

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

"BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM!
Come out to meet Him."

(Matt. 25:6 RSV)



"THE SPIRIT SPEAKETH EXPRESSLY"

If there is one message above another which the book of Acts conveys, it is that the Holy Spirit speaks to the believers in Jesus. Observe in Acts 8:29 what the Spirit said to Philip, and it expresses the fact that it was the Spirit that spoke. "Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." The Spirit spoke just as expressly to Peter as recorded in Acts 10:19-20: "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."

In Acts 13, we find the Spirit speaking to the pneumatikoi of Antioch. The record reads: As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." (verse 2) We find that as Paul and his companions were on his second missionary tour, the Spirit intervened in their plans: "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia [the province], after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." (Acts 16:6-7) You will also find as one comes to the closing events of the book of Acts that the Spirit is still speaking. In Chapter 21, it reads: "And finding disciples, we tarried seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." (verse 4) Then when Agabus came down to Caesarea, the record reads: "He took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." (verse 11)

That Spirit, which spoke so pointedly and so expressly in the days of the Apostles, speaks to us today. And I want you to notice carefully what the Word of God says the Spirit declares. Turn

to I Timothy 4:1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

I would have you note that the Spirit does not say that some would depart from the church, but some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils! They will apostatize from the truth. They will step aside from the faith. They will give heed to seducing spirits and we are told that these seducing spirits will not be in the appearance of demons but transformed into ministers of righteousness and angels of light. (II Cor. 11:13-15) They will give heed to teachings of demons that would manipulate truth, that would manipulate the Scriptures, that would manipulate the Writings, ignoring "time and place" of the contents.

The intensity of this deception will be inversely proportional to the time remaining. If you'll turn to Revelation 12 and note the "b" part of verse 12, it reads: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Now if you believe, if you understand, that we are living in the very closing hours of human history and that the end of all things is upon us, then what can you understand from this text? You can know that the wrath of the enemy to deceive is even greater now than it was ten years ago. The intensity of the deception is greater but that intensity will not be that which is obvious. It is a deception, a camouflaged deception! And if you understand the terms, "sea" and "earth" - "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea" - in a prophetic sense and compare it with Revelation 13 where two beasts come up, one out of the sea, and the other out of the earth, you can understand where the intensity of the deception is to be focused. You are living in that area described as the beast that cometh up out of the earth.

Furthermore, we are told that there is going to be manifest miracles. Turn to Revelation 16, and I want you to take a good look at verses 13 & 14:

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole

world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

First let us focus our attention on the word, "miracles." In our English understanding of "miracles," we usually perceive of them as a manifestation of cures and healings. But the Greek word is sēmeia, and means signs by which the one performing attests to his genuineness. In other words, these "demons" are going to give "signs" by which they attest their genuineness, not as demons, but as ministers of righteousness. Through this deception and under this false guise, they will deceive the nations and the kings of the earth and bring them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

The final battle of earth is over truth versus error. This is the picture portrayed in Revelation. Go back to Revelation 13, to the work of the beast that comes up out of the earth. It says - "And he doeth great wonders... and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth ("Woe to the inhabitants of the earth...for the devil is come down unto you.") by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." (verses 13-14) Here is the same word for "miracles" as in Rev. 16 - sēmeia, a word which means a manifestation by which one attests to the genuineness of his message.

There is something else. Besides the prophesied deception, there is a promise. Turn to the word of Jesus in John 14:16-17. Jesus, anticipating his role as the great High Priest, said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you - (How long?) - forever; even the Spirit of truth;..." How long will the Spirit of truth abide with us? **Forever!** There never will be a time that we will not need the Spirit of truth and there will never be a time when the Spirit of truth will not abide with us. Even though Jesus shall step aside from His High Priestly intercession in the presence of the Father, and even though the Spirit of God will be withdrawn from the earth, it never says anywhere, nor is it even mentioned anytime that the Spirit of God will be withdrawn from His own. "I will, He says, abide with you **forever.**"

We may no longer have a divine-human Intercessor when probation's hour closes for no man can enter in, but the all-divine Spirit maketh intercession before the Father in

groanings which cannot be uttered. (Rom. 8:26-27) We can know when probation's hour closes that if we are in the truth that the Spirit of truth will still be abiding with us and will keep us when the enemy would seek to destroy us. Likewise, even now as he comes down with great wrath of deception, we can have the Spirit of truth to keep us from being deceived.

Recently a fellow minister sent me an article from the Christian Inquirer (April, 1985) This article was the first of a series of feature articles by David Hunt. You recognize the name? He is the author of the God-makers, and The Seduction of Christianity, and an authority on the new-age movement. He captions his first article - "The Delusion." I am going to read several paragraphs from this article, and I want you to listen very, very carefully. He wrote:

Are we living in the last days? For much of my Christian life I considered that question to be an invitation to fruitless speculation. The prophetic visions in Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation seemed impossible to unravel, and the best proof of that was the many conflicting views held by equally devout and sincere Christians.

Consequently I avoided those parts of the Bible that dealt with the "end times," not wanting to join the ranks of those who, it seemed to me, kept crawling out on the limbs of doubtful interpretations that inevitably broke off beneath them.

Some years ago, however, I began to see that our Lord and His apostles, as well as Old Testament prophets, described the last days as though they expected that some generation would eventually recognize the prophesied "signs of the times" and on that basis take appropriate action.

Indeed, I noticed that Jesus specifically rebuked the Jewish people and their leaders in His day for failing to recognize the days in which they lived: "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?" (Luke 12:56)

If He so severely criticized them for not being alert to the time of His first coming, would He not criticize us even more if we fail to recognize this time of His Second Coming?

There can be no reasonable doubt that the Bible describes the "last days" with the

obvious intent that **some generation at some time** would thereby be able to recognize that Christ's coming "is near, right at the door." (Matthew 24:32-33) If we are that generation, how would we be able to know?

There is a standard list of "signs" that is usually given, which includes such things as wars, famine, pestilence and earthquakes. Attention is directed to the Middle East, the threat of World War III, a nuclear holocaust and Armageddon. While such things are indicated in the Bible, there are signs of the "last days" that I consider to be far more important for us to recognize.

When asked for the signs of His return, the first thing Jesus said was: "See to it that no one misleads you." (Matthew 24:4) He went on to warn that the "last days" just prior to His return would be characterized by the greatest deception the world has ever known; and it would involve three specifics: (1) false Christs, (2) false prophets, and (3) false miracles. (Matthew 24:5, 11, 24)

Moreover, Christ and His apostles emphasized these signs more than any others, because the consequences of being deceived by the forces of antichrist are far worse than being victimized by famine, disease or war. (p. 4, emphasis his)

Now think about what this is saying. To be victimized by war, victimized by famine, victimized by disease, what would that do? Kill the body! But what about deception? It would kill the soul! You can survive in eternity should famine, war or disease overtake you; but you cannot survive in eternity if deception overtakes you! ...

[This is the introduction to the sermon given August 12, at the close of the 1989 Annual Fellowship. You may have a copy of the full text by writing to the Adventist Laymen's Foundation, P. O. Box 69, Ozone, AR 72854. Please include \$1.00 for postage and handling.]

The 1989 ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP Tapes

[Only the Seminar and Evening Meetings were taped this year]

"Studies in Acts" (Grotheer) 3 tapes - \$5.00
Evening Meetings (Allen Stump) ----- 7.50

"Rest from the Beast"

"Victory Over the Beast"

"Worthy Is the Lamb"

"Ephesians 4:11 Reflected in Revelation"

"What Revelation Means to Me"

ETHICS - GONE WITH THE WIND?

OPINIONS? ALLEGATIONS? INFERENCES?

FACTS AND DOCUMENTATION?

WHICH?

This week (October 2) on the same day from two different sources, one on the West Coast and one to the East of Arkansas, we received two of the latest releases of "Waymarks." (#252 & #254) Number 252 is a book review of the most recent publication of Dr. George R. Knight. This book - Angry Saints - is a sequel to his pre-1888 Celebration work - From 1888 to Apostasy. Those who availed themselves of the opportunity to hear first hand the John W. Osborn Lectureship series at Riverside, California where Knight spoke, and his presentation at the Minneapolis Celebration '88 knew what was coming in this latest book. In fact this book was released earlier in the year.

Number 254 concerns the Adventist Celebration Church which was begun by the former pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Azure Hills, California. There is a similar church in Oregon, the Milwaukie church in the Portland area. I attended it to see first hand their format of worship, and reported on the same in the June issue of WWN. (XXII-6, "Amazing Facts," p. 3) However, the report on "The Celebration Church" as found in WM #254 was prefaced with the announcement that Morris Venden was now the pastor of the Azure Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church. Yet the report is solely on the nature of the worship service in the Celebration Church where Dan Simpson is the pastor. What is the connection? Nothing, except that Morris Venden was appointed to pastor the same church where once Dan Simpson had been the pastor - Azure Hills. The connection created by Ferrell leaves the reader with the impression that somehow Morris Venden is also involved with "pentecostalism" without the tongues!

Ferrell's "opinion" is that Elder Stephen Gifford, president of the Southeastern California Conference, backed the creation of the Celebration Church as a diversionary tactic to offset the adverse publicity Venden has been receiving as a result of alleged immoral conduct in Keene, Texas. No proof is given that this was Gifford's intention, but just another undocumented "opinion." (See XXII-10,

p. 4) One must ask, Is this latest "guilt by succession" involving Venden a further attempt "to get him"? Why do I ask this question?

A number of months ago, I received a telephone call asking if I would advertize two small booklets in WWN. These were written by a woman in Texas. One of the booklets alleged moral misconduct on the part of Venden, while the other was a dissertation on righteousness by faith by the same person who "confessed" that she was the other party in the indiscretion. The two booklets are incongruous. I was told that Venden was guilty and "they" were going "to get" Venden by this means. It was later determined that one of the "they" was Ferrell. The reason the "they" were going "to get" him was that "they" did not agree with Venden's theology. Neither do I! But you do not answer a man's false theology by an attempted character assassination! You reply by the use of the Word of God. This neither Ferrell nor the one calling can do, not that it cannot be done, but because neither spend much time in the study of theology. Ferrell forthrightly admitted to our contributing editor that he studies theology very little, and when he has spare time, he reads science and history.

I told the one calling that I would have to read the material before advertizing the same. I purchased the two booklets at full price - it was exorbitant! Now these booklets have been subsidized so as to increase circulation. But to our knowledge, the underwriter has not been identified. Is the underwriter also interested in "getting" Venden, or is the underwriter one of the original "they"? We do not know?

Now Venden may be guilty as alleged, but the charge has not been adjudicated in a court of law before a jury of his peers, nor has the one bringing the allegations been cross-examined before such a jury. **Neither** has Venden for that matter. But when men set themselves "to get" an individual, and when equity is set aside, and his Constitutional right under the American Bill of Rights is disregarded, then something is wrong. Two grievous wrongs do not make one right.

Article V of the Bill of Rights of the American Constitution reads:

No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, ...nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself ...

It is evident that Ferrell who claims to read history in his spare time neither understands Article VI nor V of the American Bill of Rights. (See WNN, XXII-10, p. 4)

It is claimed that the Scripture forbids going to Law before "the unjust" (I Cor. 6:1) but the one giving this counsel, exercised his rights as a Roman citizen, and said to Festus, - "I appeal unto Caesar." (Acts 25:11)

We have more recently received another call from one of the "they" indicating that this attempted "getting" is not working as it was intended to work. Then this WM release #254 comes suddenly to the fore. One is left to wonder if there is a connection, and is this a parting shot of the original intent "to get" Venden? Then one wonders - "Who is next on the 'hit list'?" Keep in mind that this is all in the name of keeping the professed people of God informed about the terrible things going on in the midst of "Israel." The sad thing is that many are relying on this type of reporting, thinking they are being kept informed, but in reality are being deceived.

Questionable things are taking place in the Church, but do we abandon Christian ethics in our "zeal" for the Lord of hosts? Do we substitute "opinions" for a "Thus saith the Lord"? Do we indulge in a misreading of the Constitution of the United States in order to produce sensational headlines in an attempt to misguide the unwary? Would not Jesus repeat today His words of yesterday - "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24)

WHG

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A News Item

A retired evangelist gave a copy of "Watchman What of the Night?" to a fellow church member who requested it. It was shown to the pastor of the church. The retired minister was placed under church censure for 90 days! Who doesn't want you to read what?

1990 PUBLICATIONS LIST

Included with this issue of "Watchman, What of the Night?" is the 1990 list of available publications and tapes. All prior listings are invalid after December 31, 1989, and will not be honored.

You will observe that we have maintained the \$2.00/tape for another year. However, we have removed the list of "Facsimiles Available." This service will still be offered but on an individual request basis through our Library. If you need certain facsimile documentation, we will endeavor to provide the same for you. This will include the title page, and the key page(s) desired from the publication. [Not whole books or pamphlets, however.] The charge will be based on number of pages involved in the request.

Please use an "Order Form" for ordering all publications and tapes. If you do not have one, please write and we will be happy to send you several. Make all checks payable to the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Arkansas, P. O. Box 69, Ozone, AR 72854.

RELEVANT

"As the end nears, the most dangerous place for the true people of God will be in the professed church, the synonym of apostate Israel in Herod's day." - Wm. N. Glenn, Signs of the Times, Jan. 18, 1899.

[William Newton Glenn (1837-1906) was editor of Our Little Friend from 1893 to 1901, and assistant editor of the Signs from 1900-1906.]

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