



*"Watchman,  
what of the night?"*

*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12*

## THIS IS THE VICTORY - FAITH

### Is Perfection NOT "Through Faith"?

- + -

We all are sinners, born into the sinful environment of this earth, and the recipients of the nature of fallen Adam. But we're not left in hopelessness. There are "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." (II Peter 1:4) These promises become operative at the moment we recognize our undone state, even at the point where the magnitude of our sin overwhelms us. This is well illustrated in the experience of the man who "was sick of palsy." (Mark 2:5) This man was completely discouraged - his sins had made him impotent, a complete invalid, totally dependent on friends. If he could but know his sins were forgiven him, he would willingly accept the results of his wrong course of living. Jesus, seeing the faith of the friends who had taken extreme measures to bring him into His presence, said to the man - "Thy sins be forgiven thee." The man made no move; his faith grasped the promise - all was well, the guilt that plagued his soul was gone. He would accept the results from his sin without murmuring. His friends could have pulled him up from the presence of Jesus, and he would have been perfectly happy.

This is not the end of the episode. Religious skeptics sat among the group who

had come to hear Jesus upon His return to Capernaum. To them the promise of Jesus was blasphemy. Jesus used the occasion of their skepticism to seal for all time the meaning and the extent of God's forgiveness. He asked - "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?" (Mark 2:9) Merely to speak either, makes little difference; no more effort is required. But in this case, one statement was spoken before the other to meet the need of a human heart suffering under the guilt of sin, and to illustrate the "exceeding" greatness of God's forgiving mercy. That those religious skeptics might know that He, the Son of man, had power to forgive sins on earth - yes, in the environment of sin - Jesus said to the man lying before Him - "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." (Mark 2:11) In accepting the first promise of Jesus - his sins forgiven him - the man responded in the same faith to the command of Jesus and arose and walked as he had not been able to do from the time when the ravages of sin had come upon him. He was not only forgiven; he was restored as if he had never sinned. To face life - after one has sinned as if he had never sinned - is faith that works because of the love of God shed abroad through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Christian life does not end with merely forgiveness - that is only the beginning!

Because of the deceptive working of the enemy, we have been born blind. Now we

need to see that in the cosmic struggle being fought on the stage of earth, the position God has and is taking is the correct position. There is only one way by which we can see this, and that is by beholding the Cross - whereon the Spirit of God, manifest in clay, could be applied to us. The experience involved here is illustrated in the experience of the man "which was blind from birth." (John 9:1) Neither he, nor his parents, had sinned in such a way as to cause this serious defect, "but that the works of God should be manifest in him." (verse 3) Declaring Himself to be the Light of the world, Jesus "spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He annointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." When the man had done so, he "came seeing." (verses 5-7)

The experience of this man - after he came seeing - reveals a greater insight on his part into the religious issues of that day, than many have of the issues facing Laodicea today. He was not fearful at the prospect of being cast out of the synagogue, but openly spoke the truth to the Pharisaical hierarchy who questioned him. The result was that he was "cast out" of the synagogue. When Jesus heard that he had been cast out, He "found him," and said unto him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" On whom else could he trust? Who else could have done what had been done to him - for "since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind." (John 9:32) He wanted to know such a Person, and replied, "Who is he, Sir, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou has both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him." (verses 36-38) Here is saving faith: simply to believe and then to express that belief in worship. Herein also, was the victory of Christ over Satan - "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10) Jesus in His humanity served - obeyed - God, becoming "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil 2:8) In His light we shall see light - the true cure for our Laodicean blindness. "To him that

overcometh" are the words of the Divine Spirit to Laodicea. (Rev. 3:21) But HOW do we overcome the same wily foe with whom Jesus contended? The victors "overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Rev. 12:11) This was the experience of the man born blind. He accepted the provision of the Lamb, gave the word of his testimony, and loved not his life unto the death - religious ostracism.

Now to the final generation of earth, there is given a truly "exceeding great" promise. Some - who so choose - will appear before the throne of God without fault, and without guile in their mouths. (Rev. 14:5) How shall this be? - by faith or by works?

This question can be answered in the experience of Abraham and Sarah.

When God called Abraham to leave his homeland to go to a land he had not yet seen, He also made a promise to Abraham that He would make him "a great nation." (Gen. 12:1-2) Abraham was seventy-five years old at that time and Sarah was ten years younger. Time passed - Abraham's substance increased so greatly that it became necessary for him and Lot to separate. Painful as this was to Abraham, God comforted him with the assurance - "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." (Gen. 13:16) Had he hoped to have Lot as his heir?

Years continue - Lot experiences the misfortunes of those with whom he chose to identify. Abraham comes to the rescue, and restores the captives with their substance to their cities in the plain. Once again God comes and promises Abraham - "Fear not, . . . I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. 15:1) To this Abraham replied - "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless. . . . Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." (Gen. 15:2-3) To this appeal, God was very specific. He said - "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." Then God invited him to come out of his tent, and said - "Look now toward

heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." (verses 4-5)

Eleven years came and went. Sarah was seventy-six years of age. All possibilities for her to have a child disappeared. The natural deteriorations of life had overtaken her. There must be some human way to fulfill the promise of God. The condition of the promise, as reported to her by Abraham was that he was to father the heir. So Sarah decided that through her "maid" she could obtain a child to meet the design of God. You know God does need help, doesn't He? Or does He?! If there was any way that Abraham could have an heir by works, Sarah was going to see to it. Then as with all who depend on works to accomplish what they perceive to be essential to do the works of God, when the plan didn't work, she blamed Abraham. "My wrong be upon thee," was her reaction. This experience has spiritual overtones which reach to this our very day. It has been well stated:

"The effort to earn salvation by one's own works, inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey. All of this turns the mind away from God to self. His loves dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for their fellow-men. A system of human invention, with its multitudinous exactions, will lead its advocates to judge all who come short of the prescribed human standard. The atmosphere of selfish and narrow criticism stifles the noble and generous emotions, and causes men to become self-centered judges and petty spies." (Mount of Blessing, Chapter: "Not Judging but Doing")

Now back to the story of Abraham: God permits thirteen more years to pass. It was beyond question, Sarah had now completely passed the time for child-bearing, and there was no known way to turn back the process and restore the possibility for conception. Then God comes once more to Abraham with the revelation of Himself as El-Shaddai - "the Almighty God." The promise is renewed - "I will multiply thee exceedingly," (Gen. 17:1-2) God became

very specific as to His intentions for Abraham - "I will bless [Sarah], and give thee a son of her." (Gen. 17:16) To this Abraham laughed - the possibility was too remote for him to conceive such a thing that he pled - "O that Ishmael might live before Thee." But God responded - "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed." (verses 18-19)

In a few weeks, God again appeared to Abraham, and declared in the hearing of Sarah - "I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son." (Gen. 18:10) The facts of life were too great for Sarah, and she laughed within herself. The thoughts of her heart were known to the Lord, and He called Sarah to task - "Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" Then came the question, which forms the basis of all of the precious promises given to man - "IS ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR THE LORD?" (Gen. 18:14) "At the time appointed" the promised seed was to be born. Isaac was not only a child of promise, but a child born at a "time appointed" in the plans and purposes of God.

Between this final promise to both Abraham and Sarah, and the birth of Isaac, the Scripture places the destruction of Sodom, and the experience of Abraham and Sarah with Abimelech. Though ninety years of age, Sarah was still attractive enough to create possible problems, and neither had sufficient faith that the promise of God would assure the safety of Abraham's life, so they resorted to deception for self-protection.

When Sarah did conceive, the Scripture declares - "The Lord visited. . . and the Lord did. . . as He had spoken." (Gen. 21:1) Further the event occurred "at the set time of which God had spoken to him [Abraham]" about. (verse 2) Abraham and his wife could have continued normal marital relations, and would have still continued childless had not God acted in His Almighty power. God did not create a new womb; He merely rejuvenated that which already was, so that a new life might result. Isaac was truly theirs, but only because of God's power. The time in God's plan had elapsed to such an

extent that it was obvious that the child of promise could not be because of mere human activity, but was born solely by what God could and did do.

The final victors in the struggle with "the beast" and "his image" and "his mark" (Rev. 15:2) will be "without fault" because God has promised, and He is able to perform His commitments. There has been fixed a "set time" in the plans and purposes of God when this is to be realized - the Day of Final Atonement. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth children." (Isa. 66:8)

This experience does not come through the irradiation of the fallen nature as was taught by the Holy Flesh Movement, and is presently being set forth by some today in their teaching of perfection. Sarah's womb was the same one she always had, God did not do an hysterectomy, and then create a new womb. He rejuvenated her womb that the normal process for which it was made might be carried through to the bringing forth of the promised son.

Perfection will result from the rejuvenation of our fallen nature - perverted, misused and degenerated by disobedience - by the power of Almighty God - the God who appeared to Abraham as El Shaddai. It is by God's grace through faith, lest any man should boast. The Holy Spirit in all of its fullness - without measure - is obtained by Jesus through the final intercession of His blood. "The mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, with all their quickening, recuperative, and transforming power, [will] fall as an electric shock on the palsy-stricken soul, causing every nerve to thrill with new life, restoring the whole man from his dead, earthly, sensual state to spiritual soundness." (5T:267)

When we look at ourselves - truly look - having our eyes annointed with eyesalve, we see our undone condition in the same light as Abraham and Sarah perceived the womb of Sarah to be - unable to produce life - a life acceptable to God. As did Abraham and Sarah who suggested various substitute ways - a servant born in the

house, even the child born of works accepted for the promised seed, so we perceive and teach a substitute way to perfection based on our works of "reform." Nothing - absolutely nothing - was or is acceptable to God, except that which meets His specifications and comes about as a result of His power, alone! God has promised a demonstration of perfection in the final hour of human history. We must believe that what He has promised He is able to perform. He will perform it in all who perceive the futility of their own works. "THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, EVEN OUR FAITH. WHO IS HE THAT OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD?" - even as the man born blind. (I John 5:4-5) #

#### PAWTUCKET INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH SERVICES

On the next page is a copy of a Calender of Events for the Pawtucket Institute for Health Services, a satellite of Fuller Memorial Hospital, a medical facility of the Atlantic Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Alton D. Johnson, Chaplain of the Hospital, writing about this Rhode Island facility which opened in 1978, declared that its objective was "to be an entering wedge bringing the Third Angel's Message into Rhode Island's conservative Yankee traditionalism." (Gleaner Sept. 25, 1979) He indicated that the Administrator was looking for personnel who were fully grounded "in the Three Angels' Messages" and for "individuals filled with the Holy Spirit, which must pervade every SDA health center." (Ibid.)

The Chaplain indicated in his report that "besides nursing care, other services provided by the Pawtucket Institute include social services" such as "religious services for ambulatory and wheelchair patients of Wednesdays and weekends in the attractive chapel; and special patient services." (Ibid., emphasis his.)

Sabbath worship services and Rosary services all in the same Chapel? Activities under the Three Angels' Messages - Bingo on Sabbath? Coffee Socials and Dance Therapy? "How is the faithful city become a harlot?" (8T:250)

# MAY 1983

NOTICE SABBATH !!!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Communion Service 10:30 A.M.	2 10:30 A.M. Coffee Social 2:00 P.M. Bingo	3 2:00 P.M. Pet Therapy 2:00 Rosary Service	4 1:30 P.M. Fall River Globe Shopping Store	5 10:00 Ceramics 1:30 Country Store 2:00 Bingo	6 10:00 A.M. Coffee Social 10:30 Rhythm Band	7 8:30 A.M. Mother's Day Breakfast at Alexion's
8 Mother's Day Epis. Mass 11:00 A.M. Mother's Day	9 10:00 A.M. Coffee Social 2:00 P.M. Bingo	10 10:00 A.M. Ceramics 2:00 Rosary Service	11 10:00 A.M. Baptist Church Service 1:30 P.M. The Country Store	12 10:00 A.M. Ceramics 2:00 P.M. Sing-a-long	13 10:00 A.M. Coffee Social 10:30 Dance Therapy 2:00 Bowling	14 2:00 P.M. Bingo
15 Communion Service	16 Coffee Social 10:00 A.M. 2:00 P.M. Bingo	17 2:00 P.M. Pet Therapy 2:00 Rosary Service	18 10:00 A.M. Ceramics "The Jolson Story" Refreshments and Movie	19 10:00 AM Ceramics 1:30 P.M. Epis. mass 6:30P.M. Sing a long	20 10:00AM Coffee Social 2:00 P.M. Bowling	21 2:00 P.M. Bingo
22 10:30 Communion Service	23 10:00 AM Coffee Social 1:30 P.M. Country Store 2:00 Bingo	24 10:00 AM Ceramics 2:00 Rosary Service	25 10:00 AM Baptist Church Service 2:00 P.M. Rosary Service	26 10:00A.M. Ceramics 2:00 Monthly Birthday Party	27 10:00A.M. Coffee Social 10:30 Dance Therapy 2:00 Bowling	28
29 10:30 Communion Service	30 Holiday Memorial Day Memorial Day	31 Pet Therapy 1:30 2:00 Rosary Service	APRIL 1983 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	JUNE 1983 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE	

## ETHICS

### SHOULD PROTESTORS USE THEM?

After several letters and a telephone call, we decided that more of our readers would be interested in the background which prompted the letter written on December 22, 1983, to Fritz Alseth, and which he published in an unethical manner in Advent Crossroads, #6, p. 20. Not a single sentence in the letter as sent to him was in all "caps". Further, hardly noticeable to the average reader were the ellipsis marks indicating that something had been omitted. And it had - the rest of the paragraph! In fact, it was the key paragraph of the whole letter. Accurate scholarship and ethics - if such an omission had been deemed advisable - would have to indicate that the balance of the paragraph had been omitted by starting the next sentence as it really was, the first sentence of the next paragraph. Here is the way the letter was originally written as sent to Alseth:

"This has already been done. Enclosed with this letter you will find a Statement of Beliefs which we formulated in 1980 immediately following the adoption of the apostate statements in Dallas. In fact, they were published as a Thought Paper for December of that year. This Statement received the approval of the directors of the Foundation.

"You will observe by the documentation that these Statements are worded - in many cases exactly - as the original Statements as drawn up by James White and Uriah Smith. There are also noted suggestive areas of theology not covered by the pioneers that need further and detailed study."

[The underscored part was omitted by Alseth. If our readers who were not on the Thought Paper list at that time wish to have a copy of the document sent to Alseth, which he tried to cover up by omission, we will be happy to send you one upon request.]

The second unethical aspect of the publication of our letter, was the fact that supposedly, we had received a reply. A copy of this supposed letter was printed beneath our letter. But in reality we

did not receive it. When we did get a reply dated January 16, 1984, it read like this:

"I have been thinking of writing you since receiving your letter, but didn't have the time since I was in the middle of finishing up the paper - getting it down to Sacramento and sending it out."

Who then wrote the letter as it appeared in Advent Crossroads? It was signed - "Fritz Alseth, Layman, publisher and Janitor." The letter we received was signed: "Fritz Alseth, EDITOR - ADVENT CROSSROADS." Will the real Fritz Alseth, please stand up? He that is deceitful in that which is least is also deceitful in that which is much.

Why did we write to Alseth in the first place? Two reasons, one growing out of the other. A few days before we wrote, we received a copy of a letter a friend had written to some friends of his. In it was the following comment: "Just yesterday, I got a letter from Brother Fritz Alseth, Editor of the Advent Crossroads, who suggested that they were going to call a meeting on the West Coast where they plan to propose a Statement of Beliefs, so that all the 'remnant people' can be united in one voice to PROTEST against the apostate SDA church." Inasmuch as we had drawn up a composite statement based on the Statements formulated by the pioneers of the Movement, another Statement would either be identical or of necessity veer to the right of "historic" Adventism, since the 1980 Dallas Statement had gone to the left.

We did not receive a letter from Alseth telling of the proposed meeting, and knowing why, is the second reason why we wrote the letter, and suggested: "Now I realize that you will want to put distance between yourself and where we have voted to stand on historic Adventism, but in so doing you will be as far out in the other direction as the church is in left field. Two apostacies do not make one truth."

A number of years back, Alseth was connected with the Plymouth (CA) Brethren at the Blake Commune. It seems that they were desirous of having an "unity meeting" among the dissidents of Adventist orientation. I was contacted and asked if I

would consider chairing such a meeting. Being interested in unity, I responded asking for more detail. The bottom line was that two items had to be considered as non-negotiable: 1) That all men had to wear full beards. (See Advent Crossroads, #5, p. 11); and 2) All had to use the name, Yahweh, as the designation of God. I backed away. Since that time Alseth has been in and out of the Wright Movement in Australia. The only way one can tell with whom he is connected today is to know the source of the various Protest articles as they are drawn up. From reading these Statements of Protest, it has the overtones of the great FDR Political Coalition - something for everybody. Legitimate as some of these items are, they are not to be found in "historic" Adventist Statements of Belief. Further, many are peripheral rather than major areas inviting deeper study. So what is the protest all about? Is it the same "unity theme" dressed up in a different garb? The unity for which Christ prayed was to be based solely on the Word of Truth - "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." (John 17:17)

Further from another letter dated Feb. 10, 1984, over Alseth's signature, is to be found this comment: - "We are working very closely with Brother John Nicolici." This introduces another aspect into the material covered by the Protest. Elder Nicolici has his "roots" in the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement. His father was a respected leader in that Movement, and his father's name to those in the Movement ranks with the names of Spicer, Branson, and McElhany to those in the regular Church.

Elder John Nicolici broke with the SDA Reform Movement over organization and use of authority. However, I have never heard him repudiate the teachings of the Reform Movement as outlined in the Gotha Statement drawn up in July, 1925. These Statements of Belief - which include organizational procedures as well as doctrines - while reflecting the hierarchical structure of the parent Church, do not reflect

the doctrinal teachings of "historic" Adventism, but carry the language to be found in Roman Catholic Catechisms when formulating salvation concepts.

One may ask - Have you talked to the officers of the Reform Movement about this, before making such a charge? The answer is "Yes - both on the East and West coast." On the East coast, I had with me a young man who had been an altar boy in the Catholic Church, and after the conversations with the Leaders of the Reform Movement - on the way back to his home - he was amazed how much of the formulation of certain Statements paralleled what he had been taught as a boy in the Catholic Church schools. The Leaders of the Reform Movement made the "excuse" that the brethren at Gotha did not have access to any "historic" Adventist Statement of Beliefs. But surely, in the almost sixty years since then, they could bring their Statements into line; that is, if they really believe as they teach, they are the true projection of the great Advent Movement of 1844. All of this and much more finds a reflection in the Protest Statements of the Advent Crossroads.

So as Paul Harvey would say - "Now you have the rest of the story."

#

## SO MUCH IN COMMON

Since noting two months ago in the Thought Paper this booklet published by the WCC, telling of Conversations between themselves and SDA Church leaders, we have received permission to reproduce this book with exclusive distribution rights in the USA and Canada. We have done so and now the book can be obtained by all who wish a copy, either one copy or a dozen copies. The price is \$5.00. You can add it to an Order Form, or send for it separately. If separately apply the same postage and handling costs as on the Order Form. If you wish the book for a study group in quantity, write for the quantity price for five or more to one address.

#

"Watchman, What of the Night?" is published monthly by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Mississippi, Inc., P. O. Box 178, Lamar, AR 72846, USA. It is free upon request. The Canadian affiliate is - The Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Ontario, P. O. Box 117, Thorne, Ontario POH 2J0, Canada.