



*"Watchman,  
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,  
the hour and the end!"*  
Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)

XXVI

10(93)

## PROGRESS IN YOUR BELIEF

Out of the confusion which followed the Great Disappointment in 1844, there arose a small group of former Millerites who designated themselves as Seventh-day Adventists. After organizing themselves into a corporate body in 1863, they found it necessary within a decade to state in a forthright manner what they believed. This statement, published in pamphlet form on the Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association at Battle Creek in 1872, was captioned - "A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by the Seventh-day Adventists." Even the text chosen for the cover page revealed their thinking - "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." (Eph. 2:20)

Of even more interest for us today is the preface to the statements, which stated their convictions for formulating them. They wanted it to be "distinctly understood" that in presenting this "synopsis of our faith," it was not a creed, and they had no "creed or discipline aside from the Bible." It was simply to be "a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity, held by them."

The second paragraph of the preface could be used today to justify a statement of beliefs by every one of the differing "independent ministries." It read:

"As Seventh-day Adventists we desire simply that our position shall be understood; and we are the more solicitous for this because there are many who call themselves Adventists who hold views with which we have no sympathy, some of which, we think, are subversive of the plainest and most important principles set forth in the word of God."

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## LET'S TALK IT OVER

In the preface to the 1980 Statement of Beliefs voted at Dallas, Texas, there is an interesting observation made. It reads - "Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word." (Adventist Review, May 1, 1980, p. 23) This presupposes that in 1980, the Church believed that it was led by the Holy Spirit to rewrite its beliefs as contained in the previous statement voted in 1950. Herein is the present issue facing every Seventh-day Adventist. There are those in the Adventist Community who believe that the 1980 Statement merely confirmed the compromises made with the Evangelicals in 1955-56, and reflects the influence which the dialogue with the World Council of Churches had upon its leadership.

The three decades from 1950 to 1980 were momentous years for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To list and only briefly comment on the key events during this period of time from the 1952 Bible Conference to the Dallas session would more than fill an issue of WWN. Those who first took issue with the compromises with the Evangelicals in 1955-1956 have also perceived "advancing truth" through the study of the Word. This "increasing light" and the compromises of the main body are now in direct confrontation. Every individual member of the Church must now decide which way his soul shall go. This issue of WWN highlights this current situation in Adventism. We have set before the reader four of the most critical areas of concern. In the

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The regular Seventh-day Adventist Church has declared where it stands in faith and practice through the 27 Fundamental Beliefs formulated and adopted at the 1980 General Conference Session. Every "independent ministry" which cannot go along with the Church should formulate their position so that every individual concerned with the issues which now divide the Church can know where each segment stands who wishes to be considered as an Adventist. It is self-evident that the various "independent ministries" hold to positions which are not in agreement with the 27 Fundamentals, or else they would not be "independent." Further, it is self-evident that the various "independent ministries" are at odds with each other or there would be today only one voice sounding in opposition to the apostasy in the Church. The result is that there is as much confusion without as there is within.

To meet this issue the "Independent Ministry" at Nora Springs, Iowa, through much study and prayer prepared a Statement of Beliefs reflecting their faith and practice. They did not set it in concrete, nor did they consider it a creed. At our 1993 Annual Fellowship, we had planned to discuss basic Adventism during the evening services. Upon hearing of this project and study done by the Iowa group, we invited them to bring a copy of the Statement they had formulated for discussion. This they gladly did, and in place of our planned evening program, we spent the hour in an open exchange of concepts and suggested changes in the wording of the statement that had been drawn up. At the close of the week, we stood amazed at the unanimity which was achieved as well as the good natured manner in which disagreements were expressed and corrections suggested.

Due to the need for further study and clearer articulation of certain statements of faith to meet some of the controversial issues expressed by various "independent" ministries another group meeting is planned for late September in Iowa. We desire to find the unity for which Christ prayed, and express that unity of belief in a statement so that every one who asks a reason for our faith can be given an answer.

Once the statement is formulated in its final revised form, it will be available upon request. Even at that point, we will welcome suggestions and even challenges which could send us back to the drawing board. We are interested in only one thing, and that is truth, "pure and unadulterated" - a truth upon which God's true people in this final hour may unify. Further, we

challenge every "independent ministry" which cannot so unify, to formulate its own statement of beliefs so that its position may be clearly understood, and wherein it differs may be forthrightly stated. If it cannot do so, or show wherein it differs from the 27 Fundamentals, then we suggest it return as a "ministry" to the regular Church and submit to its discipline, doctrine and order.

## ISSUES FACING EACH AND EVERY ADVENTIST

### THE INCARNATION

During the month of March this year, while in Australia, I was scheduled for an all day Sabbath series of studies in the Cooranbong area near Avondale College. We arrived early in the vicinity so as to see the College campus. As we walked the campus and corridors of Avondale, we observed an announcement on one of the bulletin boards - Dr. William G. Johnsson, Editor of the Adventist Review, was scheduled to speak at 9:30 that Friday morning in the Ladies Chapel on "Issues Facing the Church." (He had been called off of his vacation at Adelaide for the weekend. We heard several explanations as to why. Dr. Desmond Ford was in Sydney that Sabbath.) We decided to hear what Dr. Johnsson considered the issues to be. Speaking without notes, "off the cuff," he listed four major issues, one of which was Christology, involving the nature of the humanity Jesus assumed at the Incarnation. He stated - "The Fundamental Beliefs do not spell out exactly what nature Jesus came in, the nature before or after sin."

Now in the Review itself, Johnsson is opening a discussion of this issue in a series of five editorials on "Our Matchless Saviour." At this writing, four have already appeared - July 8, July 22, August 12, August 19, and the concluding article is to be in next issue, August 26. He indicated that he was "reluctant to add fuel to the debate" and "hesitated to take up this editorial series." He indicates that his only reason for getting involved was because of requests to give help to the rank and file of the members of "the mainline Adventist Church." His objective appears to be to obtain a consensus on the doctrine which would mute the present

polarization so that the controversy can be shelved. Such an accomplishment is extremely doubtful. While we will wait until the editorials are completed before making a full response, an observation or two is in order.

In the third editorial (August 12) discussing the humanity Christ assumed in the incarnation, his assertions are almost beyond belief. He declared that Christ "experienced no inner conflict, as if deity and humanity pulled Him in different directions." What was Gethsemane all about? Who of humanity has "resisted unto blood striving against sin"? (Heb. 12:4)

In the same editorial commenting on whether Christ took the fallen nature of man, he wrote - "The silence of the New Testament on this specific point of debate is deafening." Here is a man whose doctoral emphasis at Vanderbilt was New Testament and who has taught in that department at Andrews University, yet he has not heard that Christ took "the slave form of man" (Phil 2:7) having been "made of the seed of David according to the flesh." (Rom. 1:3) What did Vanderbilt do to him in addition to destroying his faith in the sanctuary truth of Adventism!

Add to this menu of deception for the "mainline" Church the "food" provided by many of the "Independent ministries," and there can be only one cry, "There is poison in the pot!" A recent letter from a doctor in Australia tells of a distorted teaching on the incarnation built around the sanctuary erected in the wilderness plus the revival of the Holy Flesh teaching on the subject. Then he comments - "However, these teachings, as we may expect from anything satanic, are extremely alluring, and once people imbibe them, they seem as set in their 'new' beliefs as concrete." Indeed, we have come to a sad hour. Therefore, each individual member of the Adventist Community must himself check all of his "spiritual food" by the Word of God.

In the last Commentary for this year, we will address in detail the five editorials by Dr. Johnsson as well as other aspects of the doctrine of the incarnation. With the introduction of the incarnation issue and the sanctuary question which we will note next, the very issues which grew out of the SDA-Evangelical Conferences and which divided the Church are again projected into prominence. This can be no accident. It is true that deviation in the church's teaching on the incarnation began before 1950, and was not discussed at the 1952 Bible Conference. Nevertheless the post-Fall nature position was held by the vast majority of members and

ministers at the time of the conferences in 1955-1956.

### THE SANCTUARY DOCTRINE

The recent publication of The Sanctuary by Roy Adams, an associate editor of the Adventist Review and a protege of Johnsson, catapults this controversy back into the arena of theological debate. The position set forth by Adams as "the heart of Adventist theology" is a far cry from the sanctuary theology which marked the teaching of the Church for more than a century. The actual jacket of the paperbound edition can be best defined by the Greek word - hupokrisis - sheer hypocrisy.

While we will make a detailed review of the book in the next issue of WVN, a few observations are in order as was the case with the editorials on the incarnation.

The question is asked - "Was the heavenly sanctuary cleansed at the cross?" (p. 144) Adams answers his own question - "Yes, the sanctuary was cleansed at the cross." In justifying such heresy, he modifies the word "cleansing" to mean - "in the sense of clearing" - and by this, he means God's name, and the vindication of His government.

In his explanation of the earthly sanctuary being a pattern of the heavenly, Adams adopts Johnsson's position - "The real will explain the shadow and not vice versa." (p. 50) Who living has seen the Heavenly? But God did give the earthly model, and the data is recorded, so we might have some idea of the services to be carried on in the heavenly - not vice versa!

In the book, reference is made to the archaeological discoveries of pagan temples which pre-date the Hebrew sanctuary which God commanded Moses to build according to the pattern shown in the mount. Adams states that "these pagan temples...closely approximated the later Israelite equivalent both in floor plan and, as far as we can determine from the evidence, in certain accessories as well." Then he asks - "Were these heathen temples also designed after the heavenly pattern? Or to put it another way, if the Israelite tabernacle/Temple was patterned after things in the heavens, why was it not unique in every way? Why was it anticipated in pagan places of sacrifice?" (p. 51) Adams' answer - God chose a pagan form to illustrate heavenly theology. (p. 57) And this is "the heart of Adventist theology?"

How does Adams diagram what he calls the "three fundamental dimensions of salvation" which the court, holy place and most holy place portray? He considers all as "Atonement" with a capital "A". But the court representing the cross is the "finished atonement." (p. 134) The holy place is "intercession" from A.D. 31 to 1844, and the most holy place is "judgment with intercession continuing." No final atonement is indicated. (p. 56)

## HERMENEUTICS

First, we should define the term so that all will understand what we are discussing in this issue facing the individual Adventist. Hermeneutics is the study of methodological principles of interpretation of the Bible. It is a transliterated Greek word which in the KJV is translated as "interpretation." See John 9:7; Heb. 7:2. Thus simply it means various methods of interpretation used in arriving at the meaning of the Scriptures.

A couple of months ago I received in the mail a few pages from an article, "J'Accuse," by Dr. Desmond Ford, containing no comments or explanation. A date was penned - "6.14.93" I am assuming this article was from Ford's official organ. The point of interest was that he was calling attention to a "recent doctoral dissertation from Uppsala University" written by Elder Kai J. Arasola, president of the East Finland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The title of the thesis for a Doctorate in Theology was The End of Historicism: Millerite Hermeneutic of Time Prophecies in the Old Testament. Ford charged that this research showed there was no biblical basis for 1844, that Arasola pointed "out the flimsy nature of Miller's chronological pillars and stresses that the whole scholarly world has repudiated them." Several thoughts ran through my mind, and I was determined to obtain a copy to read for myself what Arasola had written. I wrote to the Swedish Publishing House mentioned in the article by Ford. A few weeks later, Dr. Arasola sent me a copy. In reading his dissertation, I did not find that it said what Ford said it said. True, he gave an enlarged perception of the various time schemes - fifteen in all - that Miller developed to sustain his position that Christ was to come "some time between March 21st, 1843 and March 21st, 1844." Some were very, very weak, and took the text upon which they were based far out of context. Arasola points out that the "Millerites appear to have believed that a multiplication of weak points makes one strong

point." But he also noted that "one should observe the strong points of Miller's arguments. They were presented persuasively. There were no hidden meanings or occult references. The meaning of every symbol, or every important word was argued with biblical texts, often much to the shame of Miller's opponents. The method employed widely accepted principles of historicism.... The hermeneutic simplified human history into straightforward phases leading to the present." (p. 145)

What then is Arasola's research telling us? First it reveals that Adventist historians, Froom and Nichol, in writing about our Millerite heritage have overlooked "things that were essential to Miller but are irrelevant for Seventh-day Adventism." This is even carried over into current writings on Miller by such men as Damsteegt and Maxwell. The point of this slanted reporting was to narrow the interest down to Daniel 8:14 in discussing the great disappointment at the end of the Seventh-month movement. Secondly, it clearly distinguishes between the historicist hermeneutic used by Miller, and that hermeneutic combined with sanctuary typology which forms the basis for the uniqueness of Adventism.

It should be pointed out that Miller's use of historicism was in line with the method used for prophetic interpretation for centuries. Arasola comments that "the elements that made up the historicist interpretation grew up over a millennium from the early church to the late middle ages. These included the continuous application of prophetic symbols from the time of Babylon to the present age, the year-day hermeneutic of prophetic time, and the identification of the papacy with the little horn. The full package of historicism was drawn together by Joseph Mede aided by the conceptions of Protestant scholasticism. The system was refined and clarified by reputable eighteenth-century scholars whose research was at the time widely acknowledged. Historicism was the most popular method of prophetic exegesis from the seventeenth to the middle nineteenth century." (pp. 47-48)

The heart of Miller's expositions of prophecy was the year/day hermeneutic. This was held in such high regard by all students of Bible prophecy that Miller's opponents rarely objected to it. Arasola cites a Dr. Bush, who rejected Miller's view of the Advent, as writing:

"In taking a **day** as the prophetic term for a **year**, I believe you are sustained by the soundest

exegesis, as well as fortified by the high names of Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Kirby, Scott, Keith and a host of others." (See page 88)

But why was the Millerite movement the end of historicism? Miller and his associates carried the method to extremes. The results and failures of time setting lost its appeal, and "few wanted to take the risks involved in fresh time setting." The conservative wing in Protestantism adopted the futurism hermeneutic of the Jesuit Ribera with some modifications and additions, while the liberal Protestant thinking accepted the preteristic scheme of the Jesuit Alcasar.

What is the challenge to Adventism today? The Seventh-day Adventist Church finds its roots in the final phases of the Millerite movement, accepting from Snow's research and conclusions as much, if not more, than from William Miller. When the target year, 1843, approached and the concentration of study focused on Daniel 8:14, the exegesis of the Millerites "changed from regular historicism into a combination of typology and historicism." Add to this the concepts derived from the parable of Jesus in Matthew 25, and the conclusion is inescapable that much of this past history must be re-evaluated, painful though it may be.

Arasola points out two extremes in the use of typology. One was the Cocceian school for which he borrowed Harnack's term for Origen's exegesis to apply to its extreme applications of the types - "Biblicalalchemy." The other called Marshlan, a reaction to the undisciplined method prevailing, required a Scriptural sanction for each type perceived. With the present undisciplined use of sanctuary types among various independents, we have again a form of Biblicalalchemy. We need to stop majoring in minors in the study of the sanctuary, and delve honestly and accurately into the major revelations it contains. Further, the relationship between the sanctuary and the prophecies of Daniel need to be firmly established. Dr Arasola, rather than meeting the ecstasy of Ford's assumptions, has contributed to the basis for such a careful study.

### THE WRITINGS

No issue facing the individual Seventh-day Adventist is so pregnant with emotion as the questions arising continuously about the writings of Ellen G. White. While she herself said that *her writings were not to be made a test*, it has

now come to a critical point where individuals are judged whether they be saints or sinners by how they view what she has written.

In two recent issues of The Sabbath Sentinel, the new editor, Sidney Cleveland, a former Seventh-day Adventist minister, discusses Ellen White and her writings. While some points which he alleges must be challenged, others cannot be ignored. But in this two-article series, he calls attention to an article in the November 19, 1992, Adventist Review, written by Elder Paul A. Gordon, Secretary of the Estate. The title of the article - "Can We Legitimately Change, Abridge, or Simplify Them [the Writings]?" - goes to the heart of the issue. To this question, "The answer is yes," according to Gordon, because "Seventh-day Adventists do not hold to verbal inspiration. That means we do not believe that God dictated the words for Ellen White to use." (p. 8)

The main thrust of this article by Gordon is in regard to the 1911 edition of The Great Controversy, but with this he has mingled some comments in regard to the 1888 edition. However, what is not told is the story of the revision of the 1888 edition as revealed in research done by Dr. D. R. McAdams, former president of Southwestern Union College. This manuscript - Ellen G. White and the Protestant Historians: The Evidence from an Unpublished Manuscript on John Huss - though written in 1974 when McAdams was connected with the History Department of Andrews University, still remains unpublished because, as I am informed, the Estate will not give release to certain documentation in the manuscript.

This document is a review of a rare find in the Estate files - an autograph of a manuscript written by Ellen White on John Huss for inclusion in the 1888 edition of The Great Controversy. The facts are that little of it was included, and in its place other material was substituted. W. C. White, in a letter to C. B. Jones, manager of the Pacific Press, stated, "Mother has written enough about Huss and Jerome, to make one or two new chapters. She has written something about Zwingli, and may speak of Calvin. The chapter on the Two Witnesses, has been doubled in size, and quite a change will be made in the chapter on William Miller. And some important additions are made to 'The Sanctuary' chapter." (May 18, 1887)

A third letter by W. C. White to Jones at the Pacific Press stated that after Chapter 4, "the largest additions were to be made." Then he

commented - "The manuscripts for chapters 5, 6, and 7, [were] to be prepared by Sr. Davis after Mother had gone from Basel. The work of preparing these is nearly completed, and will soon be sent to her in England for examination." (July 21, 1887)

Blind faith is one thing; an intelligent faith is another. Until the Estate is willing to come clean with all the facts they have, and are covering up, no individual Adventist can have an intelligent faith concerning the spiritual gift manifest to the Church in the ministry of Ellen G. White. In 1915, just prior to Ellen White's death, Prescott wrote to W. C. White and almost prophetically predicted the crisis the Church and each individual Adventist now faces. He stated in a personally typed letter:

"The way your mother's writings have been handled and the false impression concerning them which is still fostered among the people have brought great perplexity and trial to me. It seems to me that what amounts to deception, though probably not intentional, has been practiced in making some of her books, and no serious effort has been made to disabuse the minds of the people of what was known to be their wrong view concerning her writings. But it is no use to go into these matters. I have talked with you for years about them, but it brings no change. I think however that we are drifting toward a crisis which will come sooner or later and perhaps sooner."

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lead article, we have challenged every "independent ministry" to state in a forthright manner their beliefs so that every one can know where they stand, and wherein they have advanced in truth, and are now walking in "the increasing light" of that truth. (R&H, March 25, 1890) However, if all they are doing is merely "church bashing" to obtain monies for their personal "ego" trips, then they need to come clean and either put up or shut up.

In the second article on issues facing individual Adventists, we called attention to a recent doctoral dissertation written by Elder Kai J. Arasola for the Faculty of Theology at the University of Uppsala in Sweden. It should be noted that Dr. Desmond Ford's evaluation of the dissertation reveals his deceptive tactics in seeking to bolster his personal heretical teachings. Having noted his conclusions and being able to read for myself the dissertation, his integrity in dealing with any source document

is now questionable in my judgment. He is truly a "paper tiger."

Actually, I received a blessing from the reading of the dissertation. My faith was strengthened in the viability of a union of sanctuary typology with the historicist hermeneutic to arrive more fully at present truth for this hour. It is true that there will need to be much "fine tuning" of the data to achieve a correct application between type and antitype. There will be lessons to learn as well as many, many to unlearn.

My perceptions of the Millerite movement were broadened. I had often wondered why the heavy emphasis on our connection with Miller's thinking when so little of his positions were accepted by our spiritual forefathers. The article by Joseph Bates in the first issue of the Review & Herald, November, 1850, now comes into better focus.

One thing about the dissertation of Arasola is that it was not the faith denying and truth destroying type of study as was done by William G. Johnsson, now editor of the Adventist Review, when he wrote his dissertation at Vanderbilt University. The tragedy of the Vanderbilt dissertation is the damnable concepts which underlie it and are now being foisted on the Church through the Adventist Review by himself as well as in publications of his protege, Roy Adams.

The final issue which the individual Adventist has to face is how shall he relate to the writings of Ellen G. White in this doctrinal crisis. Roy Adams in his book, The Sanctuary, quotes Ellen G. White to sustain his position. The conclusions he draws on these references will not be acceptable to the so-called leading "independent ministries." Johnsson in his fourth editorial on the doctrine of the Incarnation (August 19, p. 4) also gives various quotes from the Writings, and comments - "We could list many more in support of each side. And from those lists each party in the debate draws its ammunition. Some Adventists have striven mightily to bring these apparently contradictory statements together under the post-Fall view." Then he adds, "I do not think this can be done." While this opinion will be challenged, I have to admit that I have tried it, and anyone acquainted with Larson's published works knows he tried it after I did. In my judgment, the question goes deeper than that, and only the Estate holds the answer. The individual Adventist who desires truth pure and unadulterated has his "home work" cut out for him. whg

OBSERVATIONS & COMMENT

1993 ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP  
TAPES & VIDEOS

Recently, we received an invitation through the mails to subscribe to Health & Healing, a journal edited by Julian Whitaker, M.D., "an advocate of a healthy, non-toxic approach to living a healthy life." We subscribed. On the first page of Vol. 1, No. 1, was the article - "Before You Let Them Cut You ... TRY NON-SURGICAL THERAPIES FIRST!" It was a very excellent article, and we have found more such as we have noted the various issues. This comment is not a "sales' pitch" for Dr. Whitaker's publication, rather it is an introduction to a sentence found in No. 3 - "Open and well-aired discussion generally allows the truth to come forward." (p. 8)

As I thought about the force of this observation, I could not help but realize that here is the one basic reason which has promoted much of the confusion in the Adventist Community. Those involved in the "Independent ministries" will not engage in "open and well-aired discussion." They will not lay their positions on the line. Of what are they afraid? If such is good counsel in the area of physical health issues, how much more in the realm of the spiritual and eternal.

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A friend recently enclosed with his check, an article from The Prophetic Observer, a journal which from the concluding paragraph of the article indicated it espouses the secret rapture theory. However, that was not the main thrust of the article. Captioned, "The Battle Over Jerusalem," it quoted news items appearing in The Jerusalem Post. One read in part:

"The issue of Jerusalem is one of international proportions, and must be dealt with on a global scale. Both the Vatican and the Moslem world will insist on having a say in the matter, and it may be safely assumed that their attitudes will be less than friendly to Israel's position. A long, hard struggle lies ahead." (May 29, 1993)

The April 3 edition of the same paper carried a picture of an Architect's drawing of the future home of the pope in Jerusalem. Isn't it time to wake up and give heed to some key prophecies of Scripture? - Daniel 11:45, for example. How can we keep our focus straight when we seek to belittle and ignore Luke 21:24? However, do not forget, Daniel 11:45 is followed by Daniel 12:1, even though in the KJV, there is a chapter break.

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Seminar on Galatians

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- b - What Do We Believe? \*\*
- #2 - Study of Galatians - I
- #3 - Study of Galatians - II
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