

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

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

(Matt 25:6 RSV)



1888

RE-EXAMINED

EXAMINED

(PART SEVEN)

It has been with mixed feelings and emotions that the critiques on the 1987 edition of 1888 Re-Examined have been written. Many think that the issues within the Adventist Community should be discussed with objectivity devoid of personalities. This cannot be because personalities are involved with the issues. The thinking and writing of an individual(s) creates the issue itself. In the critiquing of the 1987 edition of 1888 Re-Examined, our problem is painfully acute. In this instance, we have two men whom God called as verily as He called Jones and Waggoner. We today are living in the midst of the on-going reverberations of their response to that call - the first edition of 1888 Re-Examined, and what they are now doing which clouds the whole picture.

Here at the office, we have just finished proofreading the 1950 edition as one of the documents to become a part of the second enlarged printing of A Warning and Its Reception. In proofreading this retyped copy, we were continually faced with decisions. It was evident that when it was first written, it had not been carefully proofread nor references rechecked. (The time frame in which Wieland and Short were working to get the manuscript into the hands of "the brethren" did not permit such correction. See Footnote, p. 2, "An Answer to 'Further Appraisal of the Manuscript'", October, 1958) How much editing should we do? We wished to leave the copy as close to the original as possible, and therefore, made few corrections. We did correct obvious mistakes which might cause confusion. For example, the first printing read in the use of a Scriptural reference - "Gal. 3:102 - a typographical error. We changed it to read - Gal. 3:1-2.

To this second printing, we are adding two letters, one written in 1967, as a part of the Documentary. The retyping of the 1967 Letter from a released copy of the original only compounded the

mixed emotions which has been ours during this seven part series of the 1987 edition. In reading these pen pictures of the past, one sees two men - Wieland and Short - writing a "burden" as real as that borne by Isaiah (15:1; 21:1, etc.) They saw that "light" had been rejected by "the brethren" in resisting both the message and messengers of 1888. They perceived that this "light" was only the "beginning" of greater "light" to come had the first gleamings been accepted. They recongized that the cause of the rejection was "self" and the "offense of the cross." (Gal. 5:11)

In the first edition, they accurately set forth in detailed documentation, the results of the false teachings and emphasis which came into the Church as a result of rejecting the message of 1888. With clear insight, they revealed the fine line between truth and error in the disguised worship of Baal in the Adventist Church. The picture saddens when one can see that these men today are themselves, especially Wieland, repeating the errors of "the brethren" in their own reaction to truth and advancing "light." Wieland cannot divorce himself from the fact that he personally was involved in the unfolding of the drama of history when for the third and final time, the hierarchy of the Church in 1967 rejected the message that God sent both him and Short to give them!

The history is written in the letter to Elder Short following the final and verbal confrontation in Washington, June 27-29, 1967, seventeen days after the beginning of the fulfillment of Luke 21:24. Why has Wieland not been able to see this historic factor and its significance? The same letter also gives the answer. It is twofold: Wieland wanted above all things to get out of "the dog house" he perceived himself to be in as a result of having accepted the call to be God's "messenger" in 1950. In simple language, "the offense of the cross" was too much to carry. (Letter, p. 5) This is still the basic personal problem which he alone will have to work through. The second problem lies as the foundation of the first - misconception of the Laodicean message. Accurately, he defines the "angel" of the Church to be "its human leadership, ... and is thus the General Conference," but then he adds without warrant, "to whom God has entrusted the executive authority for hastening or delaying the vindication of His character before the world and the universe." (Letter, page 4) This is compounded by the conclusion

that the General Conference "is yet to 'sit' with Christ in His 'throne'..." This is conditioned by "the call the Lord Jesus extends to the corporate church: 'be zealous therefore and repent'" (Letter, p. 5; emphasis his) But there has been no "corporate repentance"! This incongruity is explained by stating - "The Lord... is a Divine Gentleman; and if we will not keep step with Him, He will humble Himself to keep step with us; He does not intend to by-pass the General Conference and accomplish the task without their cooperation." (Letter, p. 3) All of this results from a failure to understand the Laodicean message in context.

The Message to Laodicea

Anyone who has studied the Seven Churches of Revelation, chapters two and three, is aware of the diagram depicting them as successive periods of the Church between the two Advents. Few are aware of how some of the pioneers of the movement understood these churches. For example, Joseph Bates, in the first issue of The Review and Herald (Nov., 1950), wrote an article - "The Laodicean Church" (p. 7). The article compassed the whole of the 3rd Chapter, thus including the other churches of the chapter - Sardis and Philadelphia, perceiving these churches as existing parallel to each other. Of Sardis, he wrote - "This, we understand to be the present nominal church, the Babylon,..." Philadelphia was defined as the "translation" church; and Laodicea as "the nominal Adventist" church. A little study can add to Bates' exegesis. Thyatira, the fourth church, could also be understood as parallel - the Catholic Church to the end of time.

To Thyatira is the first mention of the second coming of Christ. To those who do not know "the depths of Satan" the counsel is given - "Hold fast till I come." (2:24-25) This counsel would be without meaning were that "church" not to exist till the Second Advent. To Sardis, the warning is given - "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief." (3:3) Compare this language with the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:42-44. Again, this warning would have little meaning if the "church" did not extend to the Advent. To Philadelphia comes the promise - "Behold I come quickly." (3:11) Thus each of these three churches are addressed in relationship to the Second Coming of Jesus. But one looks in vain for any such message to the

KNIGHT DESCENDS ON JONES

(PART FOUR)

Concluded

The chapter in Knight's "interpretive biography" of A. T. Jones which focuses a key component of the 1888 Message on the present conflict in Adventism today is the chapter on "The Nature of Christ." Knight would have us to believe that the view held by Jones and Waggoner on the nature that Christ assumed in humanity "created no controversy in Adventism of the 1890s" and "was a generally accepted theological nonissue." (p. 133) This evaluation has aspects of truth if one holds rigidly to the time frame given by Knight. In the year 1900, it was an issue which created a response on the part of R. S. Donnell, then president of the Indiana Conference and leader of the Holy Flesh Movement. In the Indiana Reporter, Donnell replied to a series of editorials in the Review on the Incarnation written by A. T. Jones. (See Laymen Ministry News, No. 134, pp. 28-29)

It is difficult to understand why Knight missed this point - if indeed he did - inasmuch as he charges that "Jones had undoubtedly stimulated some of the holy flesh excesses." Then in an undocumented statement, Knight asserts - "It is significant that R. S. Donnell, the Indiana Conference President, had treated Jones as his mentor for his ideas regarding the latter rain in 1896." (Knight, op. cit., pp. 169-170)

[In 1896, Donnell was in the Northwest as President of the Upper Columbia Conference. He had not even heard of the Holy Flesh Movement. It did not begin till 1899! As President of the Indiana Conference in 1899, he had at first opposed the Movement; then made an about face becoming its leader. (See The Holy Flesh Movement 1899-1901, pp. 9-10) The Holy Flesh Movement did not grow out of the 1888 Message, but rather from contacts with Pentecostalism by S. S. Davis in Evansville, Indiana. (Ibid. p. 7)]

Knowing what the Holy Flesh advocates taught in regard to Christ's incarnation, and being forced to assume that Knight knows this also in view of the research he leads the reader to believe he did on this movement, one has no alternative but to conclude that Knight suppressed this factor, because he himself holds to the Holy Flesh teaching on the incarnation, which today is being advocated in Adventism by Elder Tom Davis. (See From 1888 to Apostasy, pp. 139, par. 3; 142, par. 3; WWN XX-2, art. "The 'Holy Flesh' Alternative - T. A. Davis Follows R. S. Donnell")

As noted in Part II of this series of critiques (WWN, XXI-3, p. 3), the chapter, "The Nature of Christ," hit a high water mark in undocumented assumptions. Let us note them again:

- p. 133 - "The devil is undoubtedly pleased..."
- p. 134 - "It is reasonable to believe that if..."
- p. 134 - "It also seems safe to infer, ..."
- p. 143 - "That appears to be the position Ellen White held, ..."
- p. 144 - "Some students have hypothesized...."
- p. 144 - "It is quite probable... If so, ..."
- p. 146 - "If, in fact, ..."
- p. 147 - "It appears that ..."

Besides this technique, Knight seeks to associate and place in the same category with the teaching of the Incarnation as projected by Jones, other issues and concepts being discussed at the time of 1888, and in the early decades of the 20th Century. For example, he reintroduces the "law in Galatians" controversy, and the semi-Arian beliefs of some, and the "daily." (pp. 133, 134) As if this does not introduce enough confusion over the subject, Ellen G. White is charged with confusing the issue. (p. 140) And if this were not enough to touch off a spirited controversy, Knight concludes that Ellen G. White's position on the nature that Christ assumed in the Incarnation resulted from reading Henry Melvill's sermons. (p. 143) This he documents from material released by the Ellen G. White Estate.

There are two points that need to be made crystal clear: 1) The place of doctrine in Christian experience; and 2) The Biblical teaching on Christ's condescension into humanity.

Knight would have us believe that if Ellen

G. White were still alive, she would take the same position on the controversy engendered today by the Incarnation issue, that she took concerning the controversies over the "law in Galatians" and "the daily" - "the argument did not make much difference in either controversy." (p. 134) Knight emphasizes - "It is not our theology that will save us, but the Lord of our theology." Then he adds - "Christian living, of course, needs to be informed by theological truth..." (p. 135) But he fails to realize that "the Lord of theology" will not preside over theological error. The real message to be sure in 1888 was not the "law in Galatians" but "the righteousness of Christ, which is pure, unadulterated truth." (TM, p. 65) "Many, many [like Knight] are very dull of comprehension in regard to their obligation to preserve the truth in its purity, **uncontaminated by one vestige of error.**" (FCE, p. 501) While truth needs to become a part of the life, producing "the caring character of Christ" this does not exclude the necessity that the true Christian "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3) These two aspects of the Christian life are not incompatible, but rather very compatible. While it is "the Lord of our theology" who alone provides salvation, it is the Holy Spirit sent forth from the throne of that Lord who through Paul counselled - "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (I Tim. 4:16)

Turning our attention to the second point - what does the Bible teach in regard to the nature Christ assumed when He became flesh? First, it must never be forgotten; it is the basic premise that it was "the Word" who became flesh, and that "Word was God." (John 1:14, 1) That Self-Identity who existed from eternity in "the form of God" "emptied Himself" and took upon His Self-Identity "the slave form of man." (Phil. 2:6-7 Greek Text) He could not come into the world "born, born again" as the Holy Flesh men taught, and as Tom Davis teaches today, or as Knight seeks to set forth in his "interpretive biography" of Jones. He ever was; His Self-Identity did not change when He changed "forms"; and by His victory in "the slave form of man" He shall be what He ever was! Why should we seek to rob Him of His glorious victory over the flesh and the originator of sin? Why should we seek to minimize the magnitude of that victory

achieved in "the slave form of man" by attempting to make that "slave form" different than the "bondage" into which all of us have been born?

The difference between us and the One who became flesh is that our "self-identity" is the creation of earthly parents who could pass on to us only what the human race received from their first parents - a fallen "self-identity." Only as we are willing to have our "self-identity" (the egō) crucified with Christ, can we have victory in the slave form of our existence. (Gal. 2:20) But the Cross, we do not want; we want to retain our "ego". But that "ego" and "the slave form" spells eternal death. We are willing to accept any kind of theological teaching so long as it does not involve a Cross. But Jesus having accepted our slave form - and all that that means - showed that the only place for such a form was on the Cross. It is expressed in the words of the believing thief to his companion - "Dost thou not fear God, seeing we are in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." (Luke 23:40-41a)

Really, there is no reason to be haggling over the nature Christ assumed in the incarnation. The "slave form" Christ took upon Himself was identical with which every other child of Adam is born. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." (Heb. 2:17) It is just that simple. All the haggling results from a refusal to accept the Cross, because the Cross is the **only** means of victory over our "slave form." Our "self-identity" is powerless against the tendencies arising out of the slave form. But "the faith of the Son of God" gives us the power of victory. "As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey." (DA:24)

In concluding the series of critiques on Knight's book - From 1888 to Apostasy - I would note what a reviewer of the book wrote as published in Ministry (Feb, 1988, p. 63). He stated - "It has been a long time since I have enjoyed reading a book on denominational history as I enjoyed this one ... It reads like a novel." Very well said, a **historical novel, a few facts and lot of fiction!**

WHG

Laodicean Church. Why should this be? This should speak volumes to us, and cause us to do some real deep thinking.

Jesus reveals Himself to Laodicea not only in the identification as to Whom the One is who addresses the "angel" of the church, in this instance - "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (3:14) - but also as the One who stands at the door and knocks (3:20). At no point is Jesus pictured as being let in by the Church - He is ever on the outside! Laodicea treats Jesus even as the Jews did Christ. Of the 1888 experience, it is declared that "had Christ been before them [at the Minneapolis session], they would have treated Him in a manner similar to that which the Jews treated Christ." (Series A, #6, p. 20) Even as Revelation pictures Jesus outside the door, so Hebrews portrays Him suffering "without the gate." (Heb. 13:12-13. The challenge is the same in both figures of speech; either open the door, or go forth to Him "without the camp."

The message to Laodicea is addressed to two groups: the corporate, and the individual. In Verses 15-19, the church is addressed in the corporate sense - "thou," "thee," and "thy" - through its leadership - the "angel." Verse 20 speaks to the individual - "if any man" [Greek - tis], no longer the "thou" [Greek - su]. Why the change? Before addressing the individual, the admonition had been given - "Be [thou] zealous and repent." (3:19) The corporate body does not respond, therefore Jesus turns to the individual. In so doing, He tells us that the indicated objective of verse 16 is carried out. What other conclusion can be drawn when the text changes from the corporate pronoun - "thou" - to the indefinite pronoun - "any one"?

We must next carefully consider verse 16: "So then because thou art lukewarm ... I will spue thee out of my mouth." (KJV) This text reads literally - "So because lukewarm thou art ... I am about thee to vomit out of the mouth of me." The Greek word translated "I am about" (KJV - "I will") is mello. In the book of Revelation, this word is used thirteen times, and as always with an infinitive; in this verse - "to vomit." But what is unusual here, the infinitive is in the simple past tense (Greek: aorist). This is a rare combination in the Greek New Testament, being used only six times. (Rom. 8:18; Gal. 3:23; I Peter 5:1; Rev. 3:2, 16; 12:4) (See A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in

the Light of Historical Research, p. 857) Setting aside Rev. 3:16 for the moment, in each of the other five uses of mello with the infinitive in the Greek aorist (past) tense, that which was or is to take place did or will take place, and the action was not and will not be a prolonged period of time, but punctiliar! Let us note two of these references by way of illustration: Rom. 8:18 and Rev. 12:4.

Romans 8:18 reads:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

"Shall be" is the translation of the present participle of mello, followed by the aorist (past) infinitive, translated, "revealed." Now is God going to change His mind about the "glory" He intends to reveal in us, and forever continue to let unborn generations suffer without hope? **No!** Christ will come and "we shall be changed, in a moment, at the last trump." (I Cor. 15:52-53)

Consider Revelation 12:4b. It reads:

The dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

A literal translation of the above underscored phrase reads - "being about to bear." The Greek is again the present participle of mello with the aorist (past) infinitive tekein, "to bear." The question is - Did the "woman" bring forth the "man child" or did God abort the plan of redemption? "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son,..." (Gal. 4:4)

Now to Rev. 3:16 - "I will spue thee out of My mouth." The same verb is used - mello, and an aorist (past) infinitive is connected with it. Can we say that this is not going to take place; that God is going to wait generations for repentance? The linguistic evidence is totally against this conclusion. The "faithful and true Witness" declares of corporate Laodicea - "Because thou art lukewarm, ... I will spue thee out of My mouth."

In seeking to justify the untenable concept that God is going to wait indefinitely for the corporate body through its hierarchy to repent, Wieland creates a "god" and clothes that "god" with human characteristics. He even names him - the "Divine Gentleman." (See quotes, p. 2, col. 2) This is creating a "god" whom our fathers never knew; a "god"

other than the God of history which the Bible reveals. The God of the Bible is a God whose Spirit does not always strive with men, but Who limits the time for repentance. By creating a "Divine Gentleman" these "messengers" who decried "Baal worship" in their original manuscript have now created their own "Baal" and are worshipping before him. Such is the terror of the deception when the track of error is placed so close to the track of truth, and the intent of the Laodicean message is clouded in faulty exegesis. May God have mercy upon the concerned of His professed people thus deceived.

(Concluded)

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MORE STUDIES ON FULL 1888 MESSAGE?

YOUR CHOICE!

The Bible presents a most precious message to us of God's love and His plan for our redemption from sin and death. In 1888 "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones." (TM, p. 91) As one studies the works of Waggoner and Jones, he cannot help but be impressed with the Biblical basis that they used in their presentations. The last 15 Thought Papers have carried a series of Bible Readings on "Christ Our Righteousness." These Bible Readings were based on the studies that Elder Waggoner published in the book Christ Our Righteousness and/or Christ and His Righteousness.

The 1888 message was based in the word of God. It was not the final outpouring of truth to God's people for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Proverbs 4:18) That light from God's word must be the basis for the future development of truth. The perception of advancing truth never contradicts earlier light. When one understands that the latter rain is to be primarily greater light, (see TM, p. 507) then the following statements become more meaningful: "Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection." (TM, p. 506) "It [the latter rain] may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it." (TM, p. 507)

The 15 Bible Readings based upon Waggoner's studies do not pretend to be the final word, just the foundation. These were offered as an alternative to study guides offered by such groups as, "THE 1888 MESSAGE STUDY COMMITTEE, that are tainted with the "ship is going through" philosophy. While such groups deal with the important heart issues of the Scriptures as given in 1888, they ignore the other two phases of the 1888 message. To present just one side of the three-fold message of 1888 is to leave the people of God without the complete message. The 1888 message involved three areas: 1. Justification by faith: Man's relationship to his Creator. 2. Religious Liberty: Man's relationship to the powers that be. 3. Organization: Man's relationship to the Body of Christ and that Body's relationship to the individual.

The response from the readers of WVN has been positive concerning the Biblical based studies: "Christ Our Righteousness." If the readers of WVN are interested in the Thought Paper presenting studies concerning religious liberty and organization, then they can inform the editors with a short note or postcard stating which sequence - Religious Liberty or Organization - would be most helpful to them.

A.S.

"Absolutely nothing which does not bear the test of truth will be triumphant in the Judgment." (1888 Re-Examined, 1950 edition, p. 2; omitted in the 1987 Edition)

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Editor Wm. H. Grotheer
Associate Editor Allen Stump

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A WARNING

AND



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