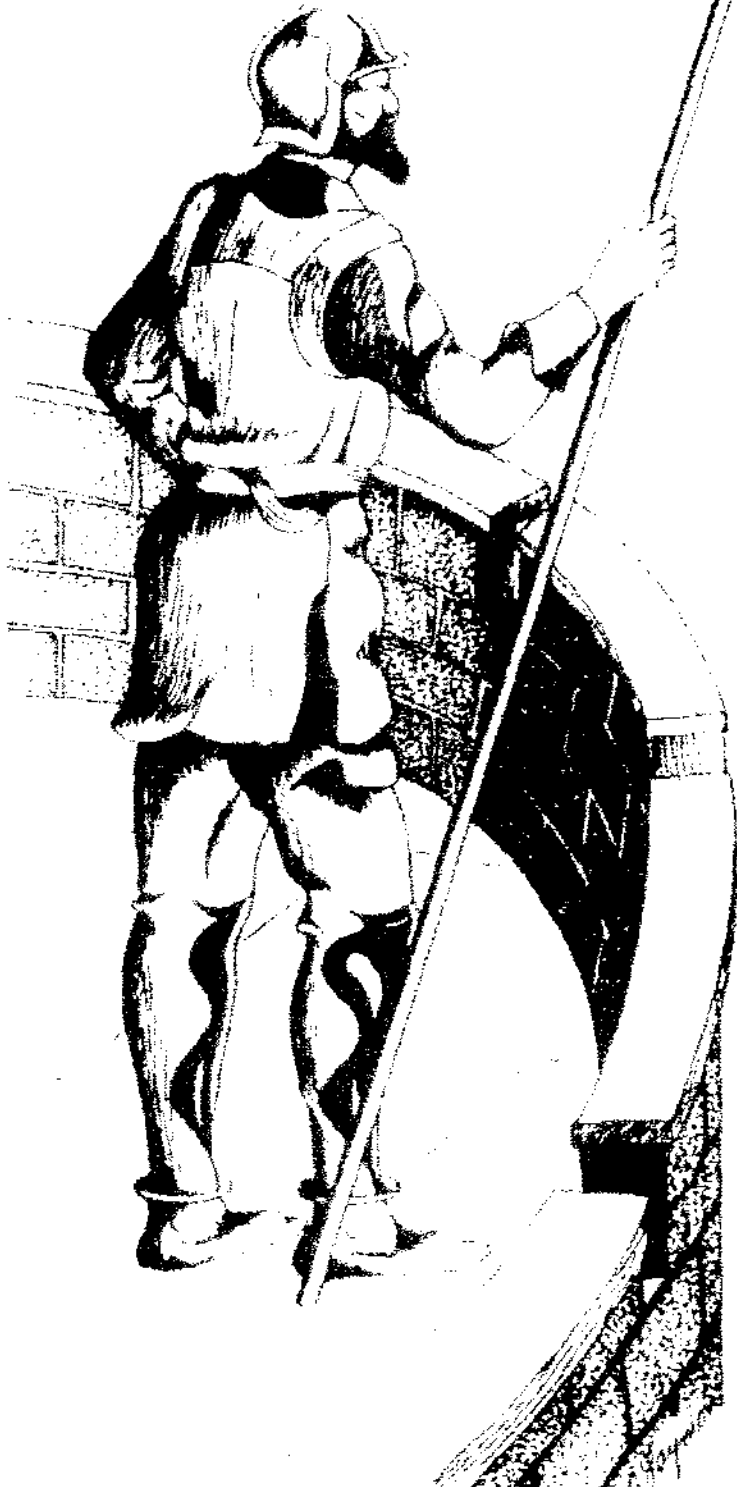


"*Watchman,  
what of the night?*"

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



## **GOD - WHO IS HE?**

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### *Editor's Preface*

With this issue of WVN, we complete thirty eight years of continuous publication. The first issue was January, 1968, in line with the fulfilled prophecy of Luke 21:24. While we did not sense the meaning of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy when the Thought Paper was first published, the events that have followed have confirmed our conviction that we had responded to the "time clock" of heaven, not in prophetic "days" - time setting - but in line with prophetic events as foretold by Jesus Himself. If you have not read the tract - "Jerusalem in Bible Prophecy" - write to us and we will send you a free copy. The events in the close of Israel's day of grace find a parallel in modern Israel's history.

In AD 31, Jesus told the Jewish hierarchy, "Your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38). In AD 34, Stephen was stoned and the 490 years of Daniel 9:24 were completed. Israel's probation as a nation ended. Thirty-six years later in AD 70, the desolate temple of Israel was destroyed and Jerusalem passed to Gentile control not to return to Jewish control until 1967. Keep in mind that Jesus did not refer to the "temple" in his prophecy as found in Luke 21:24, but to the "city"! Approximately 40 years - 39 to be exact - passed from AD 31 to AD 70. We today are facing the close of the same amount of time - 1967-2006 - with signs we little dreamed of seeing fulfilled being fulfilled before our eyes. The end is upon us. Read "P. O. Box 69"!

## GOD – Who Is He?

It was Zophar, one of Job's erstwhile friends, who asked the question:

Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

--- and answered it himself:

It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea (Job 11:7-9).

There are those today on the periphery of Adventism who think they know the answer and are proclaiming themselves to be the "other angel come down from heaven" with great light (Rev. 18:1).

The whole question revolves around one single event – the Incarnation, the great divide in time as well as eternity. If we do not recognize that event and its resultant affect on God, one cannot accurately answer the question – "Who is He?" In the Bible, there is a pre-Incarnation revelation of God, a revelation of God from Bethlehem to Calvary, and a post-Incarnation revelation of God.

To John on the Isle of Patmos, Jesus revealed Himself as "the first and the last, the Living One (ὁ ζῶν) and (I) was dead; and behold, I and alive forevermore" (Rev. 1:17-18).

While we have been advised that we "should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God" (*Great Controversy*, p. 599), we have been cautioned that in "contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend" (*Signs*, July 30, 1896); and that in approaching "the subject of Christ's divinity clothed in the garb of humanity, we may appropriately

heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground'" (Ms. 67, 1898).

The caution regarding the Holy Spirit is equally as positive: "The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. ... Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden" (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 52). Only glimpses of the nature and work of the Παρακλητος stand revealed in the Scriptures. Our failure to distinguish between "nature" and "work" in these glimpses does not help us to understand what can be understood of the "mystery."

### CONCEPTS OF THE GODHEAD

The Catholic Church teaches that the fathomless mystery we call God has revealed Himself to humankind as a Trinity of Persons – the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Handbook for Today's Catholic*, p. 11).

This doctrine as stated is the basis upon which all the other teachings of the Roman Church rests. It is defined in the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three persons, the "consubstantial Trinity." The divine persons do not share one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire "The Father is that which the Son is, the Son is that which the Father is, the Father and the Son which the Holy Spirit is., i.e., by nature one God." In the words of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215): "Each of the Persons is that supreme reality, viz., the divine substance, essence or nature.

*The divine persons are really distinct from one another. "God is one but not solitary. "Father," "Son," "Holy Spirit" are not simply names designating modalities of the divine being, for they are really distinct from one another: "He is not the Father who is the Son, nor is the Son he who is the Father, nor is the Holy Spirit he who is the Father or the Son." They are distinct from one another in their relations of origin: "It is the Father who generates, the Son who is begotten,*

and the Holy Spirit who proceeds." The divine Unity is Triune [Three in One] (pp. 66, 67).

The World Council of Churches (WCC) express their perception of one God in their Constitution. It reads (Article I):

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (*So Much in Common*, p. 40).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's current understanding of God is expressed in the second article, "The Trinity," of the Statement of Beliefs voted at the General Conference Session at Dallas, Texas, in 1980. It reads:

There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons (*Church Manual*, 1981, p. 32).

This concept of the Godhead is termed tri-theistic. At the time of the "alpha" apostasy, Ellen White wrote: "There are three living persons of the heavenly trio" (*Series B, #7*, p. 62), thus endorsing this position in contrast to the Triune concept of Romanism. There are, however, other questions that need to be clarified such as - How do they relate One to the Other?

#### THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The last two written books of the New Testament - the Gospel of John and the Revelation of Jesus Christ - both by the same human penman, while casting light upon the mystery of God, also add questions to it. As an illustration of the latter, John wrote concerning the Word made flesh, that "all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). Yet in quoting the 24 elders, as they worship before throne on whom is seated "the Lord God Almighty," John

indicates they declare of Him, "Thou hast created all things" (Rev. 4:11). These two statements are not contradictory if we accept the statement which opens our Bible - "In beginning, Gods (Elohim) created."

Revelation presents Three in connection with the Throne, the Almighty on the Throne (4:2-8); before the Throne "the seven Spirits of God (4:5) which were to be "sent forth into all the earth" (5:6); and in the midst of the Throne "a Lamb as it had been slain" (5:6). The closing picture is still "the (one) Throne of God and of the Lamb, but (two) shall be (on) it" (22:3). The Spirit is pictured with the bride; they speak as one (22:17).

#### FROM CREATION TO INCARNATION

Both the Gospel of John and Genesis begin at the same point of time - "beginning" (no article). In Genesis: "the Elohim (plural) created (singular);" In John: "the Word was with God" and "all things were made by Him." The plural subject, and the singular verb in Genesis could indicate unity of action, a Plurality functioning as One. Nothing further is hinted until the decision is made in regard to man - "Let Us make man in our image after our likeness (Gen. 1:26). What "likeness" did Adam and Eve reveal? That one of the Elohim was female? One would almost think so the way the New Testament word, (*μονογενης*) is applied to Christ by certain periphery sectors of Adventism. The emphasis in Genesis is "they (two) shall be *one* flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

Isaiah echoes the same concept of God. He wrote:

Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first and the last: and besides Me there (are) no Gods [Elohim] (Isa. 44:6 ARV).

The Shema of Israel when translated linguistically expresses the same concept - "Hear O Israel, Jehovah they Gods is one Jehovah" (Deut. 6:4).

Zachariah, when writing about the man whose name is The BRANCH and who was to "to grow up out of His place," quoted the Lord of hosts as stating that this Branch -

Shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between the Two of them (6:12-13, Heb.).

A Duality is not a Trinity. God "created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:9). It was "the Spirit of God (Who) moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. 1:2)" While "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21), it was "the Spirit of Christ which was in them" that "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:10).

Paul and Luke were travelling companions over the Roman roads and the Great Sea. There can be no question but that they discussed the birth of Christ in those many hours together. Yet in their basic statements on the Incarnation, they reflect the same concept as noted in the previous paragraph. Luke speaks of the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary (1:35) while Paul declared that Christ "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7).

While we stand before an unfathomable mystery which the human mind cannot comprehend, we dare not overlook the fact that when that child conceived in Mary came to birth, God gave orders to the angels - "worship Him" (Heb. 1:6) - He did not cease to be God. The Duality was not ended into a single Deity. Although He became "the only true

God" "life eternal" still remained based in the knowledge of the TWO (John 17:3). The Word became unique, a God-man; never before known in the universe, a union of creature and Creator!

This second phase of the revelation of God - Bethlehem to Calvary - prepared the way for the priestly ministry of the Word - "the Word came to be flesh" (John 1:14). He could "be touched with the feelings of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15). Having "suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted (Heb. 2:18). Having "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2:9), He ever liveth to make intercession for the "many sons" whom He brings to glory (Heb. 7:25; 2:10).

Into this second phase of the revelation of God, is injected another mystery - the Holy Spirit, as the Parakletos (John 14:16 - "Comforter." We noted when first mentioned (page 2) that the failure to distinguish between what has been revealed of the work and nature of this Parakletos has created false conclusions

Let us consider one revelation in Acts. 13:2-4:

Now there was in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; ... 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. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands upon them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed unto Seleucia.

It should be obvious to the most casual reader that the "I" refers to a "person;" and that that "I" is the Holy Spirit, not just an "influence" or a "power," but a Being with power and authority with a consciousness to direct and plan.

Another experience recorded in the same book declares plainly that to lie to

Being with power and authority with a consciousness to direct and plan.

Another experience recorded in the same book declares plainly that to lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie unto God (5:3-4). The book of Acts also gives us further insight into the working of the Holy Spirit. Concerning Philip one of the seven deacons, we are told that an "angel of the Lord spake unto Philip" telling him to go down to Gaza. When he got there he saw a man in a chariot reading and "the Spirit said to him, "Go near and join thy self to this chariot" (8:26-29). Then the final picture - after the baptism - "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more" (8:39). Philip was next found at Azotus (8:40). This record concerning Philip suggests a close working relationship between the Holy Spirit and the angels of heaven.

We should return to the revelation of God as given to Isaiah (44:6) and note God's declaration of Himself as emphasized in the final book of the Bible. Both the Lord, "the king of Israel" and "the Lord of hosts" declare of themselves, "I am the first, and I am the last;" and "Beside me there is no Elohim" (Heb., Gods). The "first and the last" concept expresses "eternity," no beginning, and no ending.

The first revelation of the "only true God" in the Apocalypse is the declaration - "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (1:8). The first revelation of Jesus is as "the Son of man" standing "in the midst of seven candlesticks. John had heard Him declare, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." (1:11). The Apocalypse closes with all things restored, a "new heaven and a new earth" (21:1) From the One sitting on the throne John was instructed to write, "These words

are true and faithful." "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end (21:6). From the Lamb who shares the throne, he hears the final promise given in the Upper Room reiterated, - "Behold I come quickly ... I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last (22:12-13). The same Duality which opens the Bible, closes the Bible. In the time between is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (13:8), the Living One who was dead but is now "alive forevermore" (1:18).

#### WORDS

There are certain Greek words used in the New Testament in regard to the Incarnate Christ which if incorrectly defined can lead to false conclusions about God and the Word made flesh. One is *μονογενής* ("only begotten."). So translated in the KJV, this word is found nine times in the New Testament, and only in the gospel and first Epistle of John is it used in reference to Christ. In the other two books where used - Luke and Hebrews - it defines human relationships.

Its first use in the Gospel of John (1:14) is in reference to the Incarnation. This limits its use to the same event in all of John's other references. The Greek word, *μονογενής*, is a compound word: *μονος* (alone, only) and *γενος* (kind, species, kindred). This latter word is used in the LXX of Genesis 1 for our word, "kind." Thus *μονογενής* could be translated, "one of a kind" or "unique." He truly was unique, a God-man, One of a kind. The second use of the word, *μονογενής*, by John is in verse 18. Some of the early manuscripts of the New Testament, read "only begotten God," rather than "only begotten Son." This is true as Jesus Christ was the only One of the Duality to become flesh, yet His God status was never lost in becoming flesh.

Another Greek word is πρωτοτοκος. This word, as the one above, is likewise found nine times in the New Testament. Seven of the nine references refer directly to Jesus Christ. One, Col. 1:15, allows for variant translations. Should πρωτοτοκος πασης κτισεως be translated "the first born of every creature" (KJV), or "born before all creation," (EGC), or "His is the primacy over all created things" (NEB). It, too, is a compound word: (πρωτος - "first") and (τικτο - "to bear" "to give birth").

To better understand its meaning in relationship to Jesus as far as "birth" is concerned is to observe another use made of the word in connection with His death. Twice the New Testament notes Jesus as being "the first begotten of the dead" (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). Factually, Jesus was not the first to be resurrected from the dead. He Himself called forth Lazarus. But the same reference in Colossians which admits to various translations, also clarifies this apparent contradiction. It reads "that He who is the beginning, the first born from the dead" is so "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18). Thus the NEB translation of verse 15 stays closest to context and meaning by using the word, "primacy" to express πρωτοτοκος, "first begotten."

## P. O. Box 69, OZONE

It is called by various names. Some, who receive it call it for what it is, "junk mail." Others jokingly call it "fan mail." Whatever it is, each day our postal box gets its share, and then sometimes, more than its share. More than a week ago, we received an advertising brochure wanting us to join an apparently new book club called the *American Compass*. It is being presented as "The Conservative Alternative." It is cheap to join and easy to retain membership. Buy five books for

\$1.00, and the same number of books during the next two years to retain that membership; -- and these books at 50% off publisher's edition prices. The new book club also has a connection with the "religious right," and the History Book Club through which we have purchased books during past years.

The front cover of the brochure sparked my interest. There were three pictures of individuals whom they called "voices you respect." And with each picture there is a quotation from a current publication of the one pictured. It was the quotation from Ann Coulter's book, *How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must)*, which caused me to come to immediate attention. It read:

I am often asked if I still think we should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity. The answer is: Now more than ever (p. 21).

Across my mind a text of prophecy flashed. It declares:

And he (the false prophet of Rev. 13) had power to give life unto the image of the beast (first beast of Rev. 13), that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed (v. 15).

Today it is Iraq; tomorrow it may be Iran; but down the rode will be "Mordicai" in the gate. We need to determine now as to where we will be standing. A re-reading of the book of Esther is advisable with close attention to what it took to stand in those centuries past. No less will be required tomorrow.

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The trying experiences that came to God's people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone. ... The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God (PK, p. 605)

## Katrina – Any Lessons?

As I was nearing the close of the first draft of this current issue of WWN, a young man from back East called and asked if he could make a suggestion of what an issue in 2006 might contain. He assumed that I had already completed this December issue, and I should have, but hadn't. His suggestion was concerning what Katrina should tell us. After the conversation, I mulled over his suggestion, and decided that since it was a good one and I did have some space left, I would take his advice. He was thinking of the counsel given to the Church – "Get out of the cities." He said that he could not find the references, but when I mentioned, *Country Living*, he immediately recalled that that booklet was the source he had in mind. The balance of this article will be counsel compiled in *Country Living*.

"Out of the cities; out of the cities!" --- this is the message that the Lord has been giving me. The earthquakes will come; the floods will come; and we are not to establish ourselves in the wicked cities, where the enemy is served in every way, and where God is so often forgotten. (*Life Sketches*, p. 409)

There are reasons why we should not build in the cities. On these cities God's judgments are soon to fall (*Letter 158*, 1902).

The time is near when large cities will be swept away, and all should be warned of these coming judgments (*Evangelism*, p. 29)

The world over, cities are becoming hotbeds of vice. On every hand are the sights and sound of evil. Everywhere are enticements to sensuality and dissipation. The tide of corruption and crime is continually swelling. Every day brings the record of violence, - robberies, murders, suicides and crimes unnameable. ...

It was not God's purpose that people should be crowded into cities, huddled together in terraces and tenements. In the beginning He placed our first parents amidst the beautiful sights and sounds He desires us to rejoice in today. The more nearly we come into harmony with God's original plan, the more favourable will be our

position to secure health of body, and mind, and soul (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 363, 365).

Cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood. ... Calamities will come – calamities most awful, most unexpected; and these destructions will follow one after another (*Evangelism*, p. 27).

There are reasons why we should not build in the cities. On these cities, God's judgments are soon to fall. (*Letter 158*, 1902).

The time is near when large cities will be swept away, and all should be warned of these coming judgments (*Evangelism*, p. 29).

O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry (*R&H*, Sept. 10, 1903).

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#### AN EARLY VISION

**I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists [Adventists in name only], like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs ... will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that they keep the Sabbath, and disregard Sunday (Spalding-Magan Collection, p.1, "Dorchester Vision)**