellen White has spelled out for us what that message of righteousness by faith mean. "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. 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.*"⁶⁸⁵

To conclude the letter, Ellen White again reiterates the precious message God sent His people with a most stern warning. "I have no smooth message to bear to those who have been for so long as false guideposts, pointing the wrong way. If you reject Christ's delegated messengers, you reject Christ. Neglect this great salvation kept before you for years, despise this glorious offer of *justification through the blood of Christ and sanctification through the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit*, and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. I entreat you now to humble yourselves, and *cease your stubborn resistance of light and evidence.* Say unto the Lord, Mine iniquities have separated between me and my God. O Lord, pardon my transgressions. Blot out my sins from the book of Thy remembrance. Praise His holy name, there is forgiveness

⁶⁸⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1336

with Him, and you can be converted, transformed.”⁶⁸⁶

Because space will not allow, a greater discussion of righteousness by faith is presented in Appendix C—information too important to ignore.

CONDITION OF THOSE WHO ARE SEALED

The history of Israel’s apostasy at the borders of the Promised Land reveals that not all the children of Israel had participated in the apostasy. Many had remained faithful, including leaders and influential men. So it will be today. Although apostasy abounds, God still has His faithful people who are ready to do His bidding.

While the judgments of God were falling on those who had apostatized, “The priests and leaders had prostrated themselves in grief and humiliation, weeping *‘between the porch and the altar,’* and entreating the Lord to spare His people, and give not His heritage to reproach...”⁶⁸⁷ Here is pictured the condition of those who will receive the seal of God. The prophet Ezekiel writes, “And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the *men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.*”⁶⁸⁸ Ellen White also says, “The day of God’s vengeance is just upon us. *The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land.*”⁶⁸⁹

Before the Lord pours out His blessings upon the Church, the prophet Joel warns, “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with *fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:* And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil...Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the *priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar,* and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD,

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1342

⁶⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 455

⁶⁸⁸ Ezekiel 9:4

⁶⁸⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 212

and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"⁶⁹⁰

Those who will eventually be sealed will cry unto God for Him to cleanse the Church. They will be aware of the surrounding apostasy in the Church, and this will cause them to weep just as Jesus wept over Jerusalem. This does not mean they will be hard and judgmental, accusers of the brethren. But with tears in their eyes, they will follow the counsel given in Isaiah fifty-eight, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."⁶⁹¹

In her description of the shaking caused by the straight testimony, Ellen White writes, "I saw some, with strong faith and *agonizing cries, pleading with God*. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle...As the praying ones continued *their earnest cries*, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of *agonizing and pleading*...My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before *seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit*."⁶⁹²

OPEN REBELLION

While the nation of Israel was in a state of humiliation and confessing their sins, "...while the plague was still doing its work of death, and the magistrates were executing their terrible commission, Zimri, one of the nobles of Israel, came boldly into the camp, accompanied by a Midianitish harlot, a princess 'of a chief house in Midian,' whom he escorted to his tent. Never was vice bolder or more stubborn. Inflamed with wine, Zimri declared his 'sin as Sodom,' and gloried in his shame."⁶⁹³

Zimri was a leading man in Israel. "The position he had occupied had been one of influence. Moses and the people who had taken no part in this great departure from God's law, *were weeping and lamenting at the door of the tabernacle for the sins of the*

⁶⁹⁰ Joel 2:12-17

⁶⁹¹ Isaiah 58:1

⁶⁹² Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 269-270

⁶⁹³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 455

people, and the plague that had begun. But amid all this demonstration of sorrow, this prince defied the judges to molest him if they dared.⁶⁹⁴ Through the intoxication of wine he shamefully fell into the sin of Sodom. In the previous chapter it was identified that intoxicating wine symbolizes false doctrines.

Having been intoxicated by false doctrines, Zimri declared his sin as Sodom. Ellen White uses this phrase only one other time in all of her writings. It is a quote from Isaiah 3:9,10. She writes, “The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they *declare sin as Sodom*, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.’ ‘Woe unto them that *call evil good, and good evil*; that put *darkness for light*, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! . . . Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame *consumeth the chaff*, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: *because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts*, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.’⁶⁹⁵

Those who declare their sin as Sodom openly cast away the law of God. Their act of spiritual adultery is not hidden. They will stand in our pulpits and openly teach false doctrines, even advocating Sunday worship. But like the chaff that is blown in the wind, they will be shaken out. This will happen when the apostasy in the church is at its worst.

THE 144,000

As “The priests were weeping between the porch and the altar, crying, ‘Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.’ Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, and rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin, and went after the man of Israel into the tent, and killed them both. This staid the plague.”⁶⁹⁶ It was only when the last remnants of the apostasy were removed from the camp of Israel that God’s judgments ended. So it will be with the shaking caused

⁶⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 17, 1887, par. 11

⁶⁹⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Youth’s Instructor*, January 25, 1894, par. 1

⁶⁹⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 17, 1887, par. 11

by the straight testimony.

*“With this history before the peculiar people of God in these last days, there is no excuse for any one who will follow the example of ancient Israel in sin. But Satan will work in this special temptation to make void the law of God, and make light of God's special injunctions and warnings. The point to be marked is, that Moses' prayers were not heard, neither his weeping nor the sorrow and prayers of those who had maintained their integrity, until justice was executed upon that demoralized God-defying prince. God says of Phinehas, He 'hath turned away my wrath from the children of Israel.' It was the greatest mercy that Phinehas could do to Israel, to deal promptly and decidedly with the guilty, and thus be instrumental in turning the wrath of God from the congregation of Israel. Something besides prayers and tears are needed in a time when reproach and peril are hanging over God's people. The wicked works must be brought to an end. The very work of justice done by Phinehas was an atonement for Israel.”*⁶⁹⁷

Phinehas was the son of Eleazar who was the son of Aaron the high priest. Of him, it is written, “Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my *covenant of peace*: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the *covenant of an everlasting priesthood*; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.”⁶⁹⁸

The covenant of peace is an everlasting covenant. Ezekiel says, “Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an *everlasting covenant with them*: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.”⁶⁹⁹ The everlasting covenant will be delivered to the 144,000. Describing those who pass through the time of trouble, Ellen White writes, “In the time of trouble we all fled from the cities and villages, but were pursued by the wicked, who entered the houses of the saints with a sword... 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.”⁷⁰⁰

The covenant of peace is heard by the 144,000 who have passed

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 12

⁶⁹⁸ Numbers 25:12-13

⁶⁹⁹ Ezekiel 37:26

⁷⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 34

through the time of trouble. The everlasting priesthood was the Aaronic priesthood. In Exodus 40:15 we read, “And thou shalt anoint them [Aaron’s sons], as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office: for their anointing shall surely be an *everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*”

Under the Aaronic priesthood, only the priests were allowed to enter the sanctuary. So in the new earth, the 144,000 will be the only ones who can enter into the temple. “Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies... And as we were about to enter the temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, ‘Only the 144,000 enter this place,’ and we shouted, ‘Alleluia!’”⁷⁰¹

Phinehas was a type of the 144,000. This will become even more evident when we look at Numbers 31. Like Phinehas, the 144,000 will be the ones who are most zealous for God. When the shaking is at its worst, those who will form this group of people will boldly take their stand for the truth. Ellen White says, “Why were they [the 144,000] so specially singled out? *Because they had to stand with a wonderful truth right before the whole world, and receive their opposition, and while receiving this opposition they were to remember that they were sons and daughters of God, that they must have Christ formed within them the hope of glory. They were ever keeping in view the great and blessed hope that is before them. What is it? It is an eternal weight of glory. Nothing could surpass it.*”⁷⁰²

In a sermon Ellen White preached that was published in the *Review and Herald*, we are counseled to “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. We are to have an intense interest in Christ Jesus; for he is our Saviour. He came to this world to be tempted in all points as we are, to *prove to the universe that in this world of sin human beings can live lives that God will approve.*”⁷⁰³ Many feel that they are not good enough to be among the 144,000. But the truth is, no one is

⁷⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol.1, p. 68

⁷⁰² Ellen G. White, *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 1, p. 72

⁷⁰³ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905, par. 4

good enough to be among that group. We have all fallen short of God's glory. It is only by claiming Christ's righteousness as our own that God will see us as being good enough. His righteousness is offered to us as a gift if we will take it by faith. Paul wrote, "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."⁷⁰⁴

It is the purpose of the 144,000 to vindicate the character of God, just as Jesus did when He proved to the universe that human beings can live a perfect life. When the 144,000 vindicate the character of God, they will likewise prove to the universe that sinful man, justified and sanctified by Christ's righteousness can live a perfect life. They will forever silence Satan's false accusations and vindicate the character of God.

"Just before us is the closing struggle of the great controversy when, with 'all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,' Satan is to work to misrepresent the character of God, that he may 'seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.' If there was ever a people in need of constantly increasing light from heaven, it is the people that, in this time of peril, God has called to be the depositaries of His holy law and *to vindicate His character before the world*. Those to whom has been committed a trust so sacred must be spiritualized, elevated, vitalized, by the truths they profess to believe."⁷⁰⁵

Chapter Summary

1. As Israel fell into apostasy on the very borders of the Promised Land, so God allows His last day Church to also fall into apostasy.
2. The apostasy and the judgments that followed in Israel's experience was a means of waking the people up and alerting them to their sinful condition. So God allows heresies to enter the church now so His people will be woken up.

⁷⁰⁴ Galatians 2:20

⁷⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p 746

3. God sent judgments upon the camp of Israel so that they would be cleansed. So he brings a shaking among the Seventh-day Adventist Church to separate the chaff from the wheat.
4. The judgments that fell upon Israel removed from them the last remaining people who had almost forty years before refusing to enter the Promised Land. So the shaking will remove from the Church those who reject the 1888 message of righteousness by faith as plainly revealed in the Laodicean message.
5. Even when the judgments of God were doing their work among the people, a prince of Israel openly rebelled and declared his sin as Sodom. So in the midst of the shaking, leaders in the Church will openly declare the law of God cannot be kept.
6. The judgments of God caused those who had not given themselves to apostasy to weep between the porch and the altar. While the shaking is separating the wheat from the chaff, those who remain faithful and sealed are sighing and crying.
7. Phinehas was the one credited with bringing the judgments to an end when he killed Zimri, the apostate prince. Phinehas was a type of the 144,000. They will vindicate the character of God before the whole universe.

Chapter 15

The Loud Cry

“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

While still camped on the banks of the Jordan before the Promised Land, Moses was instructed, “Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.”⁷⁰⁶ The Midianites, you will recall, were a type of Protestantism who had united with Moab—a type of Catholicism. Together they had caused Israel to apostatize, which brought the judgments of God upon them. This resulted in a cleansing of the people and those who remained of that group of people that had rebelled at Kadesh-Barnea when they first came to the borders of the Promised Land, were finally removed from among the people of God.

“And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian. Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war. So

⁷⁰⁶ Numbers 31:2

there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a *thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war*. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.”⁷⁰⁷

Phinehas was the leader of this army. Ellen White writes, “This mandate was immediately obeyed. One thousand men were chosen from each of the tribes and *sent out under the leadership of Phinehas*.”⁷⁰⁸ You will remember from the previous chapter it was revealed that Phinehas was a type of the 144,000. He was promised the covenant of peace and the covenant of an everlasting priesthood—both of which the 144,000 receive.

As one thousand men from each tribe was selected to do a special work in destroying the Midianites, so God will have twelve thousand from each tribe—totaling 144,000 to do a special work in the last days before probation closes. “And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”⁷⁰⁹ This special group will make up God’s last day army, just as the chosen ones under Phinehas’ leadership were God’s appointed army back then.

Not surprisingly, Ellen White describes those who are sealed as being a company of soldiers. “Said the angel, ‘List ye!’ Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, ‘Look ye!’ My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, *who were mightily shaken*. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were *clothed with an armor from their head to their feet*. They *moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers*. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. *They had*

⁷⁰⁷ Numbers 31:3-6

⁷⁰⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 456

⁷⁰⁹ Revelation 7:4

obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy."⁷¹⁰

The armor here represents the righteousness of Christ. "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict."⁷¹¹ "Brother and Sister Burden, we must *now put on the whole armor of righteousness*. We must be as true as steel to principle, standing steadfastly against every species of corruption. It is this steadfast adherence to principle that is to distinguish *those who bear the seal of the living God from those who have the mark of the beast.*"⁷¹²

THE LATTER RAIN

" 'And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses. . . . And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; . . . five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.' Verses 7, 8. The women also, who had been made captives by the attacking army, were put to death at the command of Moses, as the most guilty and most dangerous of the foes of Israel."⁷¹³

The war against the Midianites was commanded by God. Only when God gives the command can we have success. So it will be with those who are sealed and given the latter rain.

Whenever the children of Israel went to war, they were to be attended by priests that blew trumpets. "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies."⁷¹⁴ Phinehas was the priest chosen to lead the war and he was the one who blew the trumpet. "And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and *the trumpets to blow in his hand.*"⁷¹⁵

The trumpets were a means of communication. "In all the journeyings of Israel, 'the ark of the covenant of the Lord went

⁷¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 270

⁷¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Prophet and Kings*, 725

⁷¹² Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 4, p. 76

⁷¹³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 456

⁷¹⁴ Numbers 10:9

⁷¹⁵ Numbers 31:6

before them, . . . to search out a resting place for them.’ Numbers 10:33. Borne by the sons of Kohath, the sacred chest containing God’s holy law was to lead the van. Before it went Moses and Aaron; and the priests, *bearing silver trumpets*, were stationed near. *These priests received directions from Moses, which they communicated to the people by the trumpets.*⁷¹⁶ The trumpets were especially used to sound an alarm for war.⁷¹⁷

Phinehas, the one chosen to lead the battle against the Midianites was to blow the trumpet. This would ensure God was with them according to the promise in Numbers 10:9 and it would also serve to coordinate the battle.

Just as Phinehas, the leader of this group that represents the 144,000, was to blow the trumpet, so the trumpet will be blown by those who are sealed prior to Jesus’ return. The prophet Joel writes, “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.”⁷¹⁸ Obviously the 144,000 are not going to blow literal trumpets as they did in ancient times. Isaiah the prophet reveals just what blowing the trumpet means. “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*”⁷¹⁹

The blowing of the trumpet means to cry aloud with an important message. As the trumpet can be heard from a great distance, so the loud voice of God’s last day people will be heard by all. This will be the time when the latter rain falls. It is known as the loud cry.

In her description of those who had been shaken by the Laodicean message and were clothed with armor, Ellen White writes, “I heard those clothed with the armor *speak forth the truth with great power*. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting

⁷¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 375

⁷¹⁷ See Numbers 10:1-10. Blowing the trumpets was also used to gather the people for special occasions.

⁷¹⁸ Joel 2:1

⁷¹⁹ Isaiah 58:1

for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.'⁷²⁰ According to Ellen White, the latter rain, the refreshing and the loud cry of the third angel are the same event.

At the 1893 General Conference Session, A. T. Jones spoke about the third angel's message. It is recorded in the *General Conference Daily Bulletin*. In his eleventh sermon, Jones said to the congregation, "Well, the latter rain is the loud cry of the third angel's message; it is the beginning of that message of glory that lightens the earth. But the latter rain is the teaching of righteousness. *When did that message of the righteousness of God, as such, come to us as a people?* [Congregation: 'Four years ago.'] *Where?* [Congregation: 'At Minneapolis.'] Yes. This point was brought up the other night and can be read again in Bulletin No. 7, p. 183. I do not know that we can state it any more clearly than we did that night."⁷²¹

You will remember that Jones and Waggoner were the ones God used to give the message of Christ's righteousness to the church in 1888. How did Jones connect the latter rain with the teaching of righteousness? It was through a prophecy found in the book of Joel.

In the previous chapter we looked at Joel chapter two, verses twelve to seventeen regarding the condition of those who will be prepared for the seal of God. You will remember Joel wrote, "Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"⁷²² As a result of their weeping, God then said He would send them the latter rain. You will find this in verse twenty-three. "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."⁷²³

⁷²⁰ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 271

⁷²¹ Alonzo T. Jones, "The Third Angel's Message 11", *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, February 13, 1893, Vol. 5, p. 243

⁷²² Joel 2:17

⁷²³ Joel 2:23

At the 1893 General Conference Session, Jones' said, "Now calling attention again to a thought that we have studied before, with which to begin this study tonight directly, that is, what this righteousness is to us now, let us turn back to that passage in Joel, the second chapter, and 23rd verse, and notice also the marginal reading. '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.'

"Our study on that was in Bulletin No. 7, p. 183. What is the margin? 'He hath given you the former rain?' What is that? 'A teacher of righteousness.' 'Given you the former rain moderately.' What is that, moderately? What was the former rain at Pentecost? 'A teacher of righteousness.' 'He hath given you a teacher of righteousness according to righteousness.' Was that the former rain? And He will give you 'the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,' as at the first. What will the latter rain be? 'A teacher of righteousness' again. According to what? [Congregation: 'Righteousness.'] But what is another expression for the latter rain? [Congregation: 'The outpouring of the Spirit.' What is another one? [Congregation: 'The times of refreshing.'] What is the latter rain to the third angel's message? [Congregation: 'The loud cry.'] What is the latter rain in connection with the fall of Babylon? It is the bestowal of that power and that glory with which the angel of Rev. 18 comes down and lightens the earth."⁷²⁴

After pointing out the meaning of the latter rain, Jones then asked the congregation an interesting question—a question that is equally relevant to us today. "We have been praying for the latter rain here at this Conference already, haven't we? Have you? [Congregation: 'Yes, sir.']. *What were you looking for when your prayer was answered? Are you ready now to receive the latter rain? We have been praying here for the latter rain. Now there is the connection. The testimonies tell us what it is and Joel tells us what it is. I simply ask now, are you ready to receive the latter rain? That is, are you ready to receive God's message of righteousness, according to righteousness?*"⁷²⁵

⁷²⁴ Alonzo T. Jones, "The Third Angle's Message 11", *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, February 13, 1893, Vol. 5, p.242

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 243

Again in our study we are brought back to the message of righteousness by faith. Isn't it strange that this message keeps cropping up? It was the message that God designed should go to the whole world from the time of 1888, just as Israel came to the borders of the Promised Land at Kadesh-barnea. God again brought the message to His church in the early 1950s just as He brought the children of Israel back to Kadesh the second time. But it wasn't until the children of Israel had come to the time when God would bring His people into the Promised Land, that He finally removed from the camp those who had rebelled at Kadesh-barnea. So we learned in the previous chapter that God will remove from His Church those who reject this message of Christ's righteousness. Once they are removed, then His people can be filled with the latter rain, the very message that has been rejected for over one hundred and twenty years.

For many, the latter rain is a future event that will be noticeable by a great demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power. Yes, the latter rain will certainly be accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, we need to realize the latter rain is more than an event—it is a message. This message transforms the people of God and prepares them for the great time of trouble. We will never receive the latter rain while we reject the message.

“As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, ‘the time of Jacob's trouble,’ they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. *It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.* Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel.”⁷²⁶

The prophet Zechariah tells us we need to ask for 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.”⁷²⁷ As Jones asked his audience what answer they expected to see regarding their prayer for the latter rain, so we need to ask ourselves the same question today. What answer are we expecting when we pray for the latter

⁷²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, p. 353

⁷²⁷ Zechariah 10:1

rain? Are we just praying for the power of the Holy Spirit, or are we praying for the righteousness of Christ to so permeate our life that we will reflect the image of Christ. We will never receive the power of the Holy Spirit if we don't reflect Christ fully.

“Brethren, let us have an eye single to the glory of God. Let us not allow anything to interpose between us and him. ‘If we follow on to know the Lord,’ we shall know that ‘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.’ If we are partakers of the divine nature, we shall reflect in life and character the image of our divine Lord.”⁷²⁸ “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.”⁷²⁹

PREPARATION NEEDED

Just as every soldier needs to prepare physically and mentally for war, so those who are to receive the latter rain first need to prepare. While Ellen White was in vision, she saw many people who sadly were not prepared and consequently did not receive it. “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. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone 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

⁷²⁸ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, September 29, 1887, par. 14

⁷²⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 214

him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' I saw that none could share the 'refreshing' *unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action.* We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence."⁷³⁰

Did you recognize the class of people who do not receive the latter rain? They think their condition is far better than it really is. They don't realize they are poor, miserable, blind and naked. They fail to heed the Laodicean message to buy gold, white raiment and eye salve—symbols of the righteousness by faith message. They think they can get by with their own righteousness and have not been justified and sanctified by faith.

"Unless those who can help in ----- are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God *when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard.* When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and *perfect His work of righteousness.*"⁷³¹

Part of the work of preparation involves caring for our physical, mental and spiritual life. Ellen White wrote, "The health reform, I was shown, is a *part of the third angel's message,* and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advance move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work

⁷³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 71

⁷³¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 299

to do for themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them. He has left this work for them to do. It is an individual work; one cannot do it for another... Gluttony is the prevailing sin of this age. Lustful appetite makes slaves of men and women, and beclouds their intellects and stupefies their moral sensibilities to such a degree that the sacred, elevated truths of God's word are not appreciated... *In order to be fitted for translation, the people of God must know themselves.* They must understand in regard to their own physical frames, that they may be able with the psalmist to exclaim, 'I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.' They should ever have the appetite in subjection to the moral and intellectual organs. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body."⁷³²

In case we are tempted to think the health message was the third angel's message, Ellen White cautioned, "The health reform is closely connected with the work of the third message, *yet it is not the message.* Our preachers should teach the health reform, yet they should not make this the leading theme in the place of the message. *Its place is among those subjects which set forth the preparatory work to meet the events brought to view by the message; among these it is prominent.*"⁷³³

Those who will receive the latter rain—the righteousness of Christ in its fullness, will have first lived the health reform message. In a previous chapter, we learned that over sixty percent of Seventh-day Adventists eat meat. In light of the counsel we have been given through Ellen White, this means that over sixty percent of the church is not prepared for the latter rain just on this point alone. Both in the health vision Ellen White received in 1863 and in further revelations, God has clearly revealed that He does not approve of His people eating flesh foods. For instance, in the book *Counsels on Diet and Foods* we read:

"Those who use flesh meat disregard all the warnings that God has given concerning this question. They have *no evidence that they are walking in safe paths.* They have not the slightest excuse for eating the flesh of dead animals. God's curse is resting upon the animal creation. Many times when meat is eaten, it decays in the stomach, and creates disease. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary

⁷³² Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 32-33

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, p. 74

diseases are largely caused by meat eating.”⁷³⁴ And we wonder why so many in our church are suffering from these very diseases.

The health reform message does not just consist of abstaining from flesh foods. Ellen White wrote, “Those who have received instruction regarding the evils of the use of flesh foods, tea, and coffee, and rich and unhealthful food preparations, and who are determined to make a covenant with God by sacrifice, will not continue to indulge their appetite for food that they know to be unhealthful. God demands that the appetite be cleansed, and that self-denial be practiced in regard to those things which are not good. *This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfected people.*”⁷³⁵ The health reform message touches every aspect of our lives. It requires us not only to watch the food and beverages we consume, but it also requires us to get adequate sleep each night, exercise, sunlight, fresh air, etc.

As we pray for the latter rain, we need to realize that there must be a work of preparation before we can receive it. Before the disciples could receive the early rain, they too needed to first prepare themselves. “After the ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit did not immediately descend. There were ten days after His ascension before the Holy Spirit was given. *This time was devoted by the disciples to most earnest preparation for receiving so precious an endowment.* The rich treasures of heaven were poured out to them after they had searched their own hearts diligently and had sacrificed every idol.”⁷³⁶

Again, the messenger of the Lord writes, “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. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and

⁷³⁴ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 383

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 381

⁷³⁶ Ellen G. White, *This Day With God*, p. 10

consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples *prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit* on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. 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.*⁷³⁷

Let us not get into the habit of just praying for the latter rain, but like the disciples, let us diligently search our hearts. Let us follow the counsel God has given through the writings of Ellen White, sacrificing every idol, whether it be the food we eat or any sin that would separate us from our merciful and loving Saviour.

MESSAGE PROCLAIMED RAPIDLY

The twelve thousand soldiers chosen to go up and battle against the Midianites performed their commission swiftly. Ellen White mentions this when she wrote, “The men who *promptly and speedily* executed the divine judgments upon those heathen nations...”⁷³⁸ As the faithful soldiers performed their task swiftly, so those who receive the latter rain and proclaim the loud cry message will likewise perform their task rapidly.

“The third angel proclaims his message in no whispered tones, in no hesitant manner. He cries with a loud voice, while flying swiftly through the midst of heaven. This shows that the work of God's servants is to be earnest and rapidly performed. They must be brave witnesses for the truth. With no shame upon their countenances, with uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth declaring the last message of mercy to the world.”⁷³⁹

⁷³⁷ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 507

⁷³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, January 5, 1881, par. 2

⁷³⁹ Ellen G. White, *Reflecting Christ*, p. 347

“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. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.”⁷⁴⁰

A GREAT HARVEST

The war against the Midianites was commanded by God, and as such, it was a great success. Not only was it a swift war, but the spoil that was brought back was very large. Besides all the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin and the lead that was spoiled, there was also an immense amount of livestock captured as well.

“And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep, And threescore and twelve thousand beeves, And threescore and one thousand asses, And thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him.”⁷⁴¹ Half of this was given to the soldiers and the other half was divided among the rest of the children of Israel.

Just as the soldiers had great success and returned with an immense amount of booty, so those who proclaim the loud cry message will also meet with success. Ellen White writes, “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

⁷⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 612

⁷⁴¹ Numbers 31:32-35

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. As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened conscience. But since *many refuse to be satisfied* with the mere authority of men and demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord,' the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it."⁷⁴²

"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."⁷⁴³

And again, we are told, "God will move upon men in humble positions to declare the message of present truth. Many such will be seen hastening hither and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to give the light to those in darkness. The truth is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many, even among the uneducated, will proclaim the word of the Lord. Children will be impelled by the Holy Spirit to go forth to declare the message of heaven. The Spirit will be poured out upon those who yield to His promptings. Casting off man's binding rules and cautious movements, they will join the army of the Lord."⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴² Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 606

⁷⁴³ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, Oct. 13, 1904, par. 4

⁷⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 26

NOT ONE WILL BE LOST

After the twelve thousand soldiers had returned from the battle, it was found that not one of them had been killed. "And they said unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us."⁷⁴⁵

In his commentary of this verse, Dr. John Gill writes, "and there lacketh not one man of us; which is a *most amazing and unheard of thing*, that in waging war with a whole nation, slaying all their males, sacking and burning so many cities, plundering the inhabitants of their substance, taking and carrying off such a vast number of captives, yet not one should fall by the sword of the enemy, or by any disease or accident whatever, but all to a man should return to the camp of Israel again; *this is not to be paralleled in any history.*"⁷⁴⁶

Even in the little details, God has provided us evidences that the history of Israel's journey to the Promised Land was a prophetic parallel of His last day remnant church. Not one soldier perished in the war against the Midianites. So it will be with the 144,000, whom the soldiers represent. God will preserve them even when the wicked are stirred up by Satan to pass a death decree. The 144,000 will pass through the time of trouble without seeing death and will see the Lord return.

"In the destruction of the inhabitants of the old world by the flood is clearly represented the [fate] of all those who continue to transgress the law of God. *Enoch's translation to Heaven represents the commandment-keeping people of God who will be alive upon the earth when Christ shall come the second time, and who will be glorified in the sight of those who hated them because they would keep the commandments of God. These also will be translated to Heaven without seeing death, as Enoch and Elijah were.*"⁷⁴⁷

In describing the 144,000, Ellen White says they are the ones who will be translated. "Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,--so resplendent is it with the glory of God,--are gathered the company that have 'gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his

⁷⁴⁵ Numbers 31:49

⁷⁴⁶ Dr. John Gill, *Exposition of the Entire Bible*. Comment on Numbers 31:49

⁷⁴⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, April 29, 1875, par. 8

mark, and over the number of his name.' With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, 'having the harps of God,' they stand, *the hundred and forty and four thousand* that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, 'the voice of harpers harping with their harps.' And they sing 'a new song' before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the *hundred and forty and four thousand*. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb--*a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience--an experience such as no other company have ever had.* 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.' *These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as 'the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.'* Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1-5. 'These are they which came out of great tribulation;' they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments."⁷⁴⁸

Just as twelve thousand soldiers were selected from that vast company of Israelites to do a special work, so God will have 144,000 people who will be used to finish the gospel work. They will give the loud cry message and they will gain an experience that no one else has ever had in the history of man. Dr. Gill was correct when he said, albeit unknowingly, "*this is not to be paralleled in any history.*"

God wants us to strive to be among that group of people, not for any glory that we might receive, but to bring honor and glory to Jesus. "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. We are to have an intense interest in Christ Jesus; for he is our Saviour. He came to this world to be tempted in all points as we are, to prove to the universe that in this world of sin human beings can live lives that God will approve."⁷⁴⁹

Chapter Summary

⁷⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 648

⁷⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905, par. 4

1. Just as twelve thousand soldiers—one thousand from every tribe, were chosen for a special war, so God will have 144,000—twelve thousand from every tribe who receive the seal of God.
2. As soldiers are clothed in armor, so those who are sealed will be clothed with Christ's righteousness.
3. Phinehas was the leader of the twelve thousand soldiers. He blew the trumpet, sounding an alarm. The prophet Joel predicted that God's last day people will blow a trumpet before Jesus returns. This trumpet is not a literal trumpet, but the loud cry message.
4. The latter rain is the loud cry message of the third angel. This message is centered on the righteousness of Christ. Those who give it will not only preach the message, but will experience to the full Christ's righteousness. The message will also proclaim Babylon is fallen and will warn people not to receive the mark of the beast.
5. No one will receive the latter rain (Christ's righteousness in its fullness) without first preparing for it. We need to be experiencing the former rain now (the righteousness of Christ moderately) before we can receive the latter rain.
6. When the people of God give the loud cry message, it will go forth swiftly, just as the twelve thousand soldiers swiftly destroyed the Midianites.
7. The proclaiming of the loud cry will result in a great harvest, just as the soldiers returned from the battle with a large amount of booty.
8. Not one of the soldiers perished in their battle with the Midianites. Likewise, the 144,000 will not see death. They will be translated when Jesus returns.

Chapter 16

Mission Impossible

“These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizabab.”

—Deuteronomy 1:1

After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the time had come when the children of Israel were to finally go in and possess the Promised Land. However, before they were to enter, Moses had one last task to perform.

“Before relinquishing his position as the visible leader of Israel, Moses was directed to rehearse to them the history of their deliverance from Egypt and their journeyings in the wilderness, and also to *recapitulate the law spoken from Sinai*. When the law was given, few of the present congregation were old enough to comprehend the awful solemnity of the occasion. As they were soon to pass over Jordan and take possession of the Promised Land, *God would present before them the claims of His law and enjoin upon them obedience as the condition of prosperity.*”⁷⁵⁰

Before the Israelites could enter the Promised Land, God

⁷⁵⁰ Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 463

presented to them the exact same requirements as was presented to their fathers when they stood before Mount Sinai. “All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.”⁷⁵¹ Forty years prior, the people were quick to say “all that the LORD hath spoken we will do.”⁷⁵² Forty years had proven this was an impossibility. Why then did God reiterate the same conditions if it was impossible? The answer to this question will be revealed as we continue.

For many Seventh-day Adventists, the reason why Jesus has not returned is a mystery. Many are now even questioning the relevance of the Church because for one hundred and forty-seven years since it was organized, Jesus has not returned. The answer to why He hasn't returned is the same reason why it took the Israelites forty years to enter the Promised Land.

Before Jesus can return, His people, including those who respond to the loud cry and take their stand for God, first need to fulfill the claims of His law, just as obedience was the condition of entry into the Promised Land for ancient Israel. God does not change. What He required of His people in ancient times, He still requires of us today.

“Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents *obedience to it as the condition of eternal life*—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The Lord expects *no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise*, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God's law, which is holy, just, and good.”⁷⁵³

Clearly then, God requires of us perfect obedience, just as it was required of Adam. But how can we achieve this when all the righteousness we can produce is as filthy rags? The answer is simple. “By His [Christ's] 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

⁷⁵¹ Deuteronomy 8:1

⁷⁵² See Exodus 19:8; 24:3; 24:7

⁷⁵³ Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 391

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.*⁷⁵⁴

The question we need to ask ourselves is whether God sees us clothed with Christ's robe of righteousness or our own righteousness. The message God sent His church in 1888 by Jones and Waggoner taught us that it is not our righteousness but Christ's that justifies and sanctifies us. You will remember that Adventists back then were trying to keep the law in their own strength. According to Jones, "People had worn out their souls almost, trying to manufacture a sufficient degree of righteousness to stand through the time of trouble and meet the Saviour in peace when He comes, but they had not accomplished it."⁷⁵⁵

God never intended we wear out our souls to get to heaven. This was the kind of burden the Pharisees put upon the people. "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."⁷⁵⁶ Instead of wearing out our souls, Jesus taught us, "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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."⁷⁵⁷ The life of a Christian should be easy if we choose to submit to Christ and trust in His righteousness.

For over one hundred and twenty years God has been patiently waiting for His people to take hold of the message He graciously sent His Church in 1888. If we would accept and live it, Jesus would return. "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.*"⁷⁵⁸ Just think about that for a moment

⁷⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 113

⁷⁵⁵ Alonzo T. Jones, "The Third Angle's Message 11", *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, February 13, 1893, Vol. 5, p. 243

⁷⁵⁶ Matthew 23:4

⁷⁵⁷ Matthew 11:29-30

⁷⁵⁸ Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 69

and let it sink in. When the character of Jesus is perfectly reproduced in us then He will return. This means that the only reason why Jesus has not returned is because His people are not ready.

Not everyone in the church is attempting the impossible. Many now realize we can't manufacture perfect righteousness. But, instead of embracing Christ's righteousness as the answer to this impossibility, they instead emphasize that works has nothing to do with salvation, that all we need to do is have faith that Jesus died to justify us and we are assured of eternal life. This is as much a deception as trying in our own strength to be perfect. In fact, it might be argued that this deception is more dangerous because it creates a sense of security where there is none. If a soldier is not alert to the surrounding danger, he will likely lose his life. The same is true of those who have come to believe that Jesus only justifies us and our sanctification consists of a victory here and there. This is a swing to the opposite side of the pendulum. Both extremes are deceptions of Satan. Whether we are burdened with the guilt of sin while we try in our own strength to be perfect or whether we are sitting back content with constant failure, both extremes will rob us of the life Jesus has promised us.

In *Selected Messages*, Book One, there is a wealth of information that reveals how we can live a victorious Christian life. There we are given a balanced view and not the extremes.

FAITH AND WORKS

“When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as *man's best service*, and *He makes up for the deficiency* with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who *claim to have faith in Him, and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment*. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an *easygoing, accommodating, crossless religion*. But Jesus says, ‘If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.’”⁷⁵⁹

This quote originally appeared in *The Signs of the Times* and was entitled “Faith and Works.” It is certainly worth reading the entire

⁷⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 382

article. In it, Ellen White points out that, “Many refuse to obey God's commandments, yet they make a great deal of faith. But faith must have a foundation. God's promises are all made upon conditions. If we do his will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavor to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but he will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey his commandments, we may cry, ‘Faith, faith, only have faith,’ and the response will come back from the sure word of God, ‘Faith without works is dead.’ Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God's grace, we must do our part; we must faithfully work, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.”⁷⁶⁰

For many, the subject of “works” is to be avoided. This is because the carnal heart is naturally inclined to want to work its way to heaven. But this doesn't mean the Christian life will be devoid of works. On the contrary, the Christian will be full of good works. Works do not save us, but if they are not part of our life, we can be assured that we are not saved. “It is an evidence that a man is not justified by faith when his works do not correspond to his profession. James says, ‘Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect?’ (James 2:22).”⁷⁶¹

PERFECT OBEDIENCE THROUGH CHRIST

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also’ (James 2:24-26). It is essential to have faith in Jesus, and to believe you are saved through Him; *but there is danger in taking the position that many do take in saying, ‘I am saved.’* Many have said: ‘You must do good works, and you will live’; but *apart from Christ no one can do good works.* Many at the present day say, ‘Believe, only believe, and live.’ *Faith and works go together, believing and doing are blended.* The Lord requires no less of the soul now, than He required of Adam in Paradise before he fell—perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement of God under the covenant of grace is just as broad as

⁷⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1890, par. 1

⁷⁶¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 37

the requirement He made in Paradise—harmony with His law, which is holy, and just, and good. The gospel does not weaken the claims of the law; it exalts the law and makes it honorable. Under the New Testament, no less is required than was required under the Old Testament. Let no one take up with the delusion so pleasant to the natural heart, that *God will accept of sincerity, no matter what may be the faith, no matter how imperfect may be the life. God requires of His child perfect obedience.*⁷⁶²

The above quote points out the two extremes, one being “Believe, only believe, and live” and the other, “You must do good works, and you will live.” Of the two extremes, Ellen White spends more time showing that believing is not enough. She points out that God requires of us perfect obedience. In the next paragraph we are directed to how we can render perfect obedience:

“In order to meet the requirements of the law, *our faith must grasp the righteousness of Christ, accepting it as our righteousness.* Through union with Christ, through acceptance of *His righteousness by faith*, we may be qualified to work the works of God, to be collaborators with Christ. If you are willing to drift along with the current of evil, and do not cooperate with the heavenly agencies in restraining transgression in your family, and in the church, in order that everlasting righteousness may be brought in, you do not have faith. Faith works by love and purifies the soul. *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; for we must have *Christ's righteousness* as our credentials if we would find access to the Father. In order that we may have the *righteousness of Christ*, we need *daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit*, to be a partaker of the divine nature. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man.”⁷⁶³

Herein lies the secret to the impossible. It is only by accepting Christ's righteousness by faith that we can be perfect. True faith believes even when it cannot be physically seen. “Now faith is the

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 373

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 374

substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”⁷⁶⁴ The righteousness that we receive by faith is both imputed and imparted to us. “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.”⁷⁶⁵ The righteousness we receive from Christ is imputed and imparted. There can be no separation of the two like many try to do. Both are required to enter heaven, but many now believe that imputed righteousness is all we need. This is a deception of Satan. The righteousness that justifies us is the same righteousness that sanctifies us. Righteousness is right doing. “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”⁷⁶⁶ “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”⁷⁶⁷ You will remember Jesus counsels us to buy from Him white raiment. “The white raiment is purity of character, the *righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner*. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ *for a life of willing obedience*.”⁷⁶⁸

The only difference between imputed and imparted righteousness is its application. Imputed righteousness cleanses us from our sins while imparted righteousness enables us to live a righteous life. “It is the righteousness of Christ that makes the penitent sinner acceptable to God and *works his justification*. However sinful has been his life, if he believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, he stands before God in the spotless robes of *Christ’s imputed righteousness*.”⁷⁶⁹ “The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. *Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin*. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The *righteousness of Christ is imputed to him*, and he is no more to doubt God’s forgiving grace.”⁷⁷⁰ You will find a greater discussion on what righteousness by faith means in Appendix C.

⁷⁶⁴ Hebrews 11:1

⁷⁶⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, June 4, 1985, par. 7

⁷⁶⁶ 1 John 3:7

⁷⁶⁷ 1 John 3:10

⁷⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 88

⁷⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*, p. 106

⁷⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 107

LOOK TO JESUS

Our salvation is all about Jesus. If we would constantly look to Him instead of ourselves or others, our faith in Him would grow and so would our righteousness. As we continue in *Selected Messages*, Book One, the next paragraph reveals, "Let the soul look to Jesus. 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29). No one will be forced to look to Christ; but the voice of invitation is sounding in yearning entreaty, 'Look and live.' In looking to Christ, we shall see that His love is without a parallel, that He has taken the place of the guilty sinner, and has imputed unto him His spotless righteousness. When the sinner sees his Saviour dying upon the cross under the curse of sin in his stead, beholding His pardoning love, love awakes in his heart. The sinner loves Christ, because Christ has first loved him, and *love is the fulfilling of the law*. The repenting soul realizes that God 'is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' The Spirit of God works in the believer's soul, *enabling him to advance from one line of obedience to another*, reaching on from strength to greater strength, from grace to grace in Jesus Christ."⁷⁷¹

The Bible illustrates this in Peter's experience of walking on water. As he walked upon the water his life was safe from the billowing waves only as he kept his eyes upon Jesus. But when he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink. "And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"⁷⁷²

"I saw that we had doubted the sure promises, and wounded the Saviour by our lack of faith. Said the angel, 'Gird the armor about thee, and above all take the shield of faith; for that will guard the heart, the very life, from the fiery darts of the wicked.' If the enemy can lead the desponding to take their eyes off from Jesus, and look to themselves, and dwell upon their own unworthiness,

⁷⁷¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 374

⁷⁷² Matthew 14:29-31

instead of dwelling upon the worthiness of Jesus, His love, His merits, and His great mercy, he will get away their shield of faith, and gain his object; they will be exposed to his fiery temptations. The weak should therefore look to Jesus, and believe in Him; they then exercise faith.”⁷⁷³

A STIFF-NECKED PEOPLE

As Moses spoke to the people before they entered the Promised Land, he reminded them that it was not because of their righteousness that they would possess the land. “Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.”⁷⁷⁴

The same is true of us today. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”⁷⁷⁵ It is not because of our own righteousness that we will ever be able to enter the kingdom of God. It is only by wearing the righteousness of Christ that we will be granted entrance into the heavenly Canaan.

Moses then reminded the people of their true condition. “Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.”⁷⁷⁶ This rebellion had prevented them from entering the Promised Land, and likewise, modern Israel has been prevented from entering the heavenly Canaan. “Moses faithfully set before them their errors and the transgressions of their fathers. They had often felt impatient and rebellious because of their long wandering in the wilderness; but the Lord had not been chargeable with this delay in possessing Canaan; He was more grieved than they because He could not bring them into immediate possession of the Promised Land, and thus display before all nations His mighty power in the

⁷⁷³ Ellen G. White, *Christian Experiences and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 127

⁷⁷⁴ Deuteronomy 9:5-6

⁷⁷⁵ Romans 3:23

⁷⁷⁶ Deuteronomy 9:7

deliverance of His people. *With their distrust of God, with their pride and unbelief, they had not been prepared to enter Canaan.* They would in no way represent that people whose God is the Lord; *for they did not bear His character of purity, goodness, and benevolence.* Had their fathers *yielded in faith* to the direction of God, being governed by His judgments and walking in His ordinances, *they would long before have been settled in Canaan, a prosperous, holy, happy people.* Their delay to enter the goodly land dishonored God and detracted from His glory in the sight of surrounding nations.⁷⁷⁷

We can only imagine how God must feel at the present time. If He was grieved because He could not bring ancient Israel into the Promised Land, how much more would He be grieved now, not being able to end the reign of sin on this planet and bring all His people home to the promised heavenly Canaan? For forty years it was mission impossible—impossible for God to bring a stiff-necked people into the Promised Land. If the people had yielded in faith and obeyed all of God's commandments, they would have been saved so much heartache. But instead, they were overcome with distrust, pride and unbelief.

Before the children of Israel could enter the Promised Land, they first needed to have a clear understanding of their history, especially the reason why they had wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Moses' discourse pointed them to their past. As they camped on the banks of the Jordan, the people of God were directed to look to their past. Before they could go forward, they must first look back. They must see that God was leading them each step of the way, and they must understand that it was not God who had delayed the promise.

There is an important lesson here for us who are waiting to inherit the heavenly Canaan. Like Israel, we must not forget our past. We must look back and see the leading of God at each step of the way. We must understand that what kept Israel from receiving the promise for forty years is the same reason why we are still here. The history of ancient Israel is a parallel or type of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Like Israel, we have failed to trust implicitly in God's direction. The true message of righteousness by faith that was rejected in 1888 must be accepted and lived in

⁷⁷⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 464

God's people. Only then will Jesus return.

The history of Israel reveals that although they wandered in the wilderness for forty years, there finally came a time when they were ready to take possession of the Promised Land. Since the message of righteousness by faith was first proclaimed in 1888, it has been over one hundred and twenty years. If the history of Israel is a parallel of the last church, then we should realize that we are right on the borders of the heavenly Canaan. The forty years Israel spent in the wilderness was a time of probation. The city of Nineveh was given forty days of probation. The antediluvians were given a probation of one hundred and twenty years (three times forty) before the world was destroyed. Moses was one hundred and twenty (three times forty) when he died prior to Israel inheriting the Promised Land. There were one hundred and twenty disciples waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁷⁸ If the message could have gone to all the world by 1890 as Stephen Haskel wrote, then surely this ought to show us that we are very close to the end of probation. We shouldn't be saying anymore that Jesus is coming soon, but that Jesus is coming. Will we be ready for Him?

Chapter Summary

1. Israel first needed to fulfill the condition of entering the Promised Land. This condition was perfect obedience. Jesus is waiting for His people to fulfill the same condition of obedience before He will return.
2. Salvation is a combination of faith and works (or obedience). Faith in Christ's righteousness justifies us and faith in Christ's righteousness enables us to be perfect. It is Christ's righteousness all the way. Obedience does not save us, but if we are not obedient, this testifies we have not been justified and sanctified.
3. It is only as we keep our eyes on Jesus that we will continue to advance in the Christian life. When we take our eyes off Him as Peter did, we will sink into the troubles of the sea.
4. We need to learn from the past. The history of Israel

⁷⁷⁸ Acts 1:15

reveals that for forty years God's people were rebellious and this rebellion kept them out of the Promised Land. It is not until we as a Church admit that we have been wandering in this world longer than we should have because we have been rebellious, both as the Church and individually, that we will learn the lesson of ancient Israel.

Chapter 17

Another Prophet?

“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

—Joshua 1:5

Before the children of Israel could enter the Promised Land, Moses must first relinquish the leadership, and another take his place. Because of his sin at Kadesh-Meribah, Moses was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. “And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.”⁷⁷⁹

Moses loved his people like a father or mother love their children. He would gladly have given his life to spare them. The thought of them without a leader troubled him, and in answer to

God, he requested, "...Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd."⁷⁸⁰

"The Lord hearkened to the prayer of his servant, and the answer came, 'Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put *some of thine honor upon him*, that all the congregation of Israel may be obedient.' Joshua had long attended Moses, and being a man of wisdom and ability, of faith and piety, he was chosen to succeed him. Moses was to instruct Joshua concerning the responsibilities of his position as the visible leader of Israel, and to assure him that if he would be faithful to his sacred trust the Lord would ever be his counselor and support.

"By the laying on of Moses' hands, and a most impressive charge, Joshua was solemnly set apart as the leader of Israel. He was also admitted to a present share in the government as an evidence to the people that no jealousy stirred the heart of Moses at the thought that another was to take his place and lead Israel to the promised land. Moses instructed the people to respect Joshua, and inspired them with confidence in him as the man divinely appointed as his successor. The word of the Lord came through Moses to the congregation, 'He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim, before the Lord. At his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.'⁷⁸¹

JOSHUA

"After the death of Moses, Joshua was to be the leader of Israel, to conduct them to the promised land. He had been prime minister to Moses during the greater part of the time the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness. He had seen the wonderful works of God wrought by Moses, and well understood the disposition of

⁷⁸⁰ Numbers 27:15-17

⁷⁸¹ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, January 13, 1881

the people. He was one of the twelve spies who were sent out to search the promised land, and one of the two who gave a faithful account of its richness, and who encouraged the people to go up and possess it in the strength of God. He was well qualified for this important office.⁷⁸²

“Joshua was now the acknowledged leader of Israel. He had been known chiefly as a warrior, and his gifts and virtues were *especially valuable at this stage in the history of his people*. Courageous, resolute, and persevering, prompt, incorruptible, unmindful of selfish interests in his care for those committed to his charge, and, above all, inspired by a living faith in God--such was the character of the man *divinely chosen* to conduct the armies of Israel in their entrance upon the Promised Land. During the sojourn in the wilderness he had acted as prime minister to Moses, and by his quiet, unpretending fidelity, his steadfastness when others wavered, his firmness to maintain the truth in the midst of danger, he had given evidence of his fitness to succeed Moses, even before he was called to the position by the voice of God.”⁷⁸³

Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim. “The tribe of Ephraim was one of the largest in Israel, as well as the one to which Joshua himself belonged...”⁷⁸⁴ The tribe of Ephraim camped on the west side of the sanctuary. “On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies: and the captain of the sons of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud.”⁷⁸⁵ The tribes of Manasseh and Benjamin also camped on the west side behind the standard of Ephraim.

CHOSEN TO LEAD ISRAEL

When God first appeared to Moses, He manifested Himself in a burning bush and declared the ground that Moses stood upon was holy. “And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw

⁷⁸² Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4A, pp. 58-59

⁷⁸³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 481-482

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 513

⁷⁸⁵ Numbers 2:18

that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.⁷⁸⁶ A similar occurrence happened with Joshua. “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.”⁷⁸⁷

“It was the Son of God who stood as an armed warrior before the leader of Israel. It was the One who had conducted the Hebrews through the wilderness, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. In order to impress the mind of Joshua that He was no less than Christ, the Exalted One, He said: ‘Loose thy shoe from off thy foot.’ He then instructed Joshua what course to pursue in order to take Jericho.”⁷⁸⁸

Both Moses and Joshua encountered the divine presence of God and both were commanded to take off their shoes. This reveals that Joshua's call to lead the children of Israel was as much a divine call as was Moses'.

THE ROLE OF MOSES VS. JOSHUA

Moses was divinely called to lead and instruct. His writings form the foundation for every succeeding prophet. “To the *law* and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”⁷⁸⁹ The writings of Moses were the law here referred to. To Moses was given a complete revelation of the plan of salvation, as typified in the sanctuary service. When the Pharisees came to tempt Jesus with the question, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?” Jesus answered, “What did Moses

⁷⁸⁶ Exodus 3:2-5

⁷⁸⁷ Joshua 5:13-15

⁷⁸⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 4, pp. 159-160

⁷⁸⁹ Isaiah 8:20

command you?"⁷⁹⁰ No other writer in the Old Testament has provided us with so much knowledge and instruction as do the first five books written by Moses. Unlike other Old Testament writers who wrote of their day or prophecies for future generations, Moses also wrote about the history of the world from its very creation, with incredible detail.

Joshua's role as a prophet and leader was different to that of Moses. "The position of Joshua differed in *some respects* from that of Moses. Not only was the latter a prophet and a ruler in Israel, *but he officiated in the capacity of high priest*, and asked counsel directly of God himself. But after Moses, neither Joshua nor any other of the rulers of Israel was permitted to come to the Lord except through the high priest."⁷⁹¹

It was not Joshua's role to record prior history, nor did God reveal to him revelations on how to live an upright, godly life. Joshua was a military leader, and as such, his role was to provide leadership in conquering the Promised Land. God communicated with Joshua as He had with Moses. Before conquering Jericho, Joshua spoke with the captain of the Lord's host, and again when he was rebuked after Israel had failed to capture Ai because of Achan's sin.

To Joshua was given a promise that God would be with him as He was with Moses, if he remained faithful. "It was with great anxiety and self-distrust that Joshua had looked forward to the work before him; but his fears were removed by the assurance of God, 'As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. . . . Unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.' 'Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.' To the heights of Lebanon in the far distance, to the shores of the Great Sea, and away to the banks of the Euphrates in the east--all was to be theirs.

"To this promise was added the injunction, 'Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded.' The Lord's direction was, 'This book of the law shall not depart

⁷⁹⁰ Mark 10:2-3

⁷⁹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, January 13, 1881

out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night; 'turn not from it to the right hand or to the left;' 'for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.'"⁷⁹²

Even though Joshua was called of God, he was to rely upon the revelation revealed through Moses.

JOSHUA'S DOUBT AND SIN

Sadly, like Moses, Joshua also failed to trust in God and in a moment of weakness failed to glorify God, and accused Him of the very thing that kept Israel out of the Promised Land for forty years. After the people of Ai defeated the Israelites, Joshua "rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!"⁷⁹³

Joshua's accusation revealed his lack of faith and sin. "Joshua manifested a true zeal for the honor of God, yet his petitions were mingled with doubt and unbelief. The thought that God had brought his people over the Jordan to deliver them up to the power of the heathen *was a sinful one*, unworthy of a leader of Israel. Joshua's feelings of despondency and distrust were inexcusable in view of the mighty miracles which God had wrought for the deliverance of his people, and the repeated promise that he would be with them in driving out the wicked inhabitants of the land."⁷⁹⁴

As with Moses, God knew the heart of Joshua, that it was not his purpose to distrust God. "But our merciful God did not visit his servant with wrath because of this error. He graciously accepted the humiliation and prayers of Joshua, and at the same time gently rebuked his unbelief, and then revealed to him the cause of their defeat."⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 482

⁷⁹³ Joshua 7:6-7

⁷⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, April 21, 1881

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE

Joshua was very similar to Elijah the prophet. Upon Mount Carmel, Elijah stood alone and declared, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."⁷⁹⁶ In a similar way, Joshua challenged the children of Israel. "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."⁷⁹⁷

"As Joshua felt the infirmities of age stealing upon him, and realized that his work must soon close, he was filled with anxiety for the future of his people. It was with more than a father's interest that he addressed them, as they gathered once more about their aged chief. . . .

"By Joshua's direction the ark had been brought from Shiloh. The occasion was one of great solemnity, and this symbol of God's presence would deepen the impression he wished to make upon the people. After presenting the goodness of God toward Israel, he called upon them, in the name of Jehovah, to choose whom they would serve. The worship of idols was still to some extent secretly practiced, and Joshua endeavored now to bring them to a decision that should banish this sin from Israel. . . . Joshua desired to lead them to serve God, not by compulsion, but willingly."⁷⁹⁸

MODERN DAY PARALLEL

As God used Moses to lead and instruct His people, so He used Ellen White to guide and provide instruction and counsel to His last day Church. Like Moses, the writings of Ellen White provide a complete revelation of salvation, not limited to the types of the earthly sanctuary, but salvation as revealed through the death and ministration of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. Another similarity between Moses and Ellen White is the fact that both

⁷⁹⁶ 1 Kings 18:21

⁷⁹⁷ Joshua 24:14-15

⁷⁹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Conflict and Courage*, p. 125

are the only prophets who have written detailed accounts of history—Moses, writing from creation unto his time, and Ellen White, writing the complete history of the world.

If the children of Israel had not complained at Kadesh-barnea, Moses would have led them into the Promised Land. Likewise, if the Seventh-day Adventist Church had accepted the message of righteousness by faith in 1888, Jesus would have returned while Ellen White was still alive. Sadly, both Moses and Ellen White were not permitted to witness the hope that was ever before them. It passed on to another.

As the prophetic ministry passed from Moses to Joshua, who was responsible for leading the people of God into the Promised Land, so we should expect God to raise up another prophet who would lead His faithful people into the heavenly Canaan. You will remember that Joshua's role was different to that of Moses. Both were leaders, but Joshua was called to lead a military campaign. His ministry was very similar to Elijah's as has already been pointed out. Both called for the children of Israel to forsake their idols and serve the living God. As Joshua entered the Promised Land which is a type of the heavenly Canaan, so Elijah was translated to heaven without seeing death. The last three verses in the Old Testament written by the prophet Malachi predicts that just before the great and terrible day of the Lord, Elijah would come. "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."⁷⁹⁹

Is it a coincidence that before Malachi begins describing the work of Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord, that he reminds his readers to remember the law of Moses who was God's servant? When we look back to the day when Joshua called for all Israel to choose who they would serve, he also called for the children of Israel to keep that which was written by Moses, "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to

⁷⁹⁹ Malachi 4:4-6

the right hand or to the left.”⁸⁰⁰

ELIJAH TO COME

God called Elijah to bring about a reformation among His people because they had become idolators. The truth had been forsaken and Baal worship had replaced the worship of the true God. Sadly, the majority of God’s people at that time were not interested in listening to a message of warning from heaven. “Tidings of Elijah’s denunciation of the sins of Israel, and of his prophecy of swift-coming punishment, quickly spread throughout the land. The fears of some were aroused, but in general the *heavenly message was received with scorn and ridicule.*

“The prophet’s words went into immediate effect. Those who were at first inclined to scoff at the thought of calamity, soon had occasion for serious reflection; for after a few months the earth, unrefreshed by dew or rain, became dry, and vegetation withered. As time passed, streams that had never been known to fail began to decrease, and brooks began to dry up. Yet the people were *urged by their leaders to have confidence in the power of Baal and to set aside as idle words the prophecy of Elijah.* The priests still insisted that it was through the power of Baal that the showers of rain fell. Fear not the God of Elijah, nor tremble at His word, they urged, it is Baal that brings forth the harvest in its season and provides for man and beast.”⁸⁰¹

Elijah was so hated that his life was in danger. “God had sent messengers to Israel, with appeals to return to their allegiance. Had they heeded these appeals, had they turned from Baal to the living God, Elijah’s message of judgment would never have been given. But the warnings that might have been a savor of life unto life had proved to them a savor of death unto death. *Their pride had been wounded, their anger had been aroused against the messengers, and now they regarded with intense hatred the prophet Elijah.* If only he should fall into their hands, gladly they would deliver him to Jezebel--as if by silencing his voice they could stay the fulfillment of his words! In the face of calamity they continued to stand firm in their idolatry. Thus they were adding to the guilt

⁸⁰⁰ Joshua 23:6

⁸⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Prophet and Kings*, pp. 123-124

that had brought the judgments of Heaven upon the land.”⁸⁰²

In the days prior to Christ’s entering His public ministry, John the Baptist performed the same work as Elijah. Jesus taught that he was Elijah in a spiritual sense. “And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and *restore all things*. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he *spake unto them of John the Baptist*.”⁸⁰³

John the Baptist was a fulfillment of Elijah to come, but he was rejected by the leaders of the Jewish nation, just as Elijah was rejected. Since the work of Elijah and Joshua are very similar, could it be that God’s people will reject any further prophets God sends them, just as Elijah and John the Baptist were rejected?

MODERN DAY JOSHUA AND ELIJAH

We have already seen the similarities between Joshua and Elijah. The Bible foretells that God will send Elijah the prophet. John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and if he had been accepted, he would have been Elijah to those living at Christ’s first advent. His message was one of repentance, just as Elijah’s was, but he was not the complete fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy. Someone would come before Christ’s second advent, preparing the way just as John did at the first advent. His role will be different to that of Ellen White’s, just as Joshua’s was different to that of Moses. As he comes in the spirit and power of Elijah, we should expect him to bear a message of repentance and warning of coming destruction. He will “restore all things” as Jesus explained; he will lead God’s people back to the truths contained in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. Like Joshua, he will lead the people of God into the heavenly Canaan. This means he will be translated just as Elijah was and will be a part of the 144,000. Further evidence that supports this is the parallel between Phinehas and the 12,000 soldiers he led to war against the Midianites. We noticed in chapter 14 that these were a type or

⁸⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 127-128

⁸⁰³ Matthew 17:10-13

parallel of the 144,000.

Has God sent Elijah the prophet to us yet? Has the promise in Malachi been fulfilled? Are we living right on the borders of the Promised Land where many in God's last day remnant church have apostatized? Are we about to witness Christ's return in the clouds of glory?

In 2005, a man by the name of Ernie Knoll⁸⁰⁴ who has been a Seventh-day Adventist for over fifty years received a short dream of heaven.⁸⁰⁵ At the time he did not realize the significance of that dream, but in December the following year, he was given another dream of heaven and saw many of the things Ellen White saw in her vision of heaven. In this dream, he spoke with Jesus and was told that the second Advent was incredibly close. So close that we should no longer be saying Jesus is coming soon, but that He is coming.⁸⁰⁶ In his dream, he received a commission from Jesus to share the dream with His people. At the time of this writing, Ernie has had thirty-six published dreams. As we would expect, the theme of his dreams calls for God's people to repent and prepare for Jesus to return. They warn of coming destruction and give encouragement to face the worst time of trouble this world has ever witnessed. On his home page, he currently has three personal messages supported by Spirit of Prophecy quotations containing 1) An appeal to all Seventh-day Adventists, 2) The Coming Destruction, and 3) The Beginning Of Sorrows. Surely this is what we would expect of a messenger who was to come in the Spirit and power of Elijah.

It should not surprise us to find scattered throughout Ernie's dreams the message of righteousness by faith, since this is the message that needs to not only be understood but experienced before the people of God can be ready to live without a mediator during the time of trouble. One of the questions Jesus repeatedly asks in Ernie's dreams is whether He will find faith upon the earth when He returns.

One of the characteristics of Joshua and Elijah was the reformation they achieved through their ministry. In Joshua's time, the people responded to his call by saying, "God forbid that we

⁸⁰⁴ For further information see Ernie Knoll's website www.formypeople.org.

⁸⁰⁵ See http://www.formypeople.org/at_the_table.html

⁸⁰⁶ Ernie Knoll, *A view of Heaven*, December 3, 2006. http://www.formypeople.org/a_view_of_heaven.html

should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed.”⁸⁰⁷ After fire came down from heaven, God’s people were convinced that Elijah was a prophet of God and chose to follow Jehovah. “And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.”⁸⁰⁸ The same is happening with Ernie’s ministry. His dreams are leading many people to renew their commitment to God instead of following the ways of the world. This is evident by the testimonies on his website and is also the experience of the author.

If one takes the time to read all of Ernie’s dreams, they will quickly realize that like Joshua and the prophecy of Elijah to come, Ernie’s dreams continually refer us back to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. How appropriate is this in a time when the Spirit of Prophecy is being rejected or neglected by many in the Church.

Earlier in this chapter we learned that Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim, which was the primary tribe that camped on the west side of the sanctuary. Remarkably, Ernie’s dream of the new earth fulfills this parallel. “Many other people are flying or walking toward the gate of the city. As I approach the wall, I know this opening is the *middle of the west wall*. I realize that a long ways to the right there is another opening as well as to the left. I also know that there is a north, south and east wall configured the same as the west wall.”⁸⁰⁹ In John’s description of the 144,000, the tribe of Ephraim is left out, but God’s original purpose at the time of Joshua was that Ephraim be the tribe that enters the city through the middle of the west wall.

Another identifying point that Ernie fulfills is the fact that he is called “the bold one” a number of times in his dreams. This accurately describes not only Ernie, but Joshua, Elijah and John the Baptist. Each of these prophets were incredibly bold, particularly Elijah as he marched in before king Ahab and

⁸⁰⁷ Joshua 24:16-17

⁸⁰⁸ 1 Kings 18:39

⁸⁰⁹ Ernie Knoll, *The New Earth*, September 14, 2007. http://www.formypeople.org/the_new_earth.html.

pronounced the coming famine.

REJECTED

Like Elijah and John the Baptist, Ernie's dreams have not been well received from the majority within the Church, including the leadership. Some reason that this proves he is a false prophet, but we need to remember that the leadership of Elijah's day did not accept him. Neither did the leadership of John the Baptist's day accept his divine call. Sadly, the leadership even rejected Jesus—the long hoped for Messiah. God's prophets have rarely been accepted.

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy both warn us about being deceived by false prophets. Jesus stressed this many times in His public ministry.⁸¹⁰ However, we need to be equally cautious that we do not reject a prophet or messenger of God, for the warnings or counsel they bring are vital to our salvation. We only need to think back to Noah's day to realize the importance of this.

“The power of God that wrought with His servant was felt by those who heard. Some gave heed to the warning, and renounced their sins; but the multitudes mocked at the solemn message, and went on more boldly in their evil ways. The servants of God are to bear a similar message to the world in the last days, and it will also be received with unbelief and mockery. *The antediluvian world rejected the warning words of him who walked with God. So will the last generation make light of the warnings of the Lord's messengers.*”⁸¹¹

HOW TO TEST A PROPHET

If we want to avoid being deceived by false prophets while remaining open to true ones, we must be willing to test them according to the tests God has given us, not our own. The Bible clearly teaches how we are to test a prophet. Some of these tests include:

1. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”⁸¹² The message of a true prophet will not contradict

⁸¹⁰ See Matthew 7 and 24

⁸¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 85

⁸¹² Isaiah 8:20

- the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy.
2. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him."⁸¹³ Miracles do not prove whether a prophet is true or false. If a professed prophet tries to lead us away from God, as revealed in His Word, we should reject them.
 3. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: 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."⁸¹⁴ This does not merely mean Jesus was a human, but that He took upon Himself *fallen* human flesh as was pointed out in chapter 12.
 4. "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."⁸¹⁵ We must keep in mind that sometimes what a prophet says is

⁸¹³ Deuteronomy 13:1-4

⁸¹⁴ 1 John 4:1-3

⁸¹⁵ Deuteronomy 18:20-22

conditional even when they don't realize it is.⁸¹⁶

5. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"⁸¹⁷ The fruit of a prophet's ministry is proof of their calling. This is revealed in different ways. In Noah's day, very few accepted his message, and only eight people survived the Flood. Elijah was rejected until God vindicated him on Mount Carmel. We should not be looking for quantity of fruit, but quality.

Sadly, many have not followed the Bible's counsel on how to test a prophet before rejecting Ernie Knoll. Instead, they use human reasoning to test his dreams and conclude that he is a false prophet. When has our human reasoning ever been safe to trust? The Jews used human reasoning when they rejected Jesus. They reasoned that if He was not going to set up a literal kingdom and free them from the hated Romans, He could not be the Messiah that was predicted to come. The high priest Caiaphas falsely reasoned that, "it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."⁸¹⁸ The leadership then sought every way possible to put Jesus to death. Many others listen to what popular people have concluded and refuse to even consider testing Ernie. Isn't this how Jesus was treated?

As you read the words of Ernie's critics, you can't help but wonder about it being "proof" that he is a false prophet. No one has yet proven his dreams contain error, even after three and a half

⁸¹⁶ When Jonah preached to the Ninevites, he said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh *shall* be overthrown." Jonah 3:4. However Nineveh was not destroyed. Was Jonah a false prophet? No, because the prophecy was conditional even though Jonah was not aware of it. A similar thing happened concerning the children of Israel. God promised to take them out of Egypt and bring them into the Promised Land, and all but two of them above the age of twenty died in the wilderness because conditions altered the promise. This happened with one of Ellen White's predictions. In 1856 she wrote, "I was shown the company present at the conference. Said the angel, 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.'" However, everyone then living have since died. The prophecy was not false, but conditions altered the outcome. More can be read regarding this at <http://www.whitestate.org/issues/1856visn.html>.

⁸¹⁷ Matthew 7:15-16

⁸¹⁸ John 11:50

years of public ministry. It is true that many have accused him of teaching error regarding the subject of tithe, but these accusations are based on tradition and not on the Word of God. There is an excellent book on Ernie's website (not written by Ernie) that answers what many critics have said about Ernie, including the tithe issue. It can be viewed at www.formypeople.org/the_truth/index.html and is called *the TRUTH, the whole TRUTH, and nothing but the TRUTH* (referred to as "*the Truth Book*").

The honest seeker of truth will come away blessed after reading and comparing the dreams of Ernie with the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. They will find that Ernie, like Ellen White, passes the Biblical tests of a prophet. He may fail man-made tests, but these are only subjective and not reliable.

ERNIE KNOLL'S SIN AND REPENTANCE

Probably the strongest reason why so many are now convinced that Ernie is a false prophet is because of the sin he fell into. It is true that his sin has in no way helped his credibility. In November 2007, Ernie became discouraged because of the opposition he was receiving. Instead of seeking God for his strength, he lost his faith and made up an impressive story of a prostitute who had an angel visit and was told to read his dreams. Ernie hoped this would convince people his dreams were from God, and probably for a time, some were convinced. However, truth cannot exist with falsehood, and eventually Ernie's deception was found out. His actions resulted in the collapse of his ministry and many walked away from him. But a few remained, and determined to study the Word of God for answers, as they could not accept the fact that Satan was responsible for their renewed devotion to God. It was found that many of God's prophets failed at times to live an upright life. Commenting on this fact, Ellen White wrote:

"The pen of inspiration, true to its task, tells us of the sins that overcame Noah, Lot, Moses, Abraham, David, and Solomon, and that even Elijah's strong spirit sank under temptation during his fearful trial. Jonah's disobedience and Israel's idolatry are faithfully recorded. Peter's denial of Christ, the sharp contention of Paul and Barnabas, the failings and infirmities of the prophets and apostles, are all laid bare by the Holy Ghost, who lifts the veil from the human heart. There before us lie the lives of the believers, with all their faults and follies, which are intended as a lesson to all the

generations following them. If they had been without foible they would have been more than human, and our sinful natures would despair of ever reaching such a point of excellence. But seeing where they struggled and fell, where they took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are encouraged, and led to press over the obstacles that degenerate nature places in our way.”⁸¹⁹

Many feel that God could forgive David for his heinous sin, and Moses’ moment of weakness where he took to himself the glory of God, or Peter’s rash denial of Jesus, but they feel that God cannot forgive Ernie because he willingly deceived people and only confessed his sin after he was found out. However, the Bible plainly reveals that Abraham lied to Pharaoh and Abimelech, and yet God stilled called him a prophet.⁸²⁰ Jacob deceived his father to secure the birthright, and yet God promised to bless him after he fled from his brother.⁸²¹ David repented of his great sin, and has been a source of encouragement to many who fall short of God’s ideal, but many fail to realize that David did not confess his sin *until after* Nathan the prophet rebuked him.⁸²²

Ernie’s sin cannot be excused, but his repentance and desire to live according to God’s commandments are apparent. As with the prophets of old, the Holy Spirit has not sought to hide Ernie’s sin. His dreams contain rebukes directed at Ernie and his sin is laid open for all to know what he has done and gain encouragement from the fact that, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”⁸²³ In the Truth book, there is a chapter dedicated to his sin and repentance that provides further information.⁸²⁴

Before Jesus was arrested and crucified, His disciples trusted implicitly that He was the promised Messiah. They were willing to lay down their lives for Him. They had believed that Jesus was the Messiah, even when the leaders of the church refused to accept Him and declared He was from Beelzebub. However, as they witnessed His death, their hopes were shattered. All the

⁸¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 12

⁸²⁰ See Genesis 20:3-7

⁸²¹ See Genesis 28

⁸²² See 2 Samuel 12:7-13

⁸²³ 1 John 1:9

⁸²⁴ http://www.formypeople.org/the_truth/chapter10.html.

doubts of those who rejected Him flooded their mind until they were ready to admit He wasn't the Promised One. As two of His disciples traveled back to Emmaus, they confided with One who they thought was a stranger and said, "But *we trusted that it had been he* which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done."⁸²⁵ Their reply revealed their deep disappointment and loss of faith. Little did they know the One they were talking with was the One they had trusted! By the end of the day, their disappointment was turned into joy and they exclaimed, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"⁸²⁶

God often allows His people to pass through a time of disappointment to prove them. This was the case when the children of Israel came up to the Red Sea. It was the case in 1844 when Jesus did not return as expected, and it was the case with those who had accepted Ernie's dreams. Should we have expected anything differently? Like the disciples, the One who spoke with them caused their hearts to burn within them. So the One speaking through Ernie's dreams leads many to feel the same and to know that Jesus is coming.

As Joshua succeeded, but in no way supplanted Moses, so Ernie is now being used to wake up God's sleeping people. He is directing them back to the importance of Ellen White's writings and the Bible so that they can be prepared for the greatest event this world has ever witnessed—the subject of our next chapter.

Chapter Summary

1. Joshua succeeded Moses and was the one who lead Israel into the Promised Land. God promised to be with Joshua just as He was with Moses.
2. The role of Joshua was different from that of Moses. Joshua was a military leader, while Moses was a shepherd who God used to record not only the history of the world up until that time, but to define what was truth. The

⁸²⁵ Luke 24:21

⁸²⁶ Luke 24:32

- writings of Moses provide the very foundation for the rest of the entire Bible.
3. Joshua performed the same work as Elijah when he called the nation to choose between serving their false gods and the living God.
 4. Joshua directed people back to the law of Moses. Ellen White is a fitting parallel of Moses as we have seen throughout this book. Like Moses, she wrote detailed accounts of the history of the world, defines what truth is, and provides counsel and direction for us individually and as a Church.
 5. The one predicted to come as Elijah will follow the course of Joshua and lead people back to the law of Moses and his parallel—Ellen White. This is very significant since the last deception of Satan will be to make of no effect the Spirit of Prophecy, through either being rejected or neglected.
 6. Elijah was rejected by the people of his time and so was John the Baptist, who was a partial fulfillment of the Elijah prophecy. This indicates that the Elijah who will come before the great and terrible day of the Lord will also be rejected.
 7. A man by the name of Ernie Knoll has been receiving dreams for over three and half years and fulfills the parallel of Joshua and Elijah. He has had thirty-six dreams at the time of this writing. Like Joshua and Elijah, his dreams call for God's people to wake up and repent. They also contain warnings of coming destruction and provide encouragement to those who will pass through the time of trouble. Like the predicted Elijah to come, Ernie is "restoring all things" by directing the people of God back to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. At a time when every wind of doctrine is blowing, God has raised up a prophet to clearly point out error and to direct His people.
 8. Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim which camped on the west side of the sanctuary. Interestingly, in Ernie's dream of the new earth, he enters the middle gate on the western side of the city.
 9. As with Elijah and John the Baptist, most people are rejecting Ernie, not because he fails the test of a prophet, but because they either listen to what other people say

about him, or they make up their own tests which even Ellen White would fail.

10. At a time of discouragement, Joshua lost his faith in God and accused Him of leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land to die at their enemies hands. Like those at Kadesh-barnea, Joshua distrusted God and fell into sin. Sadly, Ernie was also overcome by Satan and fell into sin when discouraged amidst opposition. This does not rule out his divine calling just as Joshua, Moses, Abraham, Jacob, David, Elijah, Jonah, Peter and many others who remained prophets of God even after they sinned. Ernie has repented and is seeking to make God first in his life and follow the messages he himself has received.
11. God always sends a prophet or messenger to warn of coming destruction and major events. He did it before the Flood and before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Romans. He did it before Jesus started His public ministry and before the investigative judgment began. The account of Joshua shows that we should expect another prophet. Ernie fulfills exactly the requirements of a last day prophet. Why then do so many refuse to accept him?

Chapter 18

Faith Is the Victory

“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”

—Hebrews 11:30

The time had now come for the children of Israel to take possession of the Promised Land. The journey had been long, and most of those who had started out died in the wilderness.

“The Israelites were still encamped on the east side of Jordan, which presented the *first barrier* to the occupation of Canaan. ‘Arise,’ had been the first message of God to Joshua, ‘go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them.’ No instruction was given as to the way in which they were to make the passage. Joshua knew, however, that whatever God should command, He would make a way for His people to perform, and *in this faith* the intrepid leader at once began his arrangements for an advance.”⁸²⁷

Forty years prior, the unfaithful spies that had returned from the Promised Land saw only impossibilities. However, this time the spies that were sent into the land came back with a different

⁸²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 482

story.

“The spies returned in safety with the tidings, ‘Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.’ It had been declared to them in Jericho, ‘We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.’”⁸²⁸

If only this had been the report when the children of Israel camped at Kadesh-barnea. What a difference this would have made. Sadly, the lesson of faith needed to be learned, for only in faith can we gain the victory. “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”⁸²⁹

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

“Leaving their encampment in the acacia groves of Shittim, the host descended to the border of the Jordan. All knew, however, that without divine aid they could not hope to make the passage. At this time of the year—in the spring season—the melting snows of the mountains had so raised the Jordan that the river overflowed its banks, making it impossible to cross at the usual fording places. God willed that the passage of Israel over Jordan should be miraculous. Joshua, by divine direction, commanded the people to sanctify themselves; they must put away their sins and free themselves from all outward impurity; ‘for tomorrow,’ he said, ‘the Lord will do wonders among you.’ The ‘ark of the covenant’ was to lead the way before the host. When they should see the token of Jehovah’s presence, borne by the priests, remove from its place in the center of the camp, and advance toward the river, then they were to remove from their place, ‘and go after it.’ The circumstances of the passage were minutely foretold; and said Joshua, ‘Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you,

⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 483

⁸²⁹ 1 John 5:4

and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites. . . . Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.”⁸³⁰

The ark was where, “...Jehovah dwelt in visible glory, in the shekinah above the mercy-seat.”⁸³¹ “And they shall make an ark of *shittim* wood...and thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.”⁸³² Gold is a fitting representation of divinity. Unlike wood, it cannot be consumed. Job writes, “Yea, the Almighty shall be thy gold, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.”⁸³³ Gold is also a symbol of faith, which is a gift of God. If gold represents divinity, then it only stands to reason that wood would represent fallen humanity, a substance that can easily be consumed by fire. The wooden ark was totally overlaid with gold, both on the outside and on the inside. This represents the blending of the two natures of Christ; His humanity and divinity. It also shows that in His humanity, He lived completely by faith.

The law of God was placed within the ark. The Psalmist wrote, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”⁸³⁴ This fittingly represents Jesus for He delighted to do the will of His Father and He kept the law perfectly. Since the “character of Christ shall be *perfectly reproduced in His people*...”⁸³⁵ it also stands to reason that the ark can represent those who are “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”⁸³⁶ Like Jesus, our carnal heart is subjected to the divine nature and by faith the law of God is enthroned on the heart. Ezekiel wrote, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and *cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them*.”⁸³⁷

Unlike the ark, the mercy seat, which rested on top of it, was

⁸³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 483

⁸³¹ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 18

⁸³² Exodus 25:10-11

⁸³³ Job 22:25. The margin reads gold instead of defense and the context clearly supports this.

⁸³⁴ Psalm 40:8

⁸³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 69

⁸³⁶ 2 Peter 1:4

⁸³⁷ Ezekiel 36:26-27

made of solid gold. This reminds us that grace is one hundred percent a gift of God—we cannot earn it. Only through God’s grace and mercy can we live in His presence.

THE CLOSE OF PROBATION

“At the appointed time began the onward movement, the ark, borne upon the shoulders of the priests, leading the van. The people had been directed to fall back, so that there was a vacant space of more than half a mile about the ark. All watched with deep interest as the priests advanced down the bank of the Jordan. They saw them with the sacred ark move steadily forward toward the *angry, surging stream*, till the feet of the bearers were dipped into the waters. Then suddenly the tide above was swept back, while the current below flowed on, and the *bed of the river was laid bare*.”⁸³⁸

“At the divine command the priests advanced to the middle of the channel and stood there while the entire host descended and crossed to the farther side. Thus was impressed upon the minds of all Israel the fact that the power that stayed the waters of Jordan *was the same that had opened the Red Sea* to their fathers forty years before. When the people had all passed over, the ark itself was borne to the western shore. No sooner had it reached a place of security, and ‘the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up unto the dry land,’ than the imprisoned waters, being set free, rushed down, a resistless flood, in the natural channel of the stream.”⁸³⁹

The crossing of the Jordan is here likened to the crossing of the Red Sea. One took place at the beginning of Israel’s journey and the other took place at the very end. We learned in chapter three that the Red Sea crossing typified the beginning of the investigative judgment which started in 1844. It was a time when God’s faithful people were severely tested. The parting of the Jordan then must represent the closing of the investigative judgment, for after the children of Israel passed over it, they began to take possession of the Promised Land. As the angry, surging stream of the Jordan was laid bare when the feet of the priests who bore the ark touched its waters, so, “Our very thoughts and the intents and purposes of our hearts are *laid bare to God’s inspection*.”

⁸³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 484

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 484

As the features are produced upon the polished plate of the artist, *so are our characters upon the books of record in heaven.*⁸⁴⁰ Clearly, the crossing of the Jordan is the close of human probation.

When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, it was a dramatic event of victory. However, the crossing of the Jordan was the opposite. The event was very quiet and solemn. This shows that when the investigative judgment started in 1844 it was to be proclaimed with a loud voice to all the world. But when it closes, there is no proclamation. No one will know when it closes.

THE TWELVE STONES

“Coming generations were not to be without a witness to this great miracle. While the priests bearing the ark were still in the midst of Jordan, *twelve men previously chosen, one from each tribe*, took up each a stone from the river bed where the priests were standing, and carried it over to the western side. These stones were to be set up as a monument in the first camping place beyond the river. The people were bidden to repeat to their children and children's children the story of the deliverance that God had wrought for them, as Joshua said, ‘That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God forever.’⁸⁴¹ Ellen White further writes, “But before the priests had come up out of the river, that this wonderful miracle might never be forgotten, the Lord bade Joshua *select men of note* from each tribe to take up stones *from the spot in the river bed where the priests had stood*, and bear them upon their shoulders *to Gilgal*, and there erect a monument in remembrance of the fact that God had caused Israel to pass over Jordan upon dry land.”⁸⁴²

As the twelve stones were taken from the river bed by a representative of each of the twelve tribes, so the high priest wore a breastplate that contained twelve stones, also representing the twelve tribes. “And thou shalt make the *breastplate of judgment* with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it.”⁸⁴³ The breastplate is called the

⁸⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, p. 192

⁸⁴¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 484

⁸⁴² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p.158

⁸⁴³ Exodus 28:15

breastplate of judgment. Just as it represents the judgment, so the twelve stones that were setup in Gilgal and taken from the river bed, represent the close of the investigative judgment.

As Moses described the details of the breastplate, he wrote, “Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a *span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof*. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. And the *stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names*, like the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.”⁸⁴⁴

Each stone on the breastplate represented one of the tribes of Israel. They were the same stones that make up the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem. The astute Bible student will quickly realize that not all the names of the stones in the breastplate are the same as those mentioned by John in the Revelation. According to a footnote in her book, *The Pathway to the Throne of God*, Sarah Peck writes, “Because of the difference in language in which the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament were written, the names of some of the jewels in Revelation differ from those given in Ezekiel and Exodus, but the jewels themselves are the same. In the New Testament, according to *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, jacinth is the same as ligure, chalcedony is a variety of agate, sardonyx is a sard variety of onyx, while chrysoprasus and chrysolite, both jewels of great brilliancy, are evidently the carbuncle and diamond of the Old Testament.”⁸⁴⁵

Stephen Haskell also supports this in his book, *The Cross and Its Shadow*. “The breastplate was of the same material as the ephod. It was in the *form of a square* and measured a span. In it were *set in gold* twelve precious stones, arranged three in a row. On *each stone was engraved the name of one of the tribes of Israel*. Around these was a border of a variety of stones. *The stones in the breastplate were the same as those that form the foundation of the New Jerusalem*. The

⁸⁴⁴ Exodus 28:15-21

⁸⁴⁵ Sarah Peck, *The Path to the Throne of God*, p. 108

breastplate hung from the shoulders of the ephod and was fastened at the waist by a blue cord through gold rings.”⁸⁴⁶

When you start to understand the meaning of these different symbols, the Word of God comes alive. The breastplate was made in the form of a square which contained the twelve precious stones. These stones are the same as the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem. Also note that the twelve stones were set in gold. We learned that gold represents faith and the divine nature. As we try to understand the meaning of these stones, it is evident that they represent the 144,000.

The first similarity we note is that the 144,000 consist of 12,000 people from each tribe. “And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”⁸⁴⁷ As the twelve tribes were inscribed on the stones of the breastplate which represents the foundations of the New Jerusalem, and a notable person from each tribe removed a stone from the river bed, so the 144,000, a special class of people, have the name of Jerusalem written in their foreheads. “The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, *New Jerusalem*, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name.”⁸⁴⁸ Just as the breastplate was made in the form of a square, so the 144,000 stand in a perfect square. “Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a *perfect square*.”⁸⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, the New Jerusalem is also a square. “And the city lieth foursquare, and the *length is as large as the breadth*: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. *The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal*.”⁸⁵⁰ As the stones on the breastplate were set in gold, so there are tables of stone with the names of 144,000 written in gold. “This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious... I saw there *tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold*.”⁸⁵¹ The New Jerusalem is largely made up of gold, including

⁸⁴⁶ Stephen N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 87

⁸⁴⁷ Revelation 7:4

⁸⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 15

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16

⁸⁵⁰ Revelation 21:16

⁸⁵¹ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 19

its streets.⁸⁵² As the stones of the breastplate contain the names of the twelve tribes, a representation of the 144,000, and as those stones are the same stones used to make up the foundation of the wall, so the wall of the New Jerusalem is 144 cubits high. "And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel."⁸⁵³

There are too many similarities between the twelve stones set up in Gilgal and the twelve stones in the breastplate compared with the 144,000 and the New Jerusalem to be a coincidence. God is trying to show us the connection between these events.

THE COVENANT

The twelve stones set up on the banks of the Jordan signified the covenant. "In the reconstruction of this ancient altar, Elijah reveals his respect *for the covenant* that the Lord had made with Israel *when they crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land*. Choosing 'twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, . . . he built an altar in the name of the Lord.'⁸⁵⁴ It is important to remember that the children of Israel did not possess the land at once. They camped upon its land, but the enemies of God still occupied and ruled it.

After the children of Israel failed to trust in God at Kadesh-barnea, they were forbidden to perform the rite of circumcision which was the sign of the covenant. However, now that they had finally crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land, the sign of the covenant was restored.

"A short distance from Jordan the Hebrews made their first encampment in Canaan. Here Joshua 'circumcised the children of Israel;' and the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover.' The suspension of the rite of circumcision since the rebellion at Kadesh had been a constant witness to Israel that their covenant with God, of which it was the appointed symbol, had been broken. And the discontinuance of the Passover, the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, had been an evidence of the Lord's displeasure at their desire to return to the land of bondage. Now, however, *the years of rejection were ended*. Once

⁸⁵² Revelation 21:18, 21

⁸⁵³ Revelation 21:17

⁸⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1913, par. 6

more God *acknowledged Israel as His people*, and the *sign of the covenant was restored*. The rite of circumcision was performed upon all the people who had been born in the wilderness. And the Lord declared to Joshua, *'This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you,'* and in allusion to this the place of their encampment was called Gilgal, 'a rolling away,' or 'rolling off.'⁸⁵⁵

For forty years the children of Israel were not permitted to perform the sign of the covenant. But after crossing the Jordan River, God commanded Joshua to circumcise all the males. What had changed? Why did God only permit it once they had crossed the waters? The answer to these questions lie in understanding the covenant, circumcision and the rolling away of the reproach of Egypt.

"All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins *will be blotted out*, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life... While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors... Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father 'a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' Ephesians 5:27. Their names stand enrolled in the book of life... Thus will be realized the *complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise*: 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' 'In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they *shall not be found*.' Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20. 'In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be *called holy*, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem.' Isaiah 4:2, 3.⁸⁵⁶

The new covenant reveals that God's people will have the law of God written in their hearts. "Behold, the days come, saith the

⁸⁵⁵ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 485

⁸⁵⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy (1911)*, pp. 483-485

LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... 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 in their hearts*; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”⁸⁵⁷ When this is completely fulfilled, then the people of God, who have been sealed, will have the character of Jesus perfectly reproduced in them. They will try to recall their sins, but will not be able to. This can only happen once probation closes, for it is only then that every case will have been finally decided. Only then will the people of God be called holy.

This great truth is further enlarged and understood by the rite of circumcision. E.J Waggoner in his book, *The Everlasting Covenant*, explains the meaning of circumcision. “In Gen. xvii. II we are told that circumcision was given as the sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham. But in Rom. iv. II we are told that it was given him as a *seal of the righteousness which he had by faith*. In other words it was the *assurance and seal of the forgiveness of sins through the righteousness of Christ*. Therefore we know that the covenant, of which circumcision was the seal, was a *covenant of righteousness by faith*; that all the blessings promised in it are on the basis of righteousness through Jesus Christ. This again shows us that the covenant made with Abraham was the Gospel and that only.”⁸⁵⁸

By reintroducing the rite of circumcision after crossing the Jordan, God is trying to show us that only those who are living the righteousness by faith message can have the assurance that their sins are forgiven once probation closes. Describing those who were living during the time of trouble, Ellen White writes, “Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their

⁸⁵⁷ Jeremiah 31:31, 33

⁸⁵⁸ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Ever Lasting Covenant*, Chapter 6, “The Covenant Sealed”, p. 87

unworthiness, *they have no concealed wrongs to reveal*. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and *have been blotted out*, and *they cannot bring them to remembrance*.⁸⁵⁹

This message is repeated a third time when the children of Israel were told that the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from them. Waggoner explains that this represented their sin. “‘Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.’ Sin was ‘the reproach of Egypt,’ *and it was this that was rolled away from the children of Israel*; for the true circumcision of the heart, which alone is all that God counts as circumcision, is ‘the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.’”⁸⁶⁰

There is only one time in history when the reproach of our sins will be rolled away. It will be the same time when the new covenant—righteousness by faith, which requires God’s law written in our hearts and obeyed through faith—is completely fulfilled in us. It will be the time when the people of God will not remember their sins and they will be called holy. There is only one time when this will happen, and that is once probation has closed. “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: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.’ Revelation 22:11, 12.”⁸⁶¹

This is why the rite of circumcision was permitted only after they had crossed the Jordan which is a parallel of the close of probation. Only then are the people of God declared holy and righteous and will remain holy and righteous for eternity.

THE TIME OF TROUBLE

“When the tidings that God had stayed the waters of Jordan before the children of Israel, reached the kings of the Amorites

⁸⁵⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 620

⁸⁶⁰ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Ever Lasting Covenant*, Chapter 6, “The Covenant Sealed”, p. 373

⁸⁶¹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 490

and of the Canaanites, their hearts melted with fear. The Hebrews had already slain the five kings of Midian, the powerful Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og of Bashan, and now the passage over the swollen and impetuous Jordan filled all the surrounding nations with terror. To the Canaanites, to all Israel, and to Joshua himself, unmistakable evidence had been given that the living God, the King of heaven and earth, was among His people, *and that He would not fail them nor forsake them.*⁸⁶²

When we understand the crossing of the Jordan represents the close of probation, this quote takes on a whole new meaning. In the time of trouble God's people will not be forsaken. Says the Psalmist, "For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD."⁸⁶³ "Poverty is coming upon this world, and there will be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. There will be wars and rumors of wars, and the faces of men will gather paleness. You may have to suffer distress, you may go hungry sometimes; *but God will not forsake you in your suffering.* He will test your faith. We are not to live to please ourselves. We are here to manifest Christ to the world, to represent him and his power to mankind."⁸⁶⁴

"Heathen nations had reproached the Lord and His people because the Hebrews had failed to take possession of Canaan, as they expected, soon after leaving Egypt. Their enemies had triumphed because Israel had wandered so long in the wilderness, and they had mockingly declared that the God of the Hebrews was not able to bring them into the Promised Land. The Lord had now signally manifested His power and favor in opening the Jordan before *His people, and their enemies could no longer reproach them.*"⁸⁶⁵

For over one hundred and twenty years since 1888, the Seventh-day Adventist church has suffered reproach. We have claimed to be the remnant church with a last day message, but

⁸⁶² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 485

⁸⁶³ Psalm 27:5-6

⁸⁶⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, September 3, 1895, par. 2

⁸⁶⁵ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 486

that message has had little effect on the world. When we teach there will soon be a Sunday law, those in the world and other churches laugh at us and say we have been predicting this for over a hundred years. In 1888 this was no laughing matter, for Sunday laws were then being urged upon the people. In 1890 Ellen White wrote, "The reproach of Christ is upon us, His people. The gospel of Christ and His love and Him crucified was a stumbling block to the Jews, and it has been evidenced that it is a stumbling block to many who claim to believe present truth. They are forever coming against the Rock of offense. 'Man has been placed where God should be,' are the words that have been spoken to me again and again. Christ has made one sufficient sacrifice, and has become the only Mediator and sole Priest between God and man. Let every man stand out of the way, and occupy his own place as wearing Christ's yoke."⁸⁶⁶

God's people may now be suffering reproach for the sins they have committed, just as ancient Israel suffered reproach until the day they passed over the Jordan. But God will take away our reproach. "The work is soon to close. The members of the church militant who have proved faithful *will become the church triumphant.*"⁸⁶⁷

"The Hebrews had entered Canaan, *but they had not subdued it*; and to human appearance the struggle to gain possession of the land *must be long and difficult*. It was inhabited by a powerful race, who stood ready to oppose the invasion of their territory. The various tribes were bound together by the fear of a common danger. Their horses and iron battle chariots, their knowledge of the country, and their training in war, would give them great advantage. Furthermore, the country was guarded by fortresses—'cities great and fenced up to heaven.' Deuteronomy 9:1. Only in the assurance of a strength *not their own* could the Israelites hope for success in the *impending conflict.*"⁸⁶⁸

"One of the strongest fortresses in the land—the large and wealthy city of Jericho—lay just before them, but a little distance from their camp at Gilgal. On the border of a fertile plain abounding with the rich and varied productions of the tropics, its

⁸⁶⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 842

⁸⁶⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, Oct. 12, 1905, par. 22

⁸⁶⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 487

palaces and temples the abode of luxury and vice, *this proud city*, behind its massive battlements, offered *defiance to the God of Israel*. Jericho was one of the principal seats of idol worship, being especially devoted to Ashtaroth, the goddess of the moon. Here *centered all that was vilest and most degrading in the religion of the Canaanites*. The people of Israel, in whose minds were fresh the fearful results of their sin at Beth-peor, could look upon this heathen city only with disgust and horror.”⁸⁶⁹

Not only was Jericho one of the principle seats of idol worship, but it was also the key to possessing the Promised Land. “A few miles beyond the river, just opposite the place where the Israelites were encamped, was the large and strongly fortified city of Jericho. *This city was virtually the key to the whole country*, and it would present a formidable obstacle to the success of Israel.”⁸⁷⁰ Since it was the key to possessing the Promised Land, it would only stand to reason that once the children of Israel conquered Jericho, they would essentially have taken possession of the land.

When Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, He said something which is highly significant. “And Jesus answering said, A certain man went *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.”⁸⁷¹ Jerusalem represented God’s holy city. “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O *Jerusalem, the holy city*: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.”⁸⁷² On the other hand, Jericho represents Satan’s city. It was one of the principle seats of idol worship. It represents Babylon today. The second angels message says, “And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, *that great city*, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”⁸⁷³ In *Signs of the Times*, July 15, 1840, David Cambell writes, “Before the Christian church can expect to enter upon her Canaan of rest, the *walls of the great Jericho, of Satan’s empire must be thrown down*.”⁸⁷⁴ Jericho is the type of

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 487

⁸⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 482

⁸⁷¹ Luke 10:30

⁸⁷² Isaiah 52:1

⁸⁷³ Revelation 14:8

⁸⁷⁴ David Cambell, *Signs of the Times (Hiimes)*, July 15, 1840, p. 60

Babylon the great. It stands in the way of God's people, and until it is conquered, the people of God cannot enter into their rest.

Interestingly, in order to travel to Jericho, one has to turn their back on God and go downward.

THE JUBILEE

The time had come for the destruction of Jericho and to take possession of the land. Joshua had been instructed, "And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And *seven* priests shall bear before the ark *seven* trumpets of rams' horns: and the *seventh* day ye shall compass the city *seven* times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the *people shall ascend up every man straight before him.*"⁸⁷⁵

"In obedience to the divine command Joshua marshaled the armies of Israel. *No assault was to be made.* They were simply to make the circuit of the city, bearing the ark of God and blowing upon trumpets."⁸⁷⁶ The trumpets of ram's horn here do not sound an alarm of war. Their sounding has a different meaning. The Hebrew word is primarily used for the jubilee. Again in *Signs of the Times*, July 15, 1840, Cambell writes, "Scott says the words translated 'ram's' horn, may be rendered trumpets of jubilees, that is, such as were blown in the year of jubilee. The entering of Israel into the Promised Land was a jubilee to them. *Instead of the dreadful trumpet of war*, they were commanded to sound the trumpet of joy as already conquerers."⁸⁷⁷

The jubilee was a very special time for the children of Israel. "After 'seven sabbaths of years,' 'seven times seven years,' came that *great year of release—the jubilee.*" Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound . . . throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the

⁸⁷⁵ Joshua 6:2-5

⁸⁷⁶ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 488

⁸⁷⁷ David Cambell, *Signs of the Times (Hiimes)*, July 15, 1840, p. 60

land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.' Leviticus 25:9, 10.⁸⁷⁸

The jubilee trumpets sound in the Day of Atonement. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land."⁸⁷⁹ Stephen Haskell notes that this happened at the end of the day of atonement. "In the type, the jubilee was ushered in at the *close of the Day of Atonement*. In like manner we understand that the antitypical jubilee will follow the antitypical Day of Atonement."⁸⁸⁰ This is exactly what the history of Israel reveals to us. After they had crossed the Jordan, which represented the close of probation and the end of the Day of Atonement, the next event to take place was the blowing of the jubilee trumpets.

For six days the host of Israel marched once around the great city. "And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall *not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth*, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout."⁸⁸¹ Before probation had closed, God's people gave the loud cry, but now they remain silent. There is no longer a message to give. Clothed in the armor of Christ's righteousness they eagerly await the return of Jesus.

"The seventh day came, and with the first dawn of light, Joshua marshaled the armies of the Lord. Now they were directed to march seven times around Jericho, and at a *mighty peal from the trumpets* to shout with a loud voice, for God had given them the city. The vast army marched solemnly around the devoted walls. All was silent, save the measured tread of many feet, and the occasional sound of the trumpet, breaking the stillness of the early morning. The massive walls of solid stone seemed to defy the siege of men. The watchers on the walls looked on with rising fear, as, the first circuit ended, there followed a second, then a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth. What could be the object of these mysterious movements? What *mighty event was impending*? They had not long to wait. As the seventh circuit was completed, the

⁸⁷⁸ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 533

⁸⁷⁹ Leviticus 25:9

⁸⁸⁰ Steven N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 255

⁸⁸¹ Joshua 6:10

long procession paused, The trumpets, which for an interval had been silent, *now broke forth in a blast that shook the very earth*. The walls of solid stone, with their massive towers and battlements, tottered and heaved from their foundations, and with a crash fell in ruin to the earth. The inhabitants of Jericho were *paralyzed with terror*, and the hosts of Israel marched in and took possession of the city.”⁸⁸²

It wasn't until the host of Israel had marched seven times around the city on the seventh day that God wrought victory for them. This corresponds with the jubilee. The Israelites were to count seven times seven and then the fiftieth was the jubilee. It actually started at the end of the forty-ninth year.

“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... 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. *Then commenced the jubilee*, when the land should rest... Soon appeared the great white cloud. It looked more lovely than ever before. On it sat the Son of man.”⁸⁸³

“Soon I heard the *voice of God, which shook the heavens and the earth*. There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down on every side. I then heard a *triumphant shout of victory*, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon the company, who, a short time before, were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked! All marks of care and weariness were gone, and health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their enemies, the heathen around them, fell like dead men; they could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them, until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. And the graves were opened, and the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying, ‘Victory over death and the grave’; and together with the living saints they were caught up to meet their

⁸⁸² Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 491

⁸⁸³ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 34-35

Lord in the air, while rich, musical shouts of glory and victory were upon every immortal tongue.”⁸⁸⁴

What an event that will be. You will remember that Joshua was instructed that the people were to shout, “and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the *people shall ascend up every man straight before him*.”⁸⁸⁵ When Jesus returns, then this will be fulfilled. “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”⁸⁸⁶

Chapter Summary

1. Only those who walk by faith will be able to pass through the waters of the Jordan.
2. The priests bearing the ark of the covenant first entered the Jordan. It is a symbol of God’s people who are partakers of the divine nature and have God’s law written in their hearts and trust in the mercy of God.
3. The crossing of the Jordan represented the close of the investigative judgment—the end of human probation, just as the Red Sea crossing represented the beginning of the investigative judgment.
4. The Israelites set up twelve stones to commemorate their entrance into the Promised Land. These twelve stones represented the 144,000 and the fulfillment of the covenant once probation has closed.
5. The city of Jericho was the key to possessing the Promised Land. Its modern-day counterpart is Babylon the Great.
6. The children of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days while blowing the jubilee trumpets. On the seventh day they marched around it seven times. A jubilee is seven times seven and represented a time of liberty.
7. At the end of the seventh circuit around Jericho, the jubilee trumpets sounded and the children of Israel shouted. This represents the time when the voice of God is heard and His people are delivered from the wicked and Jesus returns.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 272.3

⁸⁸⁵ Joshua 6:2-5

⁸⁸⁶ 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Epilogue

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

—1 Corinthians 10:11

Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land was longer than anyone had anticipated. If God had told them before they left Egypt that most of them would die in the wilderness, probably no one would have left Egypt. They would have been content to remain as slaves.

Despite the delay, God's promise was fulfilled. Despite the constant lack of faith, rebellion and apostasy, the people God brought out of Egypt finally gained the victory and took possession of the promise that was ever before them.

Three times God brought His people to the very borders of the Promised Land, but each time they lacked the faith to enter. It was only when God removed those who did not walk by faith that the Israelites were prepared to move forward under God's guidance.

The history of Israel in the wilderness provides us with many valuable lessons. We can read of their experience and wonder in amazement how they could have continually failed to trust in God, but are we any different? Are our own lives a reflection of their unbelief?

Yes, there are many lessons for us as individuals, but the history of Israel in the wilderness is also a parallel or type of God's last day remnant—the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Like ancient Israel, God's Church has proven to be unfaithful, rebellious and as much as it is hard to say, it has fallen into apostasy—right on the very borders of the heavenly Canaan. The history of Israel shows that even when the devil succeeded in leading God's people into apostasy, God overruled the situation and continued to lead His people. The same will be true with God's last day Church. It will one day become the Church triumphant, just as Israel took possession of the Promised Land.

According to the type, there is coming a time when God is going to cleanse His church and He will take the reins into His own hands. That will be an incredibly trying time for the people of God, just as it was for Israel when it appeared as though the whole nation had joined themselves to Baal-peor. That time cannot be far away. We have wandered in our wilderness experience for over one hundred and twenty years since God sent the message of righteousness by faith to His people in 1888.

When the author first set out to write about the wilderness wanderings of Israel between their departure from Egypt into the Promised Land, surprisingly, the message of righteousness by faith was not even thought of. But through God's leading, this great and essential truth was revealed and has pervaded this book. It is the author's sincere desire that all who have read this book have received the same blessings he has received in preparing it. Jesus is the One who led ancient Israel in the cloud, and He is the One who will lead us now onto victory. As we look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, trusting in His righteousness for both forgiveness and power to obey, we will be victorious. We will receive the seal of God and the latter rain and be prepared to stand for Jesus in the last great conflict.

It is the author's prayer that God's people will put on the righteousness of Christ, and thus prepare their lives for our soon coming King and Saviour.

— The End —

Appendix A

Contemporary Music

“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”

—Psalm 29:2

When the children of Israel were on the borders of the Promised Land, preparing to enter, they were enticed to worship Baal-peor. You will recall from chapter thirteen that one of the means Satan used to allure the Israelites onto forbidden ground—and their eventual downfall—was the use of music. Today he is using the same methods to try and destroy the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The sentiments of many in the Church is that if *they* like it then God will accept it. Have you ever heard it said that we cannot judge people’s choice of music because it is culturally conditioned? This is what the previous General Conference president said on *Let’s Talk*:

“Q: I’m a worship leader. With music and worship styles still being quite a controversy within the church, what are your thoughts on how the Adventist Church is dealing with this?”

“PAULSEN: This is a very huge question *because music is also culturally conditioned*. When I first served in Africa 40 years ago, we had drums in church for worship. This would have been considered terrible in some parts of the world, but in Africa it was the natural thing, a good thing to do. Culturally acceptable. We

have to recognize that there is no simple answer to this issue.

“I think there is some music that doesn’t belong in worship life. I don’t care where you are; some music just simply doesn’t belong. But having said that, at the same time those of us who are accustomed to classical music *have to recognize that there is a large number of our members, particularly the younger generation, who are able to live meaningfully and in a very devout manner, and they express worship and witness through music that is more modern.* In Melbourne this past week when we attended [worship], the music that I heard was to a large extent very beautiful, and yet it had a modern touch to it.”⁸⁸⁷

Is this how we should approach the issue of music? Can we conclude that because one culture enjoys a particular style of music, God approves of it? Of course not. This kind of reasoning is wrong and can be proven by looking at other issues which are more directly condemned in the Bible. For example, in some cultures around the world, men have more than one wife. Do we conclude then, that because that is part of their culture, God will approve of it? Of course not. What about all the cultures that eat unclean meats. Do we conclude the Bible is outdated because many cultures enjoy eating unclean foods? No, we take the initiative to teach people God does not approve of these things. Why then should it be any different with music? Just as Satan has led cultures to have more than one wife and to eat unclean foods, so he has led cultures around the world to indulge in the wrong type of music.

Despite what many believe, music can be abused and used for the wrong purpose. “*Music is the idol which many professed Sabbath-keeping Christians worship.* Satan has no objection to music, if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God, and engage the time which should be devoted to His service. He works through the means which will exert the strongest influence to hold the largest numbers in a pleasing infatuation, while they are paralyzed by his power. When turned to good account, music is a blessing, *but it is often made one of Satan’s most attractive agencies to ensnare souls.* When abused, it

⁸⁸⁷ Jan Paulsen, *Adventist Review*, Let’s Talk. <http://adventistreview.org/article.php?id=379>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly.”⁸⁸⁸

On September 25, 1900, Stephen N. Haskell wrote to Ellen White about a camp meeting he attended in Indiana. He said, “There is a great power that goes with the movement [Holy Flesh] that is on foot there. *It would almost bring anybody within its scope*, if they are at all conscientious, and sit and listen with the least degree of favor; *because of the music that is brought to play in the ceremony*. They have an organ, one bass viol, three fiddles, two flutes, three tambourines, three horns, and a big bass drum, and perhaps other instruments which I have not mentioned. They are as much trained in their musical line as any Salvation Army choir that you ever heard. In fact, *their revival effort is simply a complete copy of the Salvation Army method*, and when they get on a high key, you cannot hear a word from the congregation in their singing, nor hear anything, unless it be shrieks of those who are half insane. After an appeal to come forward for prayers, a few of the leading ones would always come forward, to lead others to come; and then they would begin to play on the musical instruments, until you could not hear yourself think; and under the excitement of this strain, they get a large proportion of the congregation forward over and over again.”⁸⁸⁹

Describing the same event, Haskell’s wife wrote, “We have a big drum, two tambourines, a big bass fiddle, two small fiddles, a flute and two comets, and an organ and a few voices. They have ‘Garden of Spices’ as the songbook and *play dance tunes to sacred words*. They have never used our own hymn books, except when Elders Breed or Haskell speak, then they open and close with a hymn from our book, but all the other songs are from the other book. They shout Amens, and ‘Praise the Lord,’ ‘Glory to God,’ just like a Salvation Army service. It is distressing to one’s soul. The doctrines preached correspond to the rest. ‘The poor sheep are truly confused.’”⁸⁹⁰

The music used in that camp meeting was designed to create a false sense of excitement and lead the worshippers to believe the Holy Spirit was moving upon the people. But the Holy Spirit will

⁸⁸⁸ Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, p. 295

⁸⁸⁹ S. N. Haskell report to E. G. White, September 25, 1900. <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/music.html>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁸⁹⁰ Mrs. S. N. Haskell report to Sara McEnterfer, September 12, 1900. <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/music.html>. Retrieved March 3, 2010

never manifest Himself in such false revivals. In responding to Haskell, Ellen White wrote the following prediction and warning.

“It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord will accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, *the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation.* Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. *There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing.* The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. *And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.*”

“The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, *in such a bedlam of noise.* This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit’s working.”⁸⁹¹

To this, Mrs. White adds, “The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such a confusion of noise and multitude of sounds as passed before me last January. Satan works amid the din and confusion of such music, which, properly conducted, would be a praise and glory to God. *He makes its effect like the poison sting of the serpent.*”

“*Those things which have been in the past will be in the future.* Satan will *make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.* God calls upon His people, who have the light before them in the Word and in the Testimonies, to read and consider, and to take heed. Clear and definite instruction has been given in order that all may understand. But the itching desire to originate something new results in strange doctrines, and largely destroys the influence of those who would be a power for good if they held firm the beginning of their confidence in the truth the Lord had given

⁸⁹¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 36

them.”⁸⁹²

Just as the Israelites were beguiled by the music on the borders of the Promised Land, so Ellen White predicted music would again play an important part in God’s last day church into apostasy. We must realize that music is not neutral and reject that which does not meet with God’s approval.

MODERN SONGS REPLACING HYMNS

Bill Knott, writing in the *Adventist Review*, says, “In Adventist churches large and small across North America, worship songs are rapidly replacing traditional hymns in public worship. *Inspired by the perceived success of large evangelical and charismatic congregations* in attracting Baby Boomers and Gen Xers, hundreds of Adventist congregations now offer up the simple, repetitive phrases of contemporary worship songs as their corporate praise to God. This change is defended with rationales that run the gamut from popularity to posture: ‘My people like these new songs better,’ pastors tell me confidently, ‘and besides, it’s so much better to have them looking up at a screen instead of burying their heads in some old hymnbook.’”⁸⁹³

In the *Adventist Review*, Kimberly Luste Maran writes an article entitled *Praise Music and Moses*, where she describes two worship services she attended. One she identifies as being the wrong kind of worship, while the other was acceptable. “The deep tones of the bass guitar reverberated through the sanctuary. Each strum was punctuated by a pulse of percussion as the drummer beat out the song’s rhythm. More than half of the congregation had their hands raised toward the slanted wooden ceiling. The other half clapped in time with the music. All sang with passion and gusto about Jesus’ love.

“I was visiting what has been dubbed a ‘praise service.’ More accustomed to a service incorporating elements such as the *solemn singing of the doxology*, I nonetheless was enjoying myself. The people were friendly. They seemed sincerely glad to see one another and church guests--evidenced by their warm hugs and handshakes and big, bright smiles. The church was crammed with

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 37

⁸⁹³ Bill Knott, *Before We Sing the Last Hymn, Adventist Review Online Edition*. www.adventistreview.org/2002-1516/story4-1.html. Retrieved March 3, 2010

members of all ages and races. The energy surging around the packed pews was amazing. *I could feel God's presence. We were making a joyful noise unto the Lord, and I truly felt showered by blessings.*

“But as the song service continued, the worship spirit shifted. With each stanza the singing seemed to shrink as the musical accompaniment grew louder. Then, instead of lyrics flashing on the big screen mounted above the baptismal, the words ‘musical interlude’ appeared. The four choristers parted so the congregation could see the band. The musicians, with fevered verve, started to play so loudly I discreetly put my fingers to the sides of my head, under my hair, to cover my ears. This brings raising the roof to a new level, I thought as I was reminded of a friend's rock concert I had been to in college. As ‘drum solo’ materialized on the screen *the spirit of holiness totally evaporated.* What filled its place was an excited party atmosphere with self-glorification prominent. I was not only disappointed; I was unnerved.”⁸⁹⁴

The author does not mention if this was an Adventist *praise service*, but clearly the same kind of elements can be seen in it as Ellen White predicted. In the next section of her article, she writes of another *praise service* but this time it had a deep spiritual effect on her:

“In 2000, at the University of California at Berkeley, I participated in another praise service. But this one was vastly different. *Yes, the musicians jammed on their instruments as the sun set. Yes, the crowd stood as they sang, and clapped in time as words and music meshed. Yes, the young adults gathered in the student center were friendly, even joining hands during the emotive finale. But somehow, the line between worshipping God with energetic praise and exaltation--the opening of hearts to Jesus and the dawning comprehension of both the unworthiness of self and the awesomeness of salvation's gift--and self-promotional (somewhat mindless) cavorting was never crossed.*

“The spotlight remained on God and His amazing love. Instead of feeling cheated, I felt filled with awe, humbleness, and gratitude. *The music was still fairly head-splitting,* but as I was drawn into the fold, linking hands with others, I thought, Jesus is

⁸⁹⁴ Kimberly Luste Maran, *Adventist Review Online Edition*, www.adventistreview.org/2004-1538/story4.html. Retrieved March 3, 2010

truly in this place. As a Pacific breeze gently blew through the tall veranda doors surrounding the ballroom on three sides, we shouted to the Lord, telling Him that there was none other like Him. Nothing could compare to Jesus and His mighty love.”⁸⁹⁵

The author then concludes that so long as our worship services are Christ-centered, it doesn’t really matter what music we use. This is bad advice. It is like saying, it doesn’t matter what you eat, or what day you worship God on, so long as you do it to God’s glory and it is Christ-centered. No it is not. God has standards, and if we disregard them, we will end up like ancient Israel, engrossed in Baal worship.

The author then concludes her article with a rather interesting statement. “Regardless of what the song is--or how it’s sung--we need to keep the focus on Jesus. Rather than crossing that line here on earth, I pray that we all stay close to Christ and cross our own modern-day Jordan River into eternity.”⁸⁹⁶ Sadly, those who participated in the wrong kind of music on the banks of the Jordan, didn’t make it into the Promised Land. They were led to worship Baal and lost their lives. It will be the same today. The purpose of modern, contemporary music is to lead God’s people onto Satan’s ground.

In another *Adventist Review* article, David A. Pendleton draws a conclusion that is reminiscent of the false logic we are taught regarding worship styles. He writes, “Countless Christians believe that there is only one true way to worship, that there is a right way and a wrong way. Seventh-day Adventists know (or should know) that this is a mistake. With 13 million members spanning hundreds of countries around the world, we recognize that the Lord created us with our differences.

“God relishes the vast variety of creation and is eager to accept our worship, whether with *pipe organs and candles* or *tambourines and drums*; whether in formal settings with coats and ties and King James English responsive readings, or in informal settings with contemporary drama and aloha shirts. Everything offered up to God in a spirit of genuine worship, authentic praise, and sincere thanksgiving is received with divine favor. The worship of a

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

sincere believer is music to God's ears."⁸⁹⁷ This is the equivalent to saying that if I choose to worship and praise God on Sunday, then God will accept it. This is a lie of the devil. One has to wonder what he meant by *pipe organs and candles*? What church uses these in their worship services?

MUSIC AND CHURCH GROWTH

One of the reasons why a large part of the Adventist Church has been beguiled by contemporary music is its effect on church growth. We have been convinced that this is the only way to grow a church because other Protestant churches have been successful using contemporary music. In an article that discusses ways to increase church growth, John A. Solomon writes in *Ministry* the following:

“The question remains: can contemporary worship help a church grow? Robert L. Bast, who specializes in evangelism and congregational growth, says: ‘During the last few years, I have visited a number of the churches in the country which are reaching large groups of Baby Boomers. I found more differences between them than I expected, but I was impressed by one thing all of them had in common. They all make extensive use of contemporary music.’ This is a powerful statement! Bast argues that Baby Boomers have been heavily influenced by music with a beat.”⁸⁹⁸

Further in his article, Solomon writes, “Lee Stroebel, in his book *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary*, explains that one of the first components that attract the unchurched to attend church the first time is a curiosity about the music. He says: ‘I can tell you from personal experience that when their [the unchurched] favorite style of music is wed to Christian lyrics, the combination can have a strong impact on furthering their spiritual journey.’”⁸⁹⁹

If we have to revert to a worldly style of music to attract people to church and keep them there, then we are attracting the wrong people. The only attraction that God approves is the preaching

⁸⁹⁷ David A. Pendleton, *Adventist Review Online Edition*. www.adventistreview.org/2003-1533/story2.html. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁸⁹⁸ John A. Solomon, *Ministry*, February 2000, p. 17. www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/2000/MIN2000-02.pdf. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19

and practicing of the truth. The early church adopted pagan ideas to attract the pagans and this resulted in a corrupt church. If we use the same principle today, the result will be the same.

BIBLE AND SPIRIT OF PROPHECY COUNSEL REGARDING MUSIC

God has given us clear instruction as to what kind of music He likes. Remember, our worship of God should not be based on what we like, but what God knows is best.

To begin with, the Bible approves the use of hymns or songs of praise. “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”⁹⁰⁰ You will recall this was after the communion service in the upper room, before Jesus had been apprehended. The word used here means to sing a religious song. In Ephesians, Paul says, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”⁹⁰¹ Here Paul links the use of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs together, but we are not told what the style of these hymns and spiritual songs should be. In Colossians, Paul again writes, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”⁹⁰² In this verse, Paul introduces the idea that the hymns we sing should be meaningful so as to teach and admonish people. Many of the praise songs sung in contemporary church services do not follow this instruction. Bill Knott brings this out in his *Adventist Review* article “*Before We Sing the Last Hymn*”:

“What pains me more is the shallowness of so many song lyrics, as though we could think of but one small thing to say about our God when we come to stand and sing His greatness, and that to a usually forgettable melody. ‘The joy of the Lord is my strength’ is, thoughtfully considered, a powerful affirmation of God’s goodness. But singing that phrase four times in a row, with no advancement or amplification of thought, and to a bouncing little ditty of a tune, somehow cheapens what should be a special solace to believers. If God, in fact, deserves our best, our most

⁹⁰⁰ Matthew 26:30

⁹⁰¹ Ephesians 5:19

⁹⁰² Colossians 3:16

creative praise, why should we settle for a comfortable mediocrity of expression when addressing Him? Why give tin when we could give gold?

“The hymns of the Christian church are not, as some critics claim, a large and antiquated corpus of obscure expressions about God. They have survived to the present day precisely because they convey meaning—most often, deeply powerful meaning—in creative and memorable ways. The careful metrical and rhyme patterns, the progression of thought from one line to the next and from one stanza to the next, the doctrinal affirmations of Biblical truth they contain—all rightly represent generations of believers who reveled in the inexhaustible riches of God. Because the deity they worshipped was always ‘higher than the highest human thought,’ poets and lyricists strove to find new and ever finer language with which to praise Him.”⁹⁰³

In the words of Ellen White, we find even clearer counsel regarding the use of music that God approves. “Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voice can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued.”⁹⁰⁴ In another statement she counsels us that our music should be conducted with solemnity and awe. “The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God’s instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted *with solemnity and awe*, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.”⁹⁰⁵ One can hardly say that contemporary music creates an atmosphere of solemnity and awe. Again Ellen White writes, “Singing is just as much the worship of God in a religious meeting as speaking, and any oddity or peculiarity cultivated attracts the attention of the people and destroys *the serious, solemn impression which should be the result of sacred music*. Anything strange and eccentric in singing detracts from the seriousness and sacredness of religious service.”⁹⁰⁶

Finally, Ellen White reveals the difference between sacred and

⁹⁰³ Bill Knott, *Before We Sing the Last Hymn*, *Adventist Review Online Edition*. www.adventistreview.org/2002-1516/story4-1.html. Retrieved March 3, 2010

⁹⁰⁴ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 508

⁹⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 492

⁹⁰⁶ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 333

unholy music. “The art of sacred melody was diligently cultivated. *No frivolous waltz was heard, nor flippant song that should extol man and divert the attention from God; but sacred, solemn psalms of praise to the Creator, exalting His name and recounting His wondrous works. Thus music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which was pure and noble and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and gratitude to God.*”⁹⁰⁷

God has provided us enough information to make right decisions regarding the music we listen to and use to praise Him with. Will we continue to be allured by the music of the world that promises church growth, or will we take a firm stand on right principles and honor God with sacred music?

⁹⁰⁷ Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 97

Appendix B

Rejecting the Spirit of Prophecy

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

—Revelation 12:17

In chapter thirteen we looked at the importance of the Spirit of Prophecy and noticed the last deception of Satan would be to make of no effect Ellen White’s writings. This would indicate her writings would not be rejected outrightly, but a shadow would be cast on them to cause people to doubt their relevance in the Church.

SUPPOSED ERRORS IN THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

One of the most successful ways the Spirit of Prophecy has been made of no effect is the push in recent years to prove it contains errors. Richard W. Coffen, writing in *Ministry*, says, “A little over a decade ago Adventist scholars pointed out historical errors in the writings, particularly in *The Great Controversy*, despite the earlier revisions.

“Historical documents clearly show that the Waldenses did not exist for a thousand years as Ellen White asserted.....

Furthermore, contrary to her claim, there is no historical record of Waldensian Sabbath keeping;... In some instances we find chronological glitches in her accounts..... Sometimes we may discover a problem in Mrs. White's interpretation of a *biblical* passage. For example, in *Patriarchs and Prophets* and *The Great Controversy* she understands the word after in 2 Thessalonians 2:9 to refer to timing 'Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan.' According to these two books, this verse means that Jesus will return subsequent to the time in which Satan works with great power. This may well be the case in the last days, but that is not what Paul intended. The term he used was not a preposition of time but a preposition indicating mode. The idea is that someone would arrive whose *modus operandi* would be consistent with that of Satan. So the individual who was coming was not Christ but an impostor.

"Readers sometimes find a few cases of *scientific* error in Mrs. White's books. For instance, her explanation of the origin of volcanoes—the burning of underground coal and oil mixed with lime and water" seems flawed.

"There are also indications of *theological* lapses in her writings... she reported: 'I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: "Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus."'"⁹⁰⁸

Coffen continues, "We can detect certain cultural conditioning in some issues she addressed. She saw nineteenth century politics as being fraught with eschatological and cosmological overtones (for instance, the Sunday laws being enforced at that time and the attempt to legislate a national Sunday law). Her suggestion that we should see in Revelation 13 aspects of the United States fulfilling a special role in an area that was uninhabited—a nation arising from the 'land' rather than from the 'sea'—seems to echo the concept of Manifest Destiny held by many Americans of the time. She was highly involved in the temperance movement sweeping America. The 'standards' of Christian conduct—no card

⁹⁰⁸ Richard W. Coffen, "Thy Word is a light unto my feet - part 2", *Ministry*, December 2000, p. 20, 21. www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/2000/MIN2000-02.pdf. Retrieved March 10, 2010. At the time of writing, Richard Coffen was vice president of editorial services at the Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, Maryland.

playing, no dancing, no attending the theater paralleled that of the Methodism she left. Even though she indicated definite independence in her development of health reform, studies have shown that some of her ideas conformed nearly word-for-word with that written by others of her time.⁹⁰⁹

Isn't this the kind of attack Ellen White predicted Satan would make on her writings? How many of our pastors and laymen read *Ministry* magazine and would conclude that Ellen White's writings can no longer be trusted? Unfortunately, addressing the issues raised by Coffen are not in the scope of this book, but there are many good books that can provide answers.⁹¹⁰

ELLEN WHITE'S APOCALYPTIC VIEWS NOT BASED ONLY ON VISIONS

In another attack on the Spirit of Prophecy, Graeme Bradford writes in his book, *More Than a Prophet*, "It is beyond the scope of this chapter to record comprehensively the work of all Seventh-day Adventists historians as they revised the early history of Seventh-day Adventism. For those who wish a concise summary I have included in appendix A, a paper by Arthur Patrick. Some significant work was done by Jonathan Butler, associate professor of church history at Loma Linda University who produced an important paper 'The World of Ellen G. White and the End of the World' published in *Spectrum*. Butler suggests that *Ellen White's understanding of Bible prophecy about last day events was a reflection of her knowledge of religious currents in nineteenth century America*. Implicit, but not explicit, in his article was the conclusion that *Ellen White's apocalyptic views were not based only on visions and need to be revised by contemporary Adventists*. The reader who wishes to pursue this subject further should read the articles by

⁹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20

⁹¹⁰ *A Prophet Among You*, by T. Housel Jemison. <http://www.whiteestate.org/books/pay/PAYTOC.HTML>
Ellen G. White and Her Critics, by Francis D. Nichol. <http://www.whiteestate.org/books/egwhc/egwhctoc.html>
Messenger of the Lord, by Herbert E. Douglass. <http://www.whiteestate.org/books/mol/TOC.html>
Issues & Answers Regarding Inspiration and the Life and Work of Ellen G. White. <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/issues.asp>

Benjamin McArthur in *Spectrum*.⁹¹¹

CHURCH LEADERS REASSESS ELLEN WHITE

In February 2004, a special meeting was held at Avondale College, NSW, Australia, to assess the so-called challenges of Ellen White. During that month, an article was published in the Record, the official paper of the South Pacific Division by Nathan Brown, the editor-elect and Bruce Manners, the editor. The article was entitled, “*Church leaders reasses Ellen White.*”

“More than 100 ministers, church educators and administrators met at Avondale College, NSW, from February 2 to 5 [2004] to gain a better understanding of the role and ministry of Ellen White...

“ ‘The purpose of this summit is to inform people of the challenges we have with Ellen White and the development we have in scholarship in Ellen White over the past few decades,’ reports Dr Paul Petersen, field secretary for the South Pacific Division and summit organiser...

“Overseas guest lecturers were Dr Gary Land, an Adventist historian from Andrews University, Dr Jon Paulien the head of the New Testament faculty at Andrews University and Dr James Nix, director of the Ellen G White Estate at the General Conference...

“Dr Land sees the summit as a product of some of the issues that were generated in the 1970s and 1980s. He admits that the church naturally took a defensive stance at the time on something that formed a part of belief and tradition.

“ ‘But now we’ve become much more open to the evidence,’ he says. ‘I think that’s a healthy thing. The problem now is that with videos and books [against Ellen White’s ministry] it’s not always easy to get information out to the church members at the appropriate time, and that is what this summit is trying to do.’

“He’s encouraged by the fact that the church is *talking about the issues* and suggests “there are a lot of people who see real issues and real problems. To hide them or refuse to talk about them is dangerous.

⁹¹¹ Graeme Bradford, Chapter 2, “Adventist historians come of age”, *More Than a Prophet*, p. 198. <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/books/bradford/prophet-22.htm>. Retrieved March 12, 2010

“For example, a number of these issues were raised at the 1919 Bible Conference and it was felt to be too dangerous, so they put them aside. In the past 30 years or so we’ve reaped the result of that decision—a lot of people who left the church and lost their faith as a consequence...”

“The problem isn’t with Ellen White; it’s with the journey the church has taken over the 60 to 70 years following her death,’ comments Dr Lester Devine, director of the Ellen G White Research Centre at Avondale College. ‘In the past 20 years, our thinking has taken us back to where Daniells and Prescott were in 1919.’

“Reflecting on criticism of mistakes in her writing, Dr Graeme Bradford, senior lecturer in the theology faculty at Avondale College, suggests a different approach: ‘Maybe we need to change the focus and ask, *how could a woman write so much on so many subjects and get so little wrong?*’

“Dr Paulien commented on the high standard of scholarship demonstrated by members of Avondale’s theology faculty, who presented at the summit. ‘The Avondale guys have been particularly helpful, providing a good summary of the biblical material,’ he comments. ‘They’ve done an outstanding job and the church should be proud about the standard of work going on here. The people they pulled together and the quality of the presentations has been enlightening...’

“Daniela Schubert, a theology lecturer at Pacific Adventist University (Papua New Guinea), appreciated the openness from both the presenters and the audience. ‘We’ve pretended for far too long that everything is fine,’ she says. ‘There are major problems we need to tackle in our churches. We need to now study how we can help our members.’”⁹¹²

The overtones of the article leads its readers to think that the church leadership are seriously considering real problems with Ellen White. What type of confidence does this instill in its members?

⁹¹² Nathan Brown & Bruce Manners, “Church leaders reassesses Ellen White”, *Record*, February 21, 2004, p. 5. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2004/rec06-04_02_21.pdf. Retrieved March 12, 2010

ELLEN WHITE FOR TODAY

During the same month of February, a four-part interview between Bruce Manners and Dr. Arthur Patrick was also published in the *Record*. These interviews also helped to cast a shadow on the prophetic ministry of Ellen White. As you read these excerpts, consider again the statement of Ellen White concerning the way in which her writings will be rejected:

“Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious--to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.-- Letter 12, 1890.

There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.-- Letter 40, 1890.”¹³

In the first interview, Bruce Manners begins by asking, “As you have researched and listened to the findings of other researchers, how has your appreciation of Ellen White changed?”

“I’ve become more aware of the big picture.” says Arthur Patrick. “One illustration may help to explain that a bit. I used to read Ellen White’s classic volume *The Desire of Ages* to answer a host of questions like: Which Mary is the one in this story? At what point in the ministry of Jesus did this event occur? Now I read *The Desire of Ages* much more for its spiritual significance. Ellen White expresses its theme on page 22: “To know God is to love Him.” The book is 835 pages about falling in love with God as He is revealed in the ministry of Jesus.”¹⁴

What they are trying to say is that it is alright to read Ellen White, so long as you don’t allow her writings to define for us what is truth. What they are really doing is relegating her writings to that of any other author and thus the Testimonies are being

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 48

¹⁴ Bruce Manners with Arthur Patrick, “Ellen White for today—1”, *Record*, Feb 7, 2004. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2004/rec04-04_02_07.pdf. Retrieved March 12, 2010

made of no effect. The devil is happy for us to say we believe in Ellen White for his objective is harder to discern. Those who are making her writings of no effect will still quote them and it will appear as though they still regard her as a prophet.

In the third interview between Bruce Manners and Dr. Arthur Patrick, the thought is introduced that Ellen White made mistakes in her writings. “Are you implying we may not have been doing that effectively, and this could be an important reason why the conflict occurred?”

“Yes. For many Adventists, by the middle of the last century Ellen White’s writings had become an *authoritative, all-inclusive encyclopedia of Adventist faith and practice*. They were using her spiritual gift to deny the role of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Bible and the spiritual gifts of the company of believers. The furore over sources helped us—perhaps we should say, *forced us—to consider anew Ellen White’s role in the church*.

“Can you be specific and give an example?”

“Take that wonderful book, *The Great Controversy*, for instance. Most Adventists took it as authoritative on such matters as history and chronology. From the detailed study of part of the handwritten draft, Don McAdams identified clearly a main source Ellen White used (for instance, the book she consulted as she wrote about John Huss) and the way she followed that source page after page, using its framework and language, even incorporating some of its historical errors and moral exhortations. Of similar importance was Ron Graybill’s study of the way Ellen White used the writings of a well-recognised Adventist author, Uriah Smith. Looking at the abundant evidence it is now clear that *Ellen White was not writing history; she was interpreting it*. That was a far more important task with a much greater significance...

“Has careful study *identified actual mistakes* in material that Ellen White has borrowed?”

“*Many*. But they are in the details, and do not destroy the big picture, the all important interpretation. Let me again reflect the essence of what a careful researcher wrote in his doctoral study early in the 1970s: *Ellen White learned history by ordinary means; the activity of God in history was disclosed to her. The church can, now it has far better access to primary sources and many well-trained historians, correct the detail—even while we learn to better*

appreciate the God-given pattern.”

“So Ellen White’s authority is now understood as being more specific than as the all-knowing authority given her writings a few decades ago?

“Yes. This circumstance has made us more aware of the *essence of her writings*. To quote her grandson Arthur White (as he looked back on the struggle to found Loma Linda): ‘The spirit of prophecy counsels were never given to take the place of initiative, study, faith, or hard work. Rather, the Lord through His servant set before us *guiding principles* and sounded needed cautions—all of which served to guide and guard the church in its many activities’ (quoted in *The Vision Bold*, page 195.) This balanced perception helps us sense our need *to go to the Bible as our ‘rule of faith and practice,’ the very thing that Ellen White so often urged us to do....*”

“So you’re suggesting that Ellen White’s writings have a higher purpose, a more demanding role, than being an *encyclopedia on diet, disease and details of healthful living*.

“Far more demanding, far more significant. Ellen White offers meaning—the reason why God would have us live healthfully. Once we establish the *guiding principles, science can help us with the details* of how to be balanced vegetarians, the amount of sleep we need under precise circumstances in view of our age and related factors, or to figure out the answers to a host of other issues.

“It seems that sort of observation echoes a theme in your book on a century of health care at Sydney Adventist Hospital.

“True. *The hospital would close within a month if it took a literal approach to diagnosing diseases on the basis of Ellen White’s writings*. It survives (and mostly thrives) after a century because it took principles that Ellen White expresses and implemented them in a fast-changing culture, *progressively informed by scientific research*.⁹¹⁵

We must pause for a moment to be reminded that Dr. Arthur Patrick is a very influential person in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His views have far-reaching effects. “Arthur Patrick is a third-generation Seventh-day Adventist whose maternal grandparents and widowed paternal grandmother were deeply

⁹¹⁵ Bruce Manners with Arthur Patrick, “Ellen White for today—3”, *Record*, Feb 21, 2004. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2004/rec06-04_02_21.pdf. Retrieved March 12, 2010

influenced by Ellen White during her nine years in Australia. He is a graduate of five institutions: Avondale College (BA in Theology, 1957), the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary (MA and MDiv, 1972), Christian Theological Seminary (DMin, 1973), University of New England (MLitt, 1984), and University of Newcastle (PhD, 1992). His service for the church has embraced pastoral ministry and evangelism in New Zealand, Illinois, and Australia, as well as Religion teaching and academic administration at Avondale College. From 1976-1983 he was director of the Ellen G. White/SDA Research Center for the South Pacific Division; from 1992-96 he was senior chaplain at Sydney Adventist Hospital; and for the next two academic years Patrick was a visiting associate professor (Church History and Pastoral Ministry) at La Sierra University, Riverside, California.

“Since his official retirement (1998), Patrick has served variously as chair of the Professional Standards Committee for the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; as chair of Women in Ministry, Incorporated, a lay initiative offering financial support as the church incorporates women into ministerial roles; as an adjunct lecturer and Research Fellow, Avondale College.

“During recent years he has presented major papers on Adventist Studies and the life and writings of Ellen White, such as ‘Learning from Ellen White’s Perception and Use of Scripture: Toward an Adventist Hermeneutic for the Twenty-first Century,’ delivered at the South Pacific Division (SPD) Theological Conference, February 5-9, 2003. At the SPD Ellen White Summit (2004) his paper was entitled ‘Ellen White in the South Pacific: Retrospect and Prospect.’”⁹¹⁶

In the fourth interview with Dr. Arthur Patrick, the reader is led to believe that Ellen White was partly right and partly wrong. Bruce Manners asked the following question. “How certain are you that God gave Ellen White supernatural guidance?”

“A substantial number of 200 papers, book chapters and articles I’ve written during the past 25 years demonstrate my conviction about that reality. In my mind, it is beyond reasonable doubt.

“But you seem to *put limits on that guidance?*”

⁹¹⁶ <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/white/patrick/patrick-bio.htm>. Retrieved June 8, 2010

“Definitely. Limitation is an important part of what it means to be a human being. Even the apostle Paul says bluntly, “Now I know in part; then I shall know fully” (1 Corinthians 13:12, NIV).

“So even an *inspired person can be partly right and partly wrong?*”

“You’ve got it! My cancer specialist doesn’t fix my lawnmower. My wife is excellent at teaching children, but hopeless at dealing with email viruses. Because Ellen White was shown in a two-hour panorama the age-long struggle between righteousness and sin does not mean she was an expert on the life and times of John Huss...

“But didn’t she claim she was dependent on the Holy Spirit as she wrote out what she had seen?”

“Right, again! Like the prophets of the Bible, Ellen White received the gift of revelation (divine disclosure) and inspiration (divine assistance in communicating the message received). Remember how Paul puts responsibility on the community of believers when he says, “Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything” (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21, NIV). In other words, to read the Bible is also to learn our duty as a faith community.

“Another example: Because Ellen White was shown 10 important things in her great health reform vision of 1863 doesn’t mean she knew the 990 other things we might find useful with reference to healthful living.

“Sounds like you’re saying the gift of prophecy is given to meet our needs in specific ways, not to give us total knowledge?”

“You are so right. For example, Ellen White tells us in broad terms how to live healthfully, but we *need medical specialists to diagnose specific diseases, and microbiologists and chemists to identify what causes the contagious illnesses we suffer from and chemists to help develop specific antibiotics*. Then on an individual level we need to study the means of prevention and the modes of cure, and implement both....

“‘Unscientific ideas?’ What do you mean by that?”

“Concepts that a *panel of competent medical doctors would now classify as not supported by known evidence or contrary to known evidence*. Current analyses by qualified medicos now suggest that Ellen White is about twice as reliable as the best known health reformers of her era. *However, her writings on health offer advice that is seen to be between about 70 per cent and 95 per cent reliable.*

That's a very high score for such a complex area."⁹¹⁷

As you can see from the above articles, many within the Church no longer take seriously the Spirit of Prophecy. While they confess to believe Ellen White was a prophet on one hand, they craftily teach the devil's deceptions on the other. They use the arguments of those who oppose the Spirit of Prophecy to support their case. Mrs. White tells us what kind of people these are who use such tactics:

"It has been very indiscreet for our ministers to publish to the world the wily sophistry of error, furnished by designing men to cover up and make of none effect the solemn, sacred truth of Jehovah. These crafty men who lie in wait to deceive the unwary, give their strength of intellect to perverting the word of God. The inexperienced and unsuspecting are deceived to their ruin. It has been a great error to publish to all the arguments wherewith opponents battle the truth of God; for in so doing minds of every class are furnished with arguments which many of them had never thought of. Some one must render an account for this unwise generalship."⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁷ Bruce Manners with Arthur Patrick, "Ellen White for today—4", *Record*, Feb 28, 2004. http://link.adventistconnect.org/record/2004/rec07-04_02_28.pdf
Retrieved March 12, 2010

⁹¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 193

Appendix C

Righteousness by Faith

“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

—Philippians 3:9

Righteousness by faith is the truth that was rejected in 1888 when God sent Jones and Waggoner with the precious message to His church. This message has been rejected ever since, although the church believes it was never really rejected.

Throughout this study, we have seen numerous quotes that either speak of or explain righteousness by faith. For instance, we read part of a letter Ellen White wrote in 1895 to O. A. Olsen where she explained quite clearly what the message was. “This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.”⁹¹⁹

If the quote stopped there, we could join the ranks of those who are happy to sit back and believe that everything was completed at the cross. However, Ellen White continued, “*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*

⁹¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1336

*the commandments of God.*⁹²⁰

The precious message of righteousness by faith teaches the balanced and complete view of salvation. It reveals that Jesus is the One who forgives us our sins through His death on the cross and it teaches Jesus is the One who clothes us with His righteousness—the only righteousness that is perfect and acceptable to God. This balanced view is defined as justification and sanctification. More will be said about this as we proceed.

As we continue to read the letter to O. A. Olsen, Ellen White writes, “*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.*”⁹²¹

The righteousness by faith message has to be given to all the world. The reason for this is because it is the everlasting gospel which Jesus said will be proclaimed in all the world and then the end will come.⁹²² How can it be the everlasting gospel? Because it leads the sinner to the Saviour of the world and provides the power to live the life of Christ. Paul said the gospel “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...”⁹²³

THIRD ANGEL’S MESSAGE

Ellen White also pointed out that the message of righteousness by faith is the third angel’s message. How can this be since the third angel warns people not to receive the mark of the beast? The answer is in the last verse of that angel’s message. “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that *keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*”⁹²⁴ Those who heed the third angel’s message will only be able to do so as they accept and live the life of righteousness by faith. They will keep the commandments of God—righteousness—and they have the faith of Jesus. This is righteousness by faith. As the whole world is forced to decide between the commandments of God and the dictates of mankind, the message of righteousness by faith will be proclaimed with a loud voice to all the world.

⁹²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹²¹ *Ibid.*

⁹²² See Matthew 24:14

⁹²³ Romans 1:16

⁹²⁴ Revelation 14:12

To further show that the third angel's message is the message of righteousness by faith, Ellen White writes, "The third angel's message is the proclamation of the *commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ*. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness."⁹²⁵ Without leaving us to question what the faith of Jesus means, she continues, "The faith of Jesus.' It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus."⁹²⁶ Do we have that faith?

THE MESSAGE REJECTED

We have already seen enough evidence to show that the 1888 message was rejected, but in her letter to O. A. Olsen in 1895, this point is brought up again, with a very sober warning. "I have no smooth message to bear to those who have been for so long as false guideposts, pointing the wrong way. If you reject Christ's delegated messengers, you reject Christ. Neglect this great salvation kept before you for years, despise this glorious offer of *justification through the blood of Christ and sanctification through the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit*, and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. I entreat you now to humble yourselves, and *cease your stubborn resistance of light and evidence*."⁹²⁷

Again, Ellen White points out the 1888 message was more than a message of justification. It also included sanctification. Those who reject this message cannot be saved.

JUSTIFICATION

Ellen White noticed that many were wrong in their

⁹²⁵ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 3, p. 172

⁹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 172

⁹²⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1342

understanding of justification. She wrote, “Many commit the error of trying to define minutely the fine points of distinction between justification and sanctification. Into the definitions of these two terms they often bring their own ideas and speculations. Why try to be more minute than is Inspiration on the vital question of righteousness by faith? Why try to work out every minute point, as if the salvation of the soul depended upon all having exactly your understanding of this matter? All cannot see in the same line of vision. You are in danger of making a world of an atom, and an atom of a world.

“As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God's will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer, and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

“Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: ‘This is My child. I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy--eternal life--because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.’ Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God.

“The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father's prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and relieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice.”⁹²⁸

In another definition of justification, Ellen White wrote, “What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is *not in his*

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 897-898

power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be *clothed with the righteousness of Christ.*⁹²⁹

PERVERTED JUSTIFICATION

It is important to realize that not everything we read about justification by faith is necessarily the truth. Ellen White warns us that “There are dangers to be guarded against on the right hand and on the left. There will be inexperienced ones, newly come to the faith, who need to be strengthened, and to have a correct example before them. Some will not make a *right use of the doctrine of justification by faith. They will present it in a one-sided manner.*

“Others will seize the ideas that have not been correctly presented, and will go clear over the mark, *ignoring works altogether.*

“Now genuine faith always works by love. When you look to Calvary it is not to quiet your soul in the nonperformance of duty, not to compose yourself to sleep, but to create faith in Jesus, faith that will work, purifying the soul from the slime of selfishness. When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare. Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith. If one is a follower of Christ, he cannot be sharp in deal, he cannot be hardhearted, devoid of sympathy. He cannot be coarse in his speech. He cannot be full of pomposity and self-esteem. He cannot be overbearing, nor can he use harsh words, and censure and condemn.”⁹³⁰

This “one-sided” justification is designed to keep us from experiencing true salvation. Ellen White further warned that, “While one class *pervert the doctrine of justification by faith and neglect to comply with the conditions laid down in the Word of God--‘If ye love me, keep my commandments,’--there is fully as great an error on the part of those who claim to believe and obey the commandments of God but who place themselves in opposition to the precious rays of light--new to them--reflected from the cross of Calvary. The first class do not see the wondrous things in the law of God for all who are doers of His Word. The others cavil over trivialities, and neglect the weightier matters, mercy and the*

⁹²⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 111

⁹³⁰ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 20

love of God.

“Many have lost very much in that they have not opened the eyes of their understanding to discern the wondrous things in the law of God. On the one hand, *religionists generally have divorced the law and the gospel, while we have, on the other hand, almost done the same from another standpoint.* We have not held up before the people the righteousness of Christ and the full significance of His great plan of redemption. We have left out Christ and His matchless love, brought in theories and reasonings, and preached argumentative discourses.”⁹³¹

While one class teaches that justification by faith means we do not have to be obedient, the other class perverts the truth by emphasizing obedience to the law without faith. Satan is happy if we fall into either camp, for both extremes do not lead to eternal life, even though they both teach aspects of the truth.

In the year that she was laid to rest, Ellen White left the following counsel to our young people: “There is a work to be done for the young by which their minds will be impressed and molded by the sanctifying truth of God. It is my sincere wish for our young people that they find the *true meaning of justification by faith*, and the perfection of character that will prepare them for eternal life. I do not expect to live long, and I leave this message for the young, that the aim which they make shall not miscarry.”⁹³²

Although justification secures our pardon from sin, it is more than just a legal transaction. “Justification by faith in Christ *will be made manifest in transformation of character.*”⁹³³ When we by faith claim the righteousness of Christ as our own, we will be enabled to live as Christ lived, and our characters will be transformed. This is known as sanctification.

SANCTIFICATION

Because justification secures our pardon from the condemnation of sin, sanctification is often seen as something that is not essential for our salvation—an optional extra. However, many have failed to realize that the same grace that pardons or

⁹³¹ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 822

⁹³² Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1915, par. 8

⁹³³ Ellen G. White, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1071

justifies us is the same grace that also sanctifies us. To illustrate this wonderful truth, the Bible shows us a picture of the process:

“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.”⁹³⁴

The taking away of the filthy garments represents the act of justification. No amount of works can achieve this, but by God’s grace our filthy robes can be removed. After taking away the filthy robes, the angel then puts a fair mitre on Joshua’s head. “The miter placed upon Joshua’s head was such as was worn by the priests, and bore the inscription, ‘Holiness to the Lord’ (Exodus 28:36), signifying that notwithstanding his *former transgressions*, he was now qualified to minister before God in His sanctuary.”⁹³⁵ As soon as we are forgiven, God sees us as being righteous and holy as though we had never sinned. How wonderful is that? Remember that this is not achieved by anything we have done.

Many are happy to stop reading at this point and rejoice in the wonderful mercy and grace of God, but you will notice that God does not leave us naked. He does not only declare us righteous, but he makes us righteous. You will notice the angel was instructed to give to Joshua a new garment, which represents the righteousness of Christ. This garment represents our sanctification. “Jesus speaks of his people as a brand plucked out of the fire, and Satan understands what this means. The infinite sufferings of the Son of God in Gethsemane and on Calvary were endured that he might rescue his people from the *power of the evil one*. The work of Jesus for the salvation of perishing souls is as if he thrust his hand into the fire to save them. Joshua, who

⁹³⁴ Zechariah 3:1-5

⁹³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Prophet and Kings*, p. 584

represents God's people, is clothed in filthy garments, and stands before the angel; but as the people repent before God for the transgression of his law, and reach up by the hand of faith to lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, Jesus says, 'Take away the filthy garments from them, and clothe them with change of raiment' It is *through Christ's righteousness alone that we are enabled to keep the law.*⁹³⁶

Through this illustration we learn that the faith we exercise in Christ to justify us is also the same faith that sanctifies us. We cannot exercise that faith in the one and fail to exercise it in the other. Both justification and sanctification are bound together by the same grace of Christ's righteousness. Therefore, when we discuss the subject of sanctification, we must realize that from the very outset, it is wholly the work of God in our lives, just as justification is God's work.

ERRONEOUS THEORIES OF SANCTIFICATION

Unlike those who rejected the message of righteousness by faith when it was presented in 1888, today many have gone to the opposite extreme and emphasize faith alone. We have already read the warnings from the Spirit of Prophecy against the perversion of justification which leads people to conclude that obedience is not essential. However, in the book, *The Great Controversy*, Ellen White further reveals the dangers of an erroneous theory of sanctification:

"The sanctification now gaining prominence in the religious world carries with it a spirit of self-exaltation and a *disregard for the law of God* that mark it as foreign to the religion of the Bible. Its advocates teach that *sanctification is an instantaneous work*, by which, through faith alone, they attain to perfect holiness. 'Only believe,' say they, 'and the blessing is yours.' No further effort on the part of the receiver is supposed to be required. At the same time they deny the authority of the law of God, urging that they are released from obligation to keep the commandments. But is it possible for men to be holy, in accord with the will and character of God, without coming into harmony with the principles which are an expression of His nature and will, and which show what is well pleasing to Him?

⁹³⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, June 2, 1890, par. 3

“The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the *doctrine of faith, and faith only*, a popular doctrine; but what saith the word of God? Says the apostle James: ‘What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.’ James 2:14-24.

“The testimony of the word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted, *it is presumption*; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.”⁹³⁷

There is nothing we can do to cleanse ourselves from our sins. No amount of works can secure our salvation. As helpless sinners, the only thing we can do is accept by faith the righteousness of Christ. Paul said, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁹³⁸ However, as we have seen, God never intended that our salvation consist of justification alone. If this were the case, we would remain helpless sinners controlled by the corrupt passions of our heart. No, God’s plan of salvation also provides a way to stop sinning. Paul wrote, “For this is the will of God, *even your sanctification*, that ye should abstain from fornication.”⁹³⁹ It is God’s will that everyone who is justified by the grace of God is also sanctified by the same grace. Remember the illustration of Joshua. It is the same grace that justifies and sanctifies, they cannot be separated.

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote that our salvation is through sanctification: “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you *to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit* and belief of the truth.”⁹⁴⁰ The Apostle Peter also wrote, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of

⁹³⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), pp. 471-472

⁹³⁸ Romans 5:1

⁹³⁹ 1 Thessalonians 4:3

⁹⁴⁰ 2 Thessalonians 2:13

God the Father, *through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*⁹⁴¹

Just as justification has been perverted, so the doctrine of sanctification has become corrupted. “Erroneous theories of sanctification, also, springing from neglect or rejection of the divine law, have a prominent place in the religious movements of the day. These theories are both false in doctrine and dangerous in practical results; and the fact that they are so generally finding favor, renders it doubly essential that all have a clear understanding of what the Scriptures teach upon this point.

“*True sanctification* is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian church, declares: ‘This is the will of God, even your sanctification.’ And he prays: ‘The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.’ 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23. The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is and how it is to be attained. The Saviour prayed for His disciples: ‘Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.’ John 17:17. And Paul teaches that believers are to be ‘sanctified by the Holy Ghost.’ Romans 15:16. What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told His disciples: ‘When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.’ John 16:13. And the psalmist says: ‘Thy law is the truth.’ By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good,’ a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him.’ John 15:10; 8:29. The followers of Christ are to become like Him--by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. *This is Bible sanctification.*”

⁹⁴¹ 1 Peter 1:2-5

“This work can be accomplished *only through faith in Christ*, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. Paul admonishes believers: ‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.’ Philippians 2:12, 13. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it. Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims: ‘Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Corinthians 15:57.”⁹⁴²

Whereas justification is instantaneous, our sanctification is the work of a lifetime. “Obedience to the law of God is sanctification. There are many who have erroneous ideas in regard to this work in the soul, but Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, ‘Thy word is truth’ (John 17:17). *Sanctification is not an instantaneous but a progressive work*, as obedience is continuous. Just as long as Satan urges his temptations upon us, the battle for self-conquest will have to be fought over and over again; but by obedience, the truth will sanctify the soul. Those who are loyal to the truth will, through the merits of Christ, overcome all weakness of character that has led them to be molded by every varying circumstance of life.”⁹⁴³ If that wasn’t clear enough, Ellen White says it again in a slightly different way:

“Sanctification does not consist in strong emotional feelings. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. *There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification*. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own natural tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful.”⁹⁴⁴

⁹⁴² Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), p. 469

⁹⁴³ Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 85

⁹⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, January 18, 1881, par. 9

BY BEHOLDING WE BECOME CHANGED

“The sanctification of the soul is accomplished through steadfastly beholding Him by faith as the only-begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. The power of truth is to transform heart and character. Its effect is not like a dash of color here and there upon the canvas; the whole character is to be transformed; the image of Christ is to be revealed in words and actions. A new nature is imparted. Man is renewed after the image of Christ in righteousness and true holiness.”⁹⁴⁵

The message of sanctification teaches that, “Truth, precious truth, is sanctifying in its influence. The sanctification of the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit *is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity*. It is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed in character, and the grace of Christ brought into active exercise in good works. Thus the character is transformed more and more perfectly after the image of Christ, in righteousness and true holiness. There are broad requirements in divine truth stretching out introducing into one line after another of good works. The truths of the gospel are not unconnected; uniting they form one string of heavenly jewels, as in the personal work of Christ, and like threads of gold they run through the whole of Christian work and experience.”⁹⁴⁶

True sanctification is a natural response of those who love God. “True sanctification” says Ellen White, “is nothing more or less than to love God with all the heart, to walk in His commandments and ordinances blameless. Sanctification is not an emotion but a heaven-born principle that brings all the passions and desires under the control of the Spirit of God; and this work is done through our Lord and Saviour.”⁹⁴⁷

EXTREMES

In 1890, Ellen White wrote, “Brethren, shall we not all of us leave our loads there? and when we leave this meeting, may it be with the truth burning in our souls like fire shut up in our bones. 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

⁹⁴⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1065

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1273

⁹⁴⁷ Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*, p. 87

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."⁹⁴⁸

However, Ellen White also cautioned us not to go to the other extreme. In a letter to A. T. Jones in 1893, she was quick to write, "Brother A. T. Jones, I wish to call your attention to another matter. I was attending a meeting, and a large congregation were present. In my dream you were presenting the subject of faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ by faith. You repeated several times that works amounted to nothing, that there were no conditions. The matter was presented in that light that I knew minds would be confused, and would not receive the correct impression in reference to faith and works, and I decided to write to you. You state this matter too strongly. There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. I know your meaning, but you leave a wrong impression upon many minds."⁹⁴⁹

This rebuke must have had a positive effect on Jones, for in 1899 he wrote the following: "Now we used to preach the commandments of God as we thought. But we were not preaching them, indeed, as they must be. The Lord sent a message, and sent his word by that message, saying that the *faith of Jesus, righteousness by faith*, must be preached. He says that he sent the message of righteousness by faith because the people had lost sight of Christ, in the righteousness of Christ as he is. I am afraid that there has been a *tendency to go over to the other end now, and preach the faith of Jesus without the commandments*. We must guard ourselves against such a thing as that. I must set myself upon this pinnacle,—it is a pinnacle,—that I can not preach the commandments of God without preaching the faith of Jesus; and that I can not preach the faith of Jesus without preaching the commandments of God. I am to preach the commandments of God so that it will be the faith of Jesus only; and I am to preach the faith of Jesus so it will be nothing but the commandments of

⁹⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 560

⁹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1165

God. He who can not do that can not preach either the commandments of God or the faith of Jesus.”⁹⁵⁰

These two extremes are still present in the Church today. Often the conservatives focus on the law while the liberals focus on the love and faith of God. This pleases the devil, for while we are consumed with either extreme, we have missed the point. This is why Jesus has not yet returned. He is waiting for His people to embrace the truth that Christ’s righteousness not only forgives us of every sin, but it also enables us to overcome every sin. We need to have this balance, not only in belief, but in our daily experience.

⁹⁵⁰ Alonzo T. Jones, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Vol. 76, June 20, 1899, p. 392