

Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism

with special reference
Questions on Doctrine

by Norman F. Douty

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Foreword

This book originated in my own personal need. When a member of my church was coming into frequent contact with Seventh-day Adventism, it became necessary for me to study the subject afresh. By the time I had done so, I had invested so much of time and energy that I decided to invest yet more, in the hope that the total results of my months of intensive research might, by the blessing of God, prove useful to others.

I had prepared the substance of my manuscript before I procured a copy of Walter R. Martin's volume, entitled *The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*. When I had read his interesting and well-meaning—though, on the whole, disappointing—treatise, I felt it advisable to deal with some, but only some, of its contents. So my book is not to be considered "A Reply to Martin." I leave that task to other hands. But it is with allusion to his volume that I have called mine "Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism."

I desire to express my indebtedness to various authors, editors and publishers for the privilege of quoting from their productions. Among authors are Drs. L. E. Froom and F. D. Nichol; and I wish to make special mention of Dr. F. F. Bruce, Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism at the University of Manchester, who was also gracious enough, amid multiplied labors, to read my manuscript and to offer some suggestions for its improvement.

Among editors, thanks are due to the Rev. Herbert F. Stevenson of *The Life of Faith* (London, England) and to Dr. Carl F. H. Henry of *Christianity Today*.

I also make grateful acknowledgment to several publishers, including The Judson Press, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Zondervan Publishing House, and Baker Book House. The Seventh-day Adventists have kindly granted me permission to quote from all of their publications.

In addition to authors, editors and publishers, I am indebted to not a few. Elder Arthur L. White, grandson of Mrs. White, and Elder J. L. Clements, of the Michigan Book and Bible House (Adventist) have gone out of their way to furnish me materials new and old. Most of these are listed under "Sources and Reference Works I," at the close of this book.

To come nearer home, I do not forget Mrs. Sandra Shafley, of my church, whose stenographic assistance has been invaluable; nor, last but not least, my wife, to whose constructive criticisms and unremitting industry, I am so indebted that without them this book could not have been produced.

NORMAN F. DOUTY

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are occasionally used in the text:

- A.S.V. for American Standard Version
- Adventism for Seventh-day Adventism
- Adventists for Seventh-day Adventists
- LXX for the Septuagint
- SDA for Seventh-day Adventist
- N.T. for New Testament
- O.T. for Old Testament
- Questions on Doctrine* for *Seventh-day Adventists answer Questions on Doctrine*

In the footnotes, these additional abbreviations are used:

- C. of P.* for *Catalog of Publications*
- G. C.* for *The Great Controversy* by Mrs. E. G. White
- Q. on D.* for *Questions on Doctrine*
- R. and H.* for *Review and Herald*

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Introduction

In 1957 a "group of Seventh-day Adventist leaders, Bible teachers and editors" put out a book of nearly 700 pages, entitled *Seventh-day Adventists answer Questions on Doctrine* in which they profess to set forth "an explanation of certain major aspects of Seventh-day Adventist belief." Inasmuch as "the replies were prepared by a group of recognized leaders, in close counsel with Bible teachers, editors and administrators," they claim that "this volume can be viewed as truly representative of the faith and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (pp. 7-8). This representative character appears to be confirmed by the approval of the General Conference of the denomination — its highest administrative body¹ — at its Quadrennial Session the year after the publication of the book.

Questions on Doctrine does not claim to present a new Adventist creed. It says: "The goal was to set forth our basic beliefs in terminology currently used in theological circles. This was not to be a new statement of faith, but rather an answer to specific questions concerning our faith. It was natural that these answers would come within the framework of the official statement of Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists which appears in our Church Manual" (p. 8). Thus the 1957 book purports to be simply the old-time Adventism in new phraseology. The *Catalog of Publications* speaks of the book as a "reaffirmation of our beliefs." Accordingly, Mr. Martin says: "This book . . . presents the theology and doctrine which the leaders of Seventh-day Adventism affirm they have always held" (*The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*, p. 47).

The same estimate of the character of the views presented in *Questions on Doctrine* was expressed anticipatively in the Adventist monthly periodical, *Signs of the Times*. Just after Dr. Barnhouse began his startling defense of Seventh-day Adventism in the September, 1956, issue of *Eternity* magazine, this Adventist

¹In her *Testimonies for the Church*, Mrs. White declares the General Conference to be "the highest authority that God has upon earth" (Vol. III, p. 492). She says that "the voice of the General Conference . . . [is] the voice of God" (Vol. IX, p. 261).

publication printed a statement (on October 2, 1956) containing these words: "As to the effect of Dr. Barnhouse's courageous reappraisal of Seventh-day Adventism, we are convinced that it will not only create a sensation in evangelical circles, but will lead thousands to restudy the 'message' which Seventh-day Adventists feel called to give to the world in these last days." The statement was headed: "Adventists Vindicated." Of course, if the Adventists were vindicated, then they had not altered their doctrinal position.

The forty-eighth Quadrennial Session — the one mentioned above — was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 19-28, 1958. Toward its close, the heads of the Conference declared: "Let us remember that genuine unity requires, above all else, a unity in belief, a harmony in doctrine. . . . We stand with the pioneers We need no new doctrines." This declaration appeared in the *Review and Herald* for June 27, 1958 (p. 178).

Still another Adventist periodical, *These Times*, contained an article by Cecil Coffey in July 1958. It stated: "Today everything has changed for the Seventh-day Adventists except their doctrinal beliefs which are more firmly established than ever" (p. 12).

The same assurance is given in a recent publication to which we will presently refer, *The History and Teaching of Robert Brinsmead*. On page 24 it is stated that "Non-Adventists, as well as Adventists, who have read the book [*Questions on Doctrine*] testify that the authors of the book have not changed or abandoned the doctrines of the church. . . . The answers given in the book to questions regarding certain phases of the sanctuary and its services are in full harmony with what we have always believed and taught."

Judging from these various pronouncements of the Adventists themselves, we would conclude that *The Sunday School Times* was correct when it entitled its review of *Questions on Doctrine* in the March 22, 1958 issue, "A new book of old errors." Apparently, the only thing new in the book is the language; the views themselves are the same as before.

However, this is not the estimate of some able men within the movement. They believe that Adventism may have overreached itself. Before the end of 1957, Elder M. L. Andreasen, of Glendale, California, who has been a leading man in Adventism and whose ministry covers six decades, raised his voice in protestation. He strenuously objected, in particular, to

Section VII of the book, wherein the subject of the atonement is presented. He also objected to the statement of the Adventist position on the humanity of Christ. At the 1961 spring council session of the Executive Committee of the General Conference, Mr. Andreasen's ministerial credentials were revoked or suspended, and little has been heard of him since.

Another powerful protest was registered early in 1958 by Mr. A. L. Hudson, of Baker, Oregon, who, two years later, began to publish a periodical, *The Church Triumphant* — a journal which appears to the committee just mentioned, "to be dedicated to the publication of anything it thinks will embarrass the church." Mr. Hudson was trained for the Adventist ministry but is a printer. He sought to get the officers of the General Conference to grant a hearing on *Questions on Doctrine* at the forthcoming Session in Cleveland in 1958, for he recognized that it was only that general body, composed of delegates from all parts of the world, that possessed jurisdiction in cases of this sort. The officers declined to grant his request. Since then he has written some trenchant articles on the issue. As a result, he was excommunicated Oct. 7, 1961, but he continues to attend the SDA church.

Other Adventists have concurred in the viewpoint of these two men. They maintain that *Questions on Doctrine* misrepresents the denomination's historic position on several points. To them the trouble is not a mere matter of semantics, for they contend that the doctrinal expressions of Adventism's earlier writers cannot possibly bear the constructions which are now being put upon them. Perhaps chief among these is Robert D. Brinsmead of Australia who came to the United States late in 1960. So disturbing had his influence become that a special pamphlet of forty-eight pages was issued in December, 1961, on *The History and Teaching of Robert Brinsmead*. This pamphlet was "prepared by the Office of the Research and Defense Literature Committee," is "approved by the General Conference Officers and Union Conference Presidents of North America," and its distribution is "authorized by the General Conference Executive Committee."

It will be necessary to consider some of the points disputed between these two groups in Adventism. But my main object will be to deal with those doctrines common to both, which conflict with the views of Protestants generally. It will be to ascertain, not whether Seventh-day Adventism subscribes to a large body of Scriptural truth — no doubt it does — but whether, at

the same time, it subscribes to a large body of belief that is not Scriptural.

In pursuing this object, I shall make large use of *Questions on Doctrine*, inasmuch as most of its teachings are cherished by all Adventists. (All page numbers not otherwise identified refer to this book). But confirmatory evidence of Adventist beliefs will be drawn from other literature issued by their presses, including a number of works recommended in *Questions on Doctrine* itself (pp. 629-37).

Here it is appropriate to notice what is the Adventist practice in its publication work: "For the protection of Seventh-day Adventist authors, as well as for that of our churches, each of our denominational publishing houses has a book committee to which all manuscripts for books and pamphlets intended for circulation among our members must be submitted. Our houses will not print a book until after the manuscript has passed through the hands of the book committee" (*The History and Teaching of Robert Brinsmead*, p. 17). This means that all of the literature published by the denomination is officially approved. This is important.

As there are a number of restrictions which I have imposed on myself in the writing of this book, it will, I think, be useful to state them here and now.

First, I mean to steer clear of all misrepresentation. Few things are more reprehensible than misconstruing another's words, even though the misconstruction is unintentional. Whatever its motive, such inaccuracy can inflict great damage. I shall, therefore, endeavor, in every instance, to be precise when stating the views of Adventism, neither distorting nor taking out of context anything they have said.

Secondly, I aim to avoid — how far I succeed the reader must judge — the use of invalid argument. A large portion of anti-Adventist literature consists of such material. What is valid reasoning is likely to be set aside along with that which is not, instead of being carefully distinguished from it. I do not wonder that Seventh-day Adventists are more strengthened than weakened through reading such literature.

Thirdly, I intend to refrain from attributing to Seventh-day Adventism those fallacies that logically flow from its express declarations. More than three centuries ago, Bishop Joseph Hall said: "There cannot be a more useful rule for our moderation in judgment, than this: that we may not take that for a man's opinion which...doth, by necessary inference, follow

upon it; but only that which himself professes to maintain." Accordingly, in those instances in which I shall show what are inevitable implications of SDA teaching, I shall refrain from charging them upon the movement.

Fourthly, I determine to forbear all abuse. Calling things by their right names is quite another matter. Though I intend to do this, I do not intend to do it in bad spirit. Apart from my duty to God, there is the obligation of courtesy to others. I have never received anything but kindness from Adventists and shall I return evil for good? As a matter of fact, I have no impulsion but that of love in performing my present task.

Fifthly, I resolve to exclude from my examination of Seventh-day Adventism the criticisms which others have made of it. I am not unacquainted with derogatory literature, but I will not cite such in the course of my investigation. What I have to say must stand upon its own feet, unsupported by anyone else.

Sixthly, I wish to avoid writing something merely negative. Accordingly, it will be my object to provide something of positive truth in handling each aspect of SDA doctrine dealt with, so as to insure a treatment that is constructive as well as destructive.

And now with malice toward none, but with fervent prayer that what here appears may be of everlasting benefit to Adventists as well as to others, I commit my book to my readers.

CHAPTER ONE

Inspiration

Seventh-day Adventism concurs with the church universal in ascribing divine inspiration to the Bible. The church universal has held that, due to the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit, the words of the original Scriptures were both the words of men and the words of God.² Such being the case, it follows that the Bible is infallible,³ trustworthy,⁴ and authoritative.⁵ The concurrence of Seventh-day Adventism in this estimate of the Bible is expressed in its first article of belief: "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice" (p. 11, cf. pp. 22.3; 28). This declares not only that the Bible is inspired, but also that it is infallible ("unerring"), trustworthy ("an all-sufficient revelation") and authoritative ("rule").

But Adventism diverges from the church universal in ascribing divine inspiration also to the writings of Mrs. Ellen G. White

²E.g., B. B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, pp. 153, 173, 420-22; John Urquhart, *Philip Brainerd*, p. 144; F. F. Bruce, "What do we mean by Biblical Inspiration?" (*Journal of Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, 1946). Inspiration, therefore, is declared to admit of no degrees. It is either present or absent, complete or nonexistent. See e.g., L. Gaussen, *Theopneustia*, p. 116; A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 220-1; Francis J. Hall, *Theological Outlines*, p. 26; H. C. G. Moule, *Veni Creator*, pp. 55-6; T. C. Hammond, *In Understanding be Men*, p. 37; R. A. Finlayson, "Contemporary Ideas of Inspiration" (*Revelation and the Bible*, p. 222).

³E.g., Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 153; W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 68; Alvah Hovey, *Manual of Theology and Ethics*, p. 79. Observe, however, that "while at times inspiration guarantees the truth of what is written, at other times it only guarantees the report or record of what is written, which may in substance be untrue" (W. H. G. Thomas, *The Holy Spirit of God*, p. 157).

⁴E.g., John D. Davis, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 3rd ed., p. 336; Leonard Woods, "Inspiration" (*Kitto's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*); Carl F. H. Henry, "Inspiration" (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, p. 286).

⁵E.g., Maclaur, *Introduction to the Articles of the Church of England*, p. 104 f; *The Protestant Dictionary*, p. 332; H. C. G. Moule, *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 140-1.

(1827-1915).⁶ In their 1957 publication, *Questions on Doctrine*, we read: "Seventh-day Adventists regard her writings as containing inspired counsel and instruction. . . . Under the same inspiration she also wrote much in the great field of sacred history" (p. 92). In the 1961 annotated *Adventist Catalog of Publications* (which lists about seventy of Mrs. White's productions inside the back cover) the same estimate appears repeatedly in the description of her books. *A Call to Medical Evangelism* contains "inspired statements." *Highways to Heaven* carries "credentials of inspiration." *The Story of Jesus* has woven into it a "wealth of inspired meaning." *Temperance* is "an inspired reference work."

This view of Mrs. White's writings pervades Adventist literature. For example, A. G. Daniells (President of the General Conference, 1901-22) attributes a statement of hers to "the pen of inspiration" (*Christ our Righteousness*, p. 95). On August 10, 1961, I heard R. R. Figuhr, now occupying the same office, use the same words in referring to her. In *The History and Teaching of Robert Brinsmead*, mentioned in the Introduction as published last December, we find "the inspired pen" of Mrs. White mentioned on page 17. (See also pages 20, 33, 45, 46.) W. A. Spicer, Mr. Daniells' Successor as President of the General Conference (1922-30), cites with approval, in a single chapter, the impressions of ten persons who considered Mrs. White inspired (*The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, ch. 6).⁷ F. W. Detamore (author of *Just What do you believe in your Church?* i.e., the Adventist Church) declares in *The Youth's Instructor* for October 28, 1947: "I have not the slightest doubt about the absolute inspiration and accuracy of the Spirit of Prophecy." F. D. Nichol, the present editor of *Review and Herald*, says: "She spoke by inspiration" (*Ellen G. White and her Critics*, p. 23). Carlyle B. Haynes went so far as to aver that "in all her numerous books, there is not one statement, one word, that is contrary to the uniform teaching of the Holy Scriptures" (*The Gift of Prophecy*, p. 168).

Since Adventists believe in the inspiration of both the Bible and Mrs. White's writings, are we to conclude that they hold her writings to be on a par with the Bible? Their response puzzles us at first. They reply: "We have never equated them with the Scriptures, as some falsely charge" (p. 93). "We do not regard the writings of Mrs. White as an addition to the sacred canon of

⁶This is the third of the five distinctive Adventist doctrines (*Q. on D.*, p. 25).

⁷Another book by Mr. Spicer is listed on p. 631.

Scripture. . . we do not regard them in the same sense as the Holy Scriptures, which stand alone and unique as the standard by which all other writings must be judged" (p. 89). "We test the writings of Ellen G. White by the Bible, but in no sense do we test the Bible by her writings" (p. 90).⁸

We can only conclude, then, that Seventh-day Adventism has a double doctrine of inspiration, one for the Scriptures, and another for the writings of Mrs. White. The inspiration of the former is estimated as superior to that of the latter.

Just how does Adventism define the inspiration of Mrs. White's writings? It defines it in two ways: one negative and the other positive. Negatively, it says that her inspiration is not verbal; positively, that it is identical with that of the non-literary prophets.

First, consider the negative definition. Dr. Frank H. Yost, in his article entitled "A Seventh-day Adventist speaks back" (July 21, 1958 issue of *Christianity Today*), says that "Mrs. White did not believe herself verbally inspired," but that she "put down as accurately as was humanly possible the instruction she received." Similarly, W. H. Branson, in his book, *In Defense of the Faith*,⁹ says: "She never claimed verbal inspiration for her writings; but she claimed that through the gift of the Spirit special light was shed upon the written Word, and this has been written out in her own words" (p. 330). W. A. Spicer devotes the seventh chapter of his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, to expounding this "method out of the ordinary," as he terms it. An even fuller exposition of it appears in *The Testimony of Jesus* (chs. 12, 14), by F. M. Wilcox, the fifth editor

⁸Cf. *R. and H. Supplement*, Aug. 14, 1883, p. 12; *R. and H. Extra*, Dec. 1887, p. 11; *R. and H.*, Oct. 4, 1928: "The writings of Mrs. E. G. White were never designed to be an addition to the canon of Scripture"; F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, ch. 10.

⁹Published in 1933 and listed on p. 635. Called a "logical book" in the *C. of P.* Its sub-heading is "A Reply to Canright." It is a criticism of D. M. Canright, who, after twenty-eight years in Adventism, left it and wrote several volumes against it. Other criticisms of him appear in Mrs. White's *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. III (pp. 304-29) and Vol. V (pp. 516-20, 571-3, 621-8). In these four instances Mr. Canright is addressed as Brother "A," "E," "M" and "O," respectively. "An Appeal to D. M. Canright," also from Mrs. White, occurs in *Selected Messages*, Bk. II, ch. 18. Shortly after his defection, the *R. and H. Extra* of December, 1887 was printed, to answer his assaults on the movement and its leaders. C. P. Bollman's pamphlet on "Sunday," written years later, was a further reply to Canright, but the most voluminous appears in F. D. Nichol's *Ellen G. White and her Critics*.

of *Review and Herald*, (1911-c.46). Uriah Smith, who, despite his Arianism, was for about half a century editor of the *Review and Herald*, dilated on this subject in the March 13, 1888 issue of that periodical. It appears, then, that whereas Seventh-day Adventism holds that the inspiration of the Bible relates to its words as well as to its thoughts, it holds that the inspiration of Mrs. White relates only to her thoughts and not to her words.

Now let us consider whether this idea of Mrs. White's non-verbal inspiration is defensible. Such a concept is unreasonable because it is at variance with psychological laws. Bishop Lightfoot, in his *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, says: "The notion of verbal inspiration in a certain sense is involved in the very conception of an inspiration at all, because words are at once the instruments of carrying on and the means of expressing ideas, so that the words must both lead and follow the thought" (p. 180). Lightfoot's successor, Bishop Westcott, declared in his essay on "Inspiration" that "thoughts are wedded to words." Still another Anglican, W. H. G. Thomas, stated: "There is an intimate connection, a necessary connection, between thoughts and words. Whether it be for our own thought, or for intercourse between man and man, thoughts must be expressed in words" (*The Stronghold of Truth*, p. 43). Dr. Thomas' article on "Inspiration" in the January 1961 issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra* reaffirms this. The rugged Bettex declared: "If the word wavers, the sense wavers. . . . The word is the visibility and form of the spirit" (*The Bible the Word of God*, pp. 175-6). Urquhart expresses the same truth in *The Inspiration and Accuracy of the Holy Scriptures*: "Thought is defined by words. Perfectly clear thought is wedded to the words which express it — to these words and to no other" (p. 13). Accordingly, there is no such thing as an inspiration of thoughts without words.

Such an inspiration is not only unreasonable; it is also useless. If it did exist, it would confer no special benefit. For, if the Bible, by virtue of its inspiration, is infallible and, therefore, absolutely reliable and fully authoritative, then semi-inspired writings would be deficient in all of these qualities. Of what special value would such writings be? They would not be a whit more useful than uninspired writings proceeding from godly scholars who enjoy the illumination of the Spirit of God.

Furthermore, this idea of Mrs. White's non-verbal inspiration is not sustained by her own statements relative to her inspiration. She called her messages "Testimonies" with clear allusion

to the use of that term in the O.T. for the revelations of God.¹⁰ In Vol. III of her *Testimonies for the Church* (pp. 257, 260), she declared: "It is God and not an erring mortal who has spoken Those . . . who would break down our testimony . . . are not fighting against us, but against God." (The first statement is definitely defended by Dr. Yost in the article referred to above.) In Vol. IV (pp. 147-8) she said, with evident allusion to Heb. 1:1, 2: "In ancient times, God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days, He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now. . . . But will they profit by His teachings? . . . God will accept of no partial obedience." In Vol. V we read: "When I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God" (p. 64). "If you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan and Abiram" (p. 66). "I will take the words from the Lord and speak them to the people" (p. 677).¹¹

Surely, in these statements we do not find "a qualified view of inspiration," such as Mr. Martin says "one should carefully note" (*The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*, p. 96). Here Mrs. White lays claim to an inspiration that is not a whit below the level of the Scriptures themselves. Adventists have tried to explain, but have never repudiated these words of Mrs. White. They just cannot make them mean anything else but what they clearly state.

Thus the concept of Mrs. White's non-verbal inspiration is not only unreasonable and useless; it is unsustainable by her own statements concerning her inspiration.

Secondly, on the positive side, Mrs. White's inspiration is said to be in the same category as that of those Biblical prophets "whose utterances were never a part of Scripture canon" (pp. 90-91). *Questions on Doctrine* lists twenty-two of them, both men and women. There are, however, six others in Scripture

¹⁰Deut. 4:45; 6:17, 20; I Kings 2:3; II Kings 17:15; 23:3; I Chron. 29:19; II Chron. 34:31; Neh. 9:34; Ps. 25:10; 78:56; 93:5; 99:7; 119 passim; Jer. 44:23. See C. B. Haynes, *The Gift of Prophecy*, ch. 11.

¹¹Much more of the same character appears in Mrs. White's writings. E.g., see *Testimonies*, Vol. V, pp. 67, 68, 671-5, 678, 680, 681, 684, 685, 688, 691; *Selected Messages*, Book I, pp. 32, 36, 39, 40, 43, 55, 73; *Colporteur Evangelist*, p. 36.

which its list does not include. These are Hanani, Jehu, Micah, Jahaziel and the great Elijah and Elisha. Out of the entire twenty-eight, the Bible records utterances made by all of them except Iddo, Anna, Silas and the four daughters of Philip. In other words, utterances of three-fourths of these prophets are, after all, "a part of Scripture canon." Very manifestly, what the writers of *Questions on Doctrine* meant to say was that Mrs. White's inspiration is the same as that of those prophets whose writings were never a part of the Bible.

The question now to be settled is: What was the quality of the inspiration of these non-literary prophets? Was it of a lower order than that of those who penned the Scriptures? No, indeed, as a reference to the Biblical accounts of these persons proves. We read that "The Word of the LORD (or, of God) came unto" Nathan, Gad, Shemaiah, Jehu, Elijah and John¹²; and that "Thus saith the LORD (or, the Holy Ghost)" was declared by Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Elijah, Elisha, Huldah and Agabus.¹³

It is in the category of these, as well as other non-literary prophets, that Seventh-day Adventism places Mrs. White. But the literary prophets have nothing greater said of them than is said of these. In fact, the very same things are said of both groups. Isaiah to Malachi contains only a repetition of the phrases already cited. We read that "The Word of the LORD came unto" Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Jonah, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi,¹⁴ and that Amos, Obadiah and Nahum used the expression "Thus saith the LORD."¹⁵

In the light of this survey, there can be no doubt whatever that one prophet was just as inspired as another. It made absolutely no difference whether he wrote or spoke. In both cases, the revelation given possessed full divine authority. Accordingly, the inspiration of the non-literary prophets was just as great as that of the writing prophets. As a matter of fact, *Questions on Doctrine* seems to insist on this itself, when it says, "The messages that came through these prophets, it should be recognized, came from the same God who spoke through those prophets whose writings were included in the sacred canon" (p. 91).

Now, if Mrs. White's inspiration belongs to the category of

¹²II Sam. 7:4; 24:11; I Kings 12:22; 16:1, 7; 17:2, 8; 18:1; 21:17, 28; Luke 3:2.

¹³II Sam. 7:5; 24:12; I Kings 11:31; 12:24; 17:13, 14; 21:19 (twice); II Kings 1:4, 16; 2:21; 3:16; 7:1; 9:3; 22:15; II Chron. 20:15; Acts 21:11.

¹⁴Jer. 1:4; Ezek. 6:1; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1; Mal. 1:1.

¹⁵Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6; Obad. 1; Nah. 2:13; 3:5.

the non-literary prophets, and if these prophets were as inspired as those who wrote the Bible, then it necessarily follows that Mrs. White's writings are as inspired as Holy Writ. The conclusion is inescapable. There is simply no way to avoid it—except by denying that things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Look at it once more:

Mrs. White's inspiration = that of the non-literary prophets.

The inspiration of these prophets = that of the writers of the Scriptures.

Then Mrs. White's inspiration = that of the Scripture writers.

This logical deduction is confirmed by express statements on the part of some SDA leaders. G. A. Irwin (President of the General Conference, 1897-1901), declared that Mrs. White's writings were "the only infallible interpreter of Bible principles, since it is Christ, through this agency, giving the real meaning of His own words" (*The Mark of the Beast*, p. 3). Editor F. M. Wilcox made the following statement about Mrs. White in 1914: "As with the ancient prophets, the talking is done by the Holy Spirit through her vocal organs. The prophets spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (issue of *Review and Herald* for Oct. 5). On August 26, 1915, Mr. Wilcox published these words: "Think you that He would choose an inferior mouthpiece through whom to instruct the remnant church? On the other hand, as it is the greatest crisis of all ages, we should naturally expect that the mouthpiece God would use for this period would be inferior to none in the past ages." In 1928 Mr. Wilcox declared: "Like the prophets and messengers of old, her work belongs to the prophetic order. . . . By the same Spirit by which the prophets and messengers of old were guided in their work, she was directed and guided in her work as a prophet of God, as His messenger to the church in this generation" (Sept. 20). Two weeks later he stated: "As Jeremiah was a prophet in the days of the captivity. . . so we believe that Mrs. White was a prophet to the church today. And the same as the messages of the prophets were received in olden times, so her messages should be received at the present time" (Oct. 4, 1928). More recently, May 14, 1959, the same paper asserts: "It was with her as it was with the prophets of old. 'Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost' (II Peter 1:21)."

The same sentiment occurs in the *Catalog of Publications* for 1959. On page 43, *Crisis and Victory*, by Raymond F. Cottrell, is advertised thus: "A wealth of information from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy is here given in condensed, composite

and chronological order to encourage and facilitate a more diligent study of inspired writing." On page 111, *Path to the Heart*, by Glenn A. Coon, is recommended because the author has followed "the inspired instruction of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writings." When it is understood that "the Spirit of Prophecy" refers to Mrs. White,¹⁶ it will be seen that in both instances the Bible and her productions are grouped together under the common description of "inspired," as though the inspiration of both were the same.

Is it not plain, then, that Seventh-day Adventism, in accepting Mrs. White's assertions about her inspiration and in making such statements as have just been cited, virtually does equate her writings with the Scriptures? Is it not, therefore, extremely inconsistent for Adventists to deny that her works are on a par with the Scriptures? One position or the other has to be given up: either the strong affirmations about her gift or the strong denial that her writings are equal to the Bible. It is logically impossible to hold both positions, for they are diametrically opposed to each other.

Adventism must make a choice, and whichever choice it makes will be costly. It must decide between Mrs. White's having no inspiration or having one equal to the Bible's. If it should decide, after more than a century of conflict, to surrender the dogma of Mrs. White's inspiration, it will cease to be Seventh-day Adventism, for all of its distinctive tenets are bound up in one bundle of life with this dogma. Take away the supposed divine accreditation given through Mrs. White and what becomes of the special doctrines of this church?

The assertion, now made by some apologists for Seventh-day Adventism, that Mrs. White did not originate, but only confirmed, its doctrinal and prophetic views, is contrary to her own statements. In *Testimonies for the Church*, Series B, No. 2, for example, she says: "Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in

¹⁶C. of P., pp. 32, 39, 48, 75, 89, 91, 105, 124, 139, 141, 144, 149, 151.

order that we might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, 'We can do nothing more,' the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me. I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave others the instruction that the Lord had given me" (pp. 56-57).

Likewise in *Gospel Workers*, Mrs. White says: "We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.

"As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays" (p. 302).

The relation between Mrs. White's teaching and Adventist proclamation was well expressed by G. I. Butler, then President of the General Conference, in the *Review and Herald Supplement* for August 14, 1883, when he said: "Our position on the Testimonies is like the key-stone to the arch. Take that out, and there is no logical stopping-place till all the special truths of the message are gone. Our enemies, and the master they serve, realize this; but some of our people are so blind that they do not" (p. 11, column 2).

If, on the other hand, Adventism should decide to declare Mrs. White's writings to be on an equal plane with the Scriptures, it would thereby forfeit all right to the name of Protestant, for Protestantism holds that the Bible alone possesses divine authority

and unalterably opposes sharing that authority with any other literature whatsoever. As things now stand, Seventh-day Adventism has virtually renounced the Protestant camp in that it has practically elevated Mrs. White's writings to a level with Scripture. Thus we have the strange spectacle of a movement claiming to be God's instrument for completing the Reformation begun four centuries ago, which implicitly denies the very first principle of the Reformation: the all-sufficiency of Holy Writ. In its virtual — not formal — denial of this principle, we behold what claims to be the only adequate witness for the truth, undermining the truth itself.

So long as Adventists assert Mrs. White's inspiration, whether verbal or not, so long are we obliged to consider her teaching as their doctrinal standard. It cannot be otherwise. Since they hold that she possessed "the Spirit of prophecy" (pp. 16, 25), and deny that they themselves do, her teaching, and not theirs, must be deemed authoritative in Adventism.

No greater mistake, therefore, can be made in dealing with this subject than that made by Mr. Martin, who, in his book, almost scorns the idea "that one has only to refute Ellen G. White and her writings, in order to refute Seventh-day Adventism" (p. 97). Yet the present editor of the *Review and Herald*, F. D. Nichol, says plainly: "The defense of our teachings, as found in our denominational works, is really a defense of Mrs. White" (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 16). Mr. Nichol's apologetic volume, published in 1951, was no private undertaking; instead, it was "prepared under the direction and sponsorship of the Defense Literature Committee" (p. 5). No less than seventeen of the leading men in Adventism, including L. E. Froom, F. D. Nichol, A. L. White, H. W. Lowe, W. E. Read, J. L. McElhany and F. H. Yost, constituted "the personnel of that committee during the period of the preparation." All the names are recorded under "Acknowledgments" (*ibid.*). Moreover, it has recently been decided to issue a set of six twenty-dollar volumes containing facsimiles of all the articles Mrs. White contributed to *Review and Herald*.

Notwithstanding, Mr. Martin insists that what some present-day Adventists believe is of prime importance. In the Mar. 2, 1962 issue of *Christianity Today*, under the caption "Years too Late," he disparages Herbert S. Bird's *Theology of Seventh-day Adventism* because, forsooth, the author was not abreast of the latest developments in Adventism. He does not grasp the fact that even the latest of these developments do not basically change

the picture. Doubtless, a Presbyterian minister, who denies some of the articles of faith contained in the Westminster Confession, cannot expect to be considered a mouthpiece for his denomination merely because he says he subscribes to that doctrinal standard. The fact that a large number of his fellows join him in his denials does not help his case in the least; neither does the fact that he and they are all preaching in the present decade. On the other hand, the Westminster Confession, however old, is to be esteemed the touchstone of Presbyterian teaching, and all writings of its ministers conforming to the same — be they early, middle or late — are to be judged, not antiquated documents of merely historical interest, but thoroughly valid expressions of the church's doctrines. So whereas Martin esteems Bird's book to be antiquated, his own, in that it clears Adventism of heresy, must be deemed premature.

If Mr. Martin had understood the nature of Mrs. White's position in the movement, he would not, for example, have dismissed so lightly a view "held by Uriah Smith and certain earlier Adventists," as "long since repudiated by the denominational leadership and majority of membership" (*ibid.*, p. 34). The view he mentions is that the commandment-keeping company of Rev. 14:12 numbers 144,000 persons. It happens that one of those "earlier Adventists" who believed this was Mrs. White (*Testimonies*, Vol. VI, pp. 14-15). Her witness cannot logically be discounted by those who believe her inspired. Her position, not theirs, has to be esteemed the true Adventist doctrine.

Accordingly, I shall, in the course of the chapters that follow, keep referring to the views of Mrs. White as the standard doctrine of this religious system. What other Adventists, including contemporaries, say, is, on their own confession of her inspiration, of inferior authority, and I shall have to treat it so.

144,000

CHAPTER TWO

Man

The first two chapters of Genesis contain two supplementary accounts of the creation of man. In the first chapter we read that "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" (Gen. 1:27). In the second chapter we are told that "the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). So far as my researches have disclosed, it is the latter of these two accounts that Seventh-day Adventism stresses in defining the nature of man. In this particular connection, one finds little concerning "the image of God" in man, but much concerning his being "a living soul."

In chapter 40 of *Questions on Doctrine*, it is said that the basic idea of *nephesh* (the Hebrew word for "soul") is "the individual rather than a constituent part of the individual" (p. 513), and that it means the same thing in the case of animals as in that of human beings (pp. 512-13). We read: "*Nephesh* comes from the root *naphash*, a verb" which "seems to go back to the basic meaning of breathing" (p. 512). H. Wheeler Robinson is quoted as saying: "There is no reason to doubt that the primary meaning of *nephesh* was 'breath'" (p. 514). "When we turn to the N.T., we find that the word 'soul' is translated from the Greek word *psyche*, with the meanings 'life,' 'breath' or 'soul'" (p. 513). Thus, Adventists believe that "the soul of man represents the whole man, and not a particular part, independent of the other component parts of man's nature; and further, that the soul cannot exist apart from the body, for man is a unit" (p. 515).

As to the term "spirit," the O.T. word *ruach* has "the various meanings of 'breath,' 'wind' and 'spirit'" (p. 515). This word is used, among other usages, "to describe the living principle in men and animals" (p. 516). It is denied that it ever denotes "that in man there is a separate entity capable of conscious existence apart from the physical body" (*ibid.*). "When we turn to the N.T., we find that the word 'spirit' is translated" in all but two instances "from *pneuma*" (*ibid.*). "There is nothing

inherent in the word *pneuma* by which it may be taken to mean some supposed conscious entity of man capable of existing apart from the body" (p. 517). Here we have plain, repeated denial that soul or spirit can exist apart from the body.¹⁷

I will now refer to three volumes of the "Representative Adventist Doctrinal Literature" recommended on pp. 629-37 in *Questions on Doctrine*, published in the year 1957. The very first book listed is, *Bible Readings for the Home*¹⁸ — one of the series of "The Christian Home Library" which "contains only choicest volumes of primary worth," according to the jacket. In the section entitled "What is Man?" we are told that the only "spirit" man has is that "breath of life" which he possesses in common with the beasts. The infusion of this spirit or breath of life into him and them makes both to be "living souls," for "a living soul . . . is a living being of any sort" or, if you prefer, "a creature." Thus the physical body, endued with animal life, constitutes both man and beast. Accordingly, "when the spirit goes back to God, the dust from which man was made a living soul in the beginning, goes back as it was, to the earth, and the individual no longer exists as a living, conscious, thinking being, except as it exists in the mind, plan and purpose of God through Christ and the resurrection" (p. 466). That is to say, he possesses no actual being anymore.

The second book, also in "The Christian Home Library" series, is Carlyle B. Haynes' *Life, Death and Immortality*.¹⁹ The 1961 Catalog of Publications assures us that "the discussion is based strictly on Biblical foundation." In Chapter 5, on "The Creation of Man," he considers Gen. 2:7: "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The author first speaks of the formation of Adam's body, stressing the fact that it was called *man* "before he could think or feel or breathe" (p. 43). Then he goes on to speak of God's breathing the breath of life into that which He had already formed, with the result that the "man became a living soul" (*ibid.*, p. 48). On the next page, Mr. Haynes states that "this breath of life is that which

¹⁷A typically Adventist handling of the texts regarding "the soul" and "the spirit" appears in the Appendix to James Edson White's book, *Past, Present and Future* (pp. 497-516).

¹⁸Listed on p. 629. Its sub-title calls it "A study of 200 Vital Scripture Topics, in Question-and-answer Form, contributed by a large number of Bible Scholars."

¹⁹Listed on p. 631.

man breathes in common with all other animals" and which makes him and them to be living souls. "As a result of the breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, the whole man became a living soul" (*ibid.*, p. 50).

Mr. Haynes tells us that it was this infusion of animal life into Adam's body that produced intelligence, thought, knowledge, wisdom, memory and consciousness (*ibid.*). "The consciousness was produced as a result of the union of the breath of life with the dust of the ground or body" (p. 51). In death, the process is reversed. God withdraws the breath of life and the body reverts to dust. "But there is no consciousness in this spirit or breath of life which returns to God. The consciousness was destroyed when the breath separated from the body" (*ibid.*, p. 52). "When that union is broken and the breath separates from the body, the soul ceases to exist" (*ibid.*, p. 54). "With the withdrawal of the breath of life from the body, the living soul ceases to be. He becomes again the lifeless figure he was at first. He is dust and only dust" (*ibid.*). He is every bit as much dust as the beast that dies alongside him.

The third book recommended in *Questions on Doctrine is God Speaks to Modern Man*, by Arthur E. Lickey.²⁰ It is described thus in the *Catalog of Publications* for 1961: "Without doubt the author has embodied in this book the most complete coverage of Adventist beliefs to be found between the covers of any single volume ever published." Mr. Lickey, who also deals with Gen. 2:7, says: "Let us follow the steps: First God made Adam's body from the dust of the ground. . . . Second, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. . . . The third point is thus stated, 'Man became a living soul.' Body plus breath of life equals a living soul. Note carefully that God did not breathe into man a living soul, but He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man *became* a living soul" (p. 488).

"An electric light bulb of itself gives no light. But when an electric current is sent through its inner wiring, light is produced. Thus Adam's body, perfect as it was, could not perform any function or fulfill any purpose. So God switched on the current of life and Adam then became a living, active, functioning soul. The living soul did not exist before Adam was made, and it was not breathed into Adam, but came as a result of the union of his body and the breath of life or 'the breath of the spirit of life,' as it is called in one place" (pp. 488-9).

²⁰Listed on p. 629.

"Man belongs to the animal kingdom. Do animals, as well as man, have 'the breath of life'? The answer is given in Gen. 7:15 . . . animals also possess the breath of life ('the breath of the spirit of life.' Gen. 7:22 m.). . . .

"Do the animals become living souls when the breath of life enters their bodies? . . . The original expression for 'living soul' is *nephesh hayyah*. This expression . . . used in Gen. 1:20, 21, 24, 30 in referring to the animals . . . is the identical expression used in Gen. 2:7, when man became a 'living soul'" (pp. 489-90).

"Is man then a mere animal? No indeed! Such a conclusion is entirely unwarranted. In your garden is a green-leafed bush bearing beautiful, blushing roses. Close by is an ugly weed. They are both of the same kingdom and receive the same kind of sunshine and rain, and grow in identical soil. But no one calls a rose a weed or a weed a rose. The difference does not lie in the sunshine, soil, or rain, but in the plant organism" (p. 490).

Now the implication here is unmistakable: the difference between man and beasts resides primarily in the difference between their bodies. That this is the author's meaning is proved by what he says next: "When God put life into Adam's organism He produced different results from those that occurred when He put life into animal organisms" (*ibid.*). The life put into both was the same but the results were not, because the organisms were not: "When God put the vitalizing energy of life into Adam, it was the same life as that of the animal kingdom, but how different the results!" (p. 491). Why? Here is the answer given by means of an illustration: "An electric current passes into a light bulb filament, and we get light. It passes into the heavy coils of an electric heater, and heat is the chief product. The current is connected with an electric motor and a revolving motion is the result. We get power. Whether we get light, heat or power depends on what the current goes into. But it is the same current" (*ibid.*).

As the different kinds of plants are due to difference in their organisms, while all receive the same sunshine and rain, and all grow in the same soil; as the different kinds of forces — light, heat and power — are due to difference in the structure of the receiving subjects, while all are wrought upon by the same electrical current; so, according to SDA teaching, the difference between man and beasts is purely one of different bodies, while all are animated by the same vital principle. If this were true, then why do we find such a vast difference between man and those animals that are structurally very much like him? And why are

there such big differences amongst men who are made on the same pattern?

Precisely the same view was taught by James Edson White (son of James and Ellen G. White) who had every opportunity of being carefully indoctrinated in Adventism. Of Adam's creation, he says: "He was formed of the dust of the ground and was then complete in every part but was inanimate . . . God breathed into his nostrils, thus starting respiration"²¹. Thus the inbreathing added nothing to Adam's essence; it only animated him who was entirely material.

Mr. White quotes J. N. Andrews' words on Gen. 2:7 and Eccl. 12:7: "One text teaches how man was first formed. The other makes known the process of his dissolution. What God did in creating, death undoes by dissolving" (*ibid.*, p. 506). He further quotes Uriah Smith, the long-time editor of the *Review and Herald*: "The spirit which returns to God who gave it, is the breath of life — that agency by which God vivifies and sustains these physical frames. This breath of life, so far as the record goes, is just what God did give, and all He did give, to man in the beginning" (*ibid.*, p. 508. Italics Smith's or White's). Charles D. Utt in *Answers to 343 Bible Questions*, says the same thing: "The combination of breath and body made the living soul" (p. 139).

To sum up the teaching of Seventh-day Adventism on man, it consists of this: that into his body God infused the principle of animal life or spirit, with the result that he became a living soul or creature, and that in this respect he differs nothing whatever from the brute. He differs from the brute only in having a more highly organized body, which is said to account for his possession of all those intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities that are absent from the brute itself. Adventism does not attribute to man any element of a superior nature, but emphatically denies such a thing. This is not only what the Seventh-day Adventists believed in the distant past. This is what they believe today. Now, if man differs from the beasts only in the form of his body, then he is every bit as material as they are. Thus the SDA doctrine of man is strictly materialistic. As like can only produce like, how can that which is material produce that which is spiritual? It follows, then, that man's

²¹*Past, Present and Future*, p. 168. Cf. G. E. Vandeman, *Planet in Rebellion*, pp. 319-23 and R. L. Odom's recent article, "The Mystery of Man's Nature," in *R. and H.* for Nov. 5, 1959.

intelligence, consciousness, conscience and love, instead of being spiritual in nature, are all essentially material. Accordingly, Seventh-day Adventism does not misrepresent its own teaching when it quotes with complete assent the words: "Man is by nature an animal" (p. 590) — true, a splendid one, but still only an animal. Logically, it is bound to interpret all Scriptures relating to man in harmony with this concept.

What shall we say to all this? First, we say that we grant that, in many respects, man bears a similarity to the beast. The structure and functions of their physical organisms are much alike. Secondly, we also grant that, in Scripture, man's similarity to the beast is duly recognized. This recognition appears in the use of the very same terms to describe both — such terms as *neshamah* (breath)²², *ruach* (spirit)²³, and *nephesh* (soul)²⁴. As a matter of fact, the making of animals and of man is placed on the very same day of creation (Gen. 1:24-31).

But when we have granted these two things to Adventism, we have by no means granted all. As ordinary observation tells us that man bears some similarity to the beast, so does it tell us that he transcends the beast. A. H. Strong lists some instances of this transcendence in his *Systematic Theology* (pp. 467-68).

1. "The brute is conscious but man is self-conscious."
2. "The brute has only percepts; man has also concepts. . . . The brute knows white things, but not whiteness. . . . Man alone has the power of abstraction."
3. "The brute has no language. . . . where there are no concepts there can be no words." (Adolph Saphir said that speech "is the Rubicon which none of the lower creation has ever crossed.")
4. "The brute forms no judgments, e.g., that *this* is like *that*, accompanied with belief. Hence there is no sense of the ridiculous and no laughter."
5. "The brute has no reasoning — no sense that *this* follows *that*, accompanied by a feeling that the sequence is necessary."
6. "The brute has no general ideas. . . . Hence there is no . . . progress. . . . No animal makes tools, uses clothes, cooks food."
7. "The brute has determination but not self-determination

²²E.g., Gen. 2:7; 7:21-22.

²³E.g., Gen. 6:17; 7:13-15, 21-22; Job 27:3; Ps. 104:29; 146:4; Eccl. 3:19.

²⁴E.g., Gen. 1:20, 21, 24, 30; 2:7, 19; 9:10, 12, 15, 16.

What about "Let us create man in our image?"
 God's image?

... no power to choose between motives." ("His determination is the result of influences from without; there is no inner spontaneity" — *ibid.* p. 252).

8. "The brute has no conscience and no religious nature. No dog ever brought back to the butcher the meat it had stolen."

But what we are most interested in is what the Bible says concerning man's transcendence over the beasts. It is clear that it emphasizes this point, and that from the outset. Though man was created on the same day as the beasts, yet he was created separately. Moreover, in the creation of the beasts, God spoke similarly to what He had spoken on the fifth day. Then He had said: "Let the waters swarm" with marine life; now He says: "Let the earth bring forth" land animals — intimating that both sets of creatures were educes from matter alone. But in man's creation, God first consulted with Himself (Gen. 1:26), and then made him by a very special act (v. 27; cf. Gen. 2:7). Furthermore, He placed man in lordship over the beasts already made.

The core of this matter of man's transcendence over the animal world lies in the fact that he was created in the image, after the likeness, of God (Gen. 1:26, 27). Prof. Berkhof remarks that "the idea expressed by the two words is that of *the very image of God*" (*Systematic Theology*, p. 206). Of all the creatures made in Gen. 1, man alone was so made as to be like God. This means, then, that the beast was not so made. It follows, therefore, that man's likeness to God does not consist in anything wherein he is like the beast. Thus man is allied to God as well as to animals, but allied to Him only in those respects in which he is not allied to them, for wherein he bears an affinity to them he bears none to God. Accordingly, man is a twofold being — on the one side related to the animals, and on the other, to God. We may speak of these two parts of his being as the lower and higher components respectively.

This image of God in man is both natural and moral. The former consists in man's constitution and the latter in his character. Man is the natural image of God by virtue of being constituted a personality; he is the moral image of God by virtue of being characterized by holiness. At his creation, man was God's image in both respects. Through sin, he lost that image in its second sense, but retained it in its first (Gen. 9:6; I Cor. 11:7; James 3:9).²⁵ It is this fact of personality, and not the

²⁵But what was lost through sin is restored through grace (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).

structure of man's body, that accounts for all of the items enumerated above, wherein man transcends the brute. Because man is personal, he possesses self-consciousness, concepts, speech, judgments, reason, general ideas, self-determination, conscience and a religious nature.

It remains to be said that whereas the terms "soul" and "spirit" have only one meaning in reference to the beasts, they fulfil a double function in reference to man. They sometimes denote the lower, sometimes the higher component of his nature. James Orr says in *Sidelights on Christian Doctrine*: "In the O. T., soul (*nephesh*) is the seat of life and personality in man — on the one hand, the animating principle or life of the body (the soul is in the blood, Lev. 17:11) and source of the animal appetites, desires and passions; on the other, the source of the higher rational and spiritual activities — those which belong to man as a personal, moral and religious being. It is these latter activities which, in Biblical phraseology, are specially denominated spirit (*ruach*). The soul, in other words, is the source of two classes of activities — the animal, connected with the body, and the spiritual in which lies man's proper affinity to God" (p. 83).²⁶

The dual connotation of these terms is not surprising, seeing that they are used in reference to God Himself. The word "soul" is thus used in Isa. 42:1; Jer. 9:9; Amos 6:8 and in Heb. 10:38 (where the Greek *psuche*, which corresponds to the Hebrew *nephesh*, occurs). While it is true that in all of these places the word is used metaphorically (in what are called anthropomorphisms), yet it is used in allusion to man's higher element and not to his lower, to his emotional nature and not to his animal life. The word "spirit" is constantly used of God — and that properly, i.e., not figuratively — from the second verse of the Bible onward.²⁷

Thus both observation and Scripture show that man, in the unity of his being, consists of two radically distinct substances: spirit and matter. Seventh-day Adventism, on the contrary, to this day, teaches that man consists of only one substance: matter. Though it uses the term "spirit" in connection with man's constitution, it uses it merely to denote his physical breath. It employs the same term to denote the breath of animals.

²⁶Cf. the quotation from Hovey's *Biblical Eschatology* in Ch. III below, p. 37.

²⁷As a matter of fact, the word "breath" is also used of God (II Sam. 22:16; Job 4:9; 32:8; 33:4; 37:10; Ps. 18:15; Isa. 30:33).

Accordingly, to Adventism, man is simply material. Its materialistic concept of man inevitably affects all its doctrines relating to man, (e.g., those regarding death, Christ and salvation) and forms an important part of the unsound foundation on which its theological structure is reared.

CHAPTER THREE

Death

The Bible speaks of two deaths, the first and the second. Forty years ago, Adventist teachers differed amongst themselves as to whether the first death was the same for Christians and non-Christians. Today, in *Questions on Doctrine*, no such distinction is even suggested. However, there is no consistency in defining this death. Sometimes it is said to be cessation of being and sometimes only unconsciousness. We do not wonder at this vacillation when we consider that either definition creates problems for the Adventist.

That the first death involves cessation of being is clearly taught by the Adventists in various places. (This idea logically flows from Adventism's teaching on Man, discussed in the preceding chapter). Let us again refer to *Questions on Doctrine*. Adventists "fully concur" with the assertion of a recent scholar that "the breath-soul . . . has no existence apart from the body" (pp. 514-15). "The soul cannot exist apart from the body" (p. 515). On page 608 it is again denied that "the soul can exist apart from the body." It is said that the church Fathers introduced the erroneous notion that "the soul can exist apart from the body" (*ibid.*). "The soul has no existence apart from the body" (p. 606).

"The soul of man represents the whole man" (p. 515). "When the time of leaving comes . . . the whole person goes" (p. 528). "The whole man, body and soul, dies" (p. 606). "As whole man sinned, so whole man died" (p. 577). "In death, first the whole man and secondly each component part, suffers privation of life" (*ibid.*).

"The soul in death is as much dead as the body itself" (p. 580). "The soul of man dies with the body" (p. 581). "At death, man's soul dies" (p. 597). "The body dies . . . even the spirit, the soul that I am, will not exist. The soul will also die" (p. 598). "There is no existence after death only by way of . . . resurrection" (p. 605). "Men, beasts, even plants are alike in death" (*ibid.*). This was the doctrine of the Sadducees, too. Josephus, who was contemporary with them, says: "The doctrine of the

Sadducees
Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies" (*Antiquities*, Book XVIII, Ch. 1, Paragraph 4).

The reason why Seventh-day Adventism believes thus is because it esteems "man's nature" — not just his body — to be mortal (*Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 463). "Men are not immortal by nature" (W. H. Branson, *In Defense of the Faith*, p. 238). Adventists are "certain that man was not in any sense created immortal" (p. 511). Mortality is "one of the qualities of the human spirit" (p. 518), as well as of the human body.

But *Questions on Doctrine* in 1957 just as emphatically teaches that the first death is only a state of unconsciousness. "The condition of man in death is one of unconsciousness . . . all men, good and evil alike, remain in the grave from death to resurrection" (p. 13.10). "We . . . believe in unconscious sleep in death pending the resurrection" (p. 503). On page 522 some passages are quoted which are supposed to teach that the dead are oblivious, not simply to everything in *this* world, but to everything absolutely. Accordingly, those who have died are considered to be devoid of memory, thought, knowledge, love, hatred, envy and hope, and to be incapable of worship, witness and reward. "While asleep in the tomb the child of God knows nothing" (p. 523). "The dead are not actually conscious living beings" (p. 553). "The dead, both the righteous and the wicked, lie silent and unconscious in death until the resurrection day" (p. 558). "The unconscious dead" (p. 559). "At death . . . the man himself passes into unconscious sleep until the resurrection" (p. 597). Time and again we read that the soul after death does not exist "as a conscious entity," which certainly implies existence itself (e.g., pp. 511, 514, 517, 525).

The truth is, both of the SDA definitions of the first death are fallacious. When a person dies, he neither ceases to be nor ceases to be conscious.

In the first place, he does not cease to be. In writing of the death of Rachel (Gen. 35:18), Moses says, (A.S.V.) "as her soul was departing (for she died)." (The Hebrew word rendered "departing" signifies "a going out" and not "a ceasing to be." It occurs twice in Gen. 12:4, where it could not possibly mean anything else.) Dr. Gosman²⁸ says that these words denote "not the annihilation of the soul, but the change of state and

²⁸The translator of the "General Introduction" to Lange's monumental Commentary on the whole Bible and also of that part of the Commentary itself which covers Gen. 12-36.

place." Melancthon W. Jacobus remarks on them: "the soul only changes place at death and is not annihilated." James G. Murphy, Professor of Hebrew at Belfast, has a similar remark: "This phrase expresses not annihilation, but merely change of place." (See their commentaries on Genesis.)

The counterpart to Gen. 35:18 is I Kings 17:22: "the soul of the child came into him again" (cf. Luke 8:55). Yet Adventists insists that God never put soul *into* man, that He only made man *to be* soul, by putting breath or spirit into him. Thus, refusal to admit that the word "soul" is sometimes used in the sense of personality involves them in difficulty. The statements of the Scriptures are explicit: Rachel's soul went out of her and the boy's soul came into him again. Both indicate existence apart from the body.

Turning to the N.T., we find Christ summarily denying the cessation of the person at death, when He said, "Be not afraid of them which kill the body and after that have no more that they can do" (Luke 12:4). "Three things are noticeable here," says Hovey, in his book on *Biblical Eschatology*: "First, an implication that the body is not the whole man. If it were in strictness the whole man, killing the body . . . would be putting an end to the whole being . . . Secondly, an implication that the life of the body may be destroyed and yet some part of the being survive. For if this be not the case, the last clause — 'and after that have no more that they can do' — would be without sense . . . Thirdly, an implication that the part of man which survives the death of the body is the soul . . . and therefore the central and controlling element of man's nature. This is definitely stated in Matthew's Gospel: 'Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul' (10:28) . . . It is important to observe this use of the term soul, for it is sometimes employed to denote the animal life which perishes with the body. Here, on the contrary, it is synonymous with spirit" (pp. 13-14). The words of Christ are unequivocal. There is not the least bit of ambiguity about them: the soul survives the death of the body.

The very figures used in Scripture to represent the body indicate that the soul survives the shock of death. The body is called a tent (II Peter 1:14), a house (II Cor. 5:1), a temple (John 2:21), a garment (II Cor. 5:4) and a sheath (Dan. 7:15). Accordingly, what a tent is to a traveller, a house to a resident, a temple to a worshipper, a garment to a body and a sheath to a sword, that the body of a man is to the personality within it.

over

It follows that as a traveller can survive the destruction of his tent, a resident of his house, a worshipper of his temple, a body of its garment, and a sword of its sheath, so the soul can survive the destruction of the body in which it has abode. Otherwise, the symbols employed are not instructive but deceptive.

In the second place, the dying person does not merely continue to be; he continues to be in a state of consciousness. The proof is manifold and conclusive. Take the O.T. Moses declares that when we come to the end of this life, "we fly away" (Ps. 90:10) — not that we become unconscious. Departure does not involve sinking into an oblivious condition. Similarly, David believed in conscious existence after death, for, upon the death of his infant son, he tells out his heart thus: "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23). Yet we are seriously assured that "the Hebrews had never thought of a disembodied soul" (p. 515)!

If the Hebrews had no conception of a disembodied soul, they would have had no disposition to seek communication with the departed. Yet God legislated against such endeavors (Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:11). As a matter of fact, we are told that the Jews did try to contact the dead (II Kings 21:6b; II Chron. 33:6; II Kings 23:24; Isa. 8:19). In particular, King Saul made a journey to Endor in order to get in touch with the departed Samuel (I Sam. 28:3-25).

Then, take the N.T. and first of all the teachings of the incarnate Son Himself. I have already referred to Matt. 10:28 and Luke 12:4 which, respectively, affirm that the killing of the body does not involve the killing of the soul and deny that the killing of the body does even injure the soul. To quote Dr. Hovey again, "If men, by killing the body, extinguish the soul's consciousness until the resurrection, they do — to all intents and purposes — kill the soul no less than the body. For a soul minus consciousness is no more a human soul than a corpse without life is a human body. Consciousness organizes and holds together the faculties of the soul, as the principle of natural life does the elements of the body — the one is as necessary to personal being as the other is to animal existence. Hence, we say, if men put an end to consciousness until the resurrection, by killing the body, they do, *ipso facto*, kill the soul as well. Both, as such, are rendered by this act, virtually nonexistent" (*The State of the Impenitent Dead*, pp. 105-6).

Dr. James Strong,²⁹ the eminent Methodist scholar — compiler of *Strong's Concordance* — speaks similarly when dealing with the subject of "the soul's continued consciousness in the disembodied state." He says: "Without this it can hardly be said to have an appreciative or real existence at all. Divested of corporeity, of locality, of external organs or connections or impressions; if, as some vainly say, the spirit remains in a state of coma or torpor, not even aware of itself, it practically ceases to be. Reduced to a mere point, even that is blotted out by this last deprivation. Such a condition is not a suspension of existence — a contradiction in terms — nor of faculties, but a total loss of them; and their return, if it ever occurs, would not be a proper recovery, but a restoration tantamount to re-creation."

"While in the body, it is true, we often pass a considerable space of time in unconsciousness, partial or total, as during sleep or under the operation of disease or narcotics; but this is entirely owing to the influence of the body upon the spirit, and therefore could not occur in the absence of that bodily connection. Hence the term 'soul-sleep' is absurd, for it is borrowed from a false analogy If self-consciousness be taken away, what is left? Existence without it is a mere name, an empty predicate not worth talking about. There remains no bond of continuity, no basis of identity. The last vestige of personality is obliterated, the soul is annihilated

"To suppose that death arrests cogitation or emotion, or any of the ordinary mental habits, is to materialize the soul, and that is to deny its real existence altogether. There is no escape from this logical conclusion. We might add that a refusal to accept it involves, by parity of reason, a denial of all purely spiritual existence, and thus ends in absolute materialism. Even angels and God Himself are blotted out of the creed. Stark infidelity is the necessary result" (*The Doctrine of a Future Life*, pp. 46-48).

In the parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-9), Christ teaches His disciples to use the mammon of unrighteousness (their worldly goods) in such a way as to make to themselves friends "that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the everlasting tabernacles." Edersheim³⁰ says that "the 'everlasting tabernacles' mean the well-known heavenly home; in which sense the term 'tabernacle' is, indeed, already used in the O.T. — Ps.

²⁹Appealed to on p. 295.

³⁰Appealed to on p. 566.

15:1; 27:5" (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 274). Since all of our earthly treasure fails when we die — not when we are resurrected — the time of death is the time when we may be welcomed by departed friends into the heavenly home. Says Edersheim: "Gain such friends by means of it [earthly wealth] that when it fails, as fail it must when we die, all may not be lost, but rather meet us in heaven" (*ibid.*). It must be evident that such a reunion of separated friends necessitates the full consciousness of all concerned in it.

Christ further taught consciousness after death in the story of the rich man (Dives — from the Latin for "rich") and Lazarus, which follows hard on the heels of His parable about the unjust steward (Luke 16:19-31). Inasmuch as *Questions on Doctrine* devotes a special chapter of twenty-three pages to this parable,³¹ I will deal with it separately also.³²

Adventism would alter the punctuation of Luke 23:43 and make Christ say, "Verily I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with me in Paradise," instead of saying, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." But it is evident that Christ was being triply gracious to the dying robber who had asked Him to remember him when He came in His kingdom. In the words of Archdeacon (later Archbishop) Trench, "The reply of our Lord is a glorious example of what we may not unfitly call the prodigalities of the Kingdom of heaven, of the answers to prayer infinitely larger and more liberal than the suppliant, in the boldest ventures of faith, had dared to suggest" (*Studies in the Gospels*, p. 312). Christ, in effect, replied: Remember you? You shall be with Me — "not merely in my company but sharing with Me" (Plummer). In My kingdom? In Paradise (the royal Garden). When I come? Today. Even the exigencies of a theory have difficulty in misconstruing a text like this. Yet it will also attempt to explain away the dying words of Christ Himself when He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46, cf. Ps. 30:5), and represent His entire manhood as inoperative between death and resurrection.

Passing from the Gospels to the Acts, we find Ch. 2:34 used on pp. 526-7: "the divine Word definitely declares that David never went up to heaven or did not ascend into the heavens." However, the context (v. 29) shows clearly that Peter meant that David, whose sepulchre was still in Jerusalem, had not gone *bodily* into

³¹Luke 16:19, 20. Cf. Ch. 7:41; 10:30; 12:16; 14:16; 15:11; 16:1; 19:12.

³²See Appendix at end of present chapter.

heaven. The Apostle's words were spoken in connection with proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. He had recently ascended in His risen body; David's tomb was as yet undisturbed. As a matter of fact, whenever the word "ascend" is used of any man with reference to heaven, it relates to him physically — whether it be Elijah or David or Christ. So the text does not deny that David's "soul went to the realms of bliss" when he died; it only denies that on the day of Pentecost his body had as yet gone there.

In the close of Acts 7, Luke gives us an account of the death of Stephen. Its similarity to the death of Christ Himself is very prominent. Both were falsely accused before the Sanhedrin and doomed to die. Both prayed for their slayers. Both committed their spirits to divine care. As Jesus had said: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," so Stephen said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). According to SDA conceptions, presented thus far, Stephen's sight of the glory of God and of Jesus standing on His right hand (v. 55) must have faded into nothingness when his spirit had been received.

The attempt of the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* to weaken Paul's teaching in II Cor. 5 and Phil. 1 is futile (pp. 527-8). In the former passage, the Apostle says that "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord," but that we "are willing rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord" (vv. 6, 8). To be "at home in the body" plainly means to be alive, and "to be absent from the body" just as plainly means to be dead. In the first case, "we are absent from the Lord," and in the second case, we are "at home with the Lord." Accordingly, whilst we are alive, we are absent from Him, and when dead, we are at home with Him. Yet we are told (p. 529): "The text does not indicate when these experiences take place"! Moreover, Paul speaks of believers as capable of two states: clothed and unclothed (v. 4), according to whether they are "in the body" (Heb. 13:3) or out of it. But Adventists insist to this very day: "There is no separation of soul and body" (p. 528). The very phrase "absent from the body" contradicts this.

In the latter passage (Phil. 1:20-24), Paul again considers the matters of life and death. He contrasts "departing" with "abiding in the flesh." "To depart" is to die; "to abide in the flesh" is to stay alive. Now he says that the former is preferable to the latter. In fact, he says it is "very far better" (A.S.V.): he calls it "gain" (v. 21). But Paul, alive, daily experienced the blessedness

of communion with God. What could be gain over that? Only being "with Christ." That was the gain he "greatly desired."

The Greek construction in verse 23 shows that this gain of being with Christ was connected with the experience of death and not with that of subsequent resurrection. Paul desired what? "To depart and to be with Christ." The two infinitives hang upon "*eis to,*" which denotes the end he had in view. That end was dual: to depart and to be with Christ. Prof. Hackett's manuscript notes on Philippians comment thus: "Paul regarded one event as immediately subsequent to the other. On the supposition that he expected after death to remain, for an indefinite time, unconscious in the grave until the resurrection, how — with his characteristic zeal for the salvation of men and his contempt of trials and dangers in the pursuit of that object — could he have hesitated for a moment to wish to live as long as possible, since the longer he lived the more he would be able to accomplish for the cause of the Redeemer, and since he could gain nothing of a permanent nature by an earlier death which he would regard as worthy of a moment's comparison with the value of his labors to his fellow-men?"³³

Of course, the Apostle's first choice was glorification — to be transformed, soul and body, into Christ's likeness at His appearing. He did not prefer disembodiment to that, only to the present mortal condition (II Cor. 5:4-5).

Having referred to the O.T., the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles, let us also go to the last book of the N.T. What about "the souls of them that had been slain" in Rev. 6? These souls — which are expressly distinguished from their blood — both spoke (v. 10) and were spoken to (v. 11). See also Rev. 20:4-6, where "the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus . . . lived" (used by Christ in ch. 2:8 in the sense of bodily resurrection). Dean Alford's remarks on this passage are quoted with approval on page 503. What he says on the cognate passage in ch. 6 reveals his belief in the conscious existence of the soul between death and resurrection. As a matter of fact, he wrote a little book on the subject, entitled, *The State of the Blessed Dead*.

Ordinarily, the personality in the body is termed "soul," and out of the body "spirit," but there are exceptions to this rule.

³³Cf. Alvah Hovey, *The State of the Impenitent Dead*, pp. 59-60, which includes a valuable quotation from the works of Edwards the Younger (Vol. II, p. 530).

We have just observed such exceptions in Rev. 6 and 20 in the use of the word "soul" for the disembodied. Similar exceptions in the use of the word "spirit" occur in Job 32:8, 18; Zech. 12:1 and I Cor. 2:11, where the person is viewed as embodied. James 2:26 declares that "the body without the spirit is dead" — not that the spirit is dead if the body is. In II Cor. 12:1-4, Paul states that when he was caught up to the third heaven, into Paradise, there to see a vision (v. 1) and to hear unspeakable words (v. 4), he may have been "out of the body." He just could not tell. Thus the Apostle teaches us that a person can exist consciously apart from his physical organism. Was not Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration? True, some — e.g., Mrs. White (*Early Writings*, p. 164) — think that he had been resurrected after his death and burial (Deut. 34:5-6) but the arguments adduced are hardly conclusive.

Against all of this Scriptural evidence it is argued that the idea of unconsciousness is supported by the Scriptures in those instances where they term death a sleep (pp. 521, 523). But a greater blunder could scarcely have been made by the Adventists, as the following demonstrates.

In Num. 12:6 Jehovah speaks thus: "Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak with him *in a dream.*" So, divine revelations were made to prophets in their sleep. Then the prophet was only unconscious of this earthly scene — not absolutely unconscious.

The first book of the Bible records no less than eleven divine communications given to men while asleep. They were given to Abram, Abimelech, Jacob, Laban, Joseph, the butler and the baker and to Pharaoh. (Jacob, Joseph and Pharaoh each had two dreams.) In the historical books, Gideon and Solomon received revelation through their own or others' dreams. Eliphaz and Elihu tell of their experiences while asleep (Job 4, 33). As for the book of Daniel, it contains revelations made in sleep (chs. 2, 4, 7) which the Adventists themselves build upon. When we turn to the N.T. we find Joseph's four dreams and the dream of the Magi in its first two chapters. We read later of the dream of Pilate's wife in Matt. 27:19. Thus the fact that death is called a sleep does not in any wise imply a state of unconsciousness.

The truth is that death — in Scripture and out of it — is called "sleep," simply because the dead body bears the appearance of sleeping. The term has nothing whatever to do with the personality. In Scripture, the use of this metaphor also indicates the

truth of a coming resurrection, for they who sleep will awake in due course (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 27:52). The ultimate, therefore, is not disembodiment, but embodiment. C. F. H. Henry (in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*) says that the Scripture's "emphasis falls on man as a unitary personality of soul and body. Their disjunction is due to sin (Gen. 2:17); man's reconstitution as a corporeal being in the resurrection is part of his destiny. While the soul survives in the intermediate state between death and resurrection, this is not the ultimate ideal (II Cor. 5:1-4), in sharp contrast to Greek philosophy" (p. 341).³⁴

Thus far we have considered only the first death and have seen that Seventh-day Adventism defines it in two different ways — sometimes as cessation of being and sometimes as unconsciousness. It is illogical for Adventists to hold the former of these views because of their belief in the resurrection of mankind (e.g., p. 14.11); for, to talk of the resurrection of nonexistent beings is positively absurd. On the other hand, it is necessary for Adventists to retain this belief; for to deny the first death to be cessation and yet to affirm the second one — which "is associated with the final punishment of the wicked" (p. 524) — to be such, is manifestly inconsistent.

That Adventism to this day affirms the second death to be cessation of being is plain from its own words in its 1957 publication *Questions on Doctrine*. The penalty for human sin is described thus: "reduced to a state of nonexistence, becoming as though they had not been" (p. 14); "complete destruction" (p. 23.5); "utter extinction" (p. 506); "the wicked shall not be" (p. 536) or "shall pass out of existence" (p. 589); "extinction of being" (*ibid.*); "nonexistence" (p. 607). This, we are assured, is the penalty threatened in Eden (pp. 530-1). Even Matthew Henry is made to look like a witness on behalf of this doctrine (p. 531). The whole of Chapter 42 is devoted to prove this major point. The reason given why the second death is extinction of being is this: "Man's whole being was forfeited by the fall" (p. 588). The refutation of this view of the second death will be postponed to chapter XI of this book.

³⁴Contrast Dr. Oscar Cullmann's unsatisfactory volume, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead*, which was largely reproduced in *Christianity Today*, Vol. II, nos. 21, 22.

APPENDIX The Rich Man and Lazarus

Questions on Doctrine contains a rather long chapter on this story (pp. 544-66). In it we are told that "Edersheim rightly says that doctrine cannot be derived from this parable" (p. 556). However, Edersheim said no such thing. What he did say was: "It will be necessary in the interpretation of this parable to keep in mind that its Parabolic details must not be exploited nor doctrines of any kind derived from them" (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 277, italics mine). He was only saying what Adventism itself says on p. 369: "no parable or type can be applied in all details. It is the central truth that is to be sought out and applied" (cf. p. 212).

Luke 16 belongs with Luke 15, which opens with the Pharisees murmuring because of Christ's contact with the publicans and sinners. In the three parables that follow, Christ likened the Pharisees to the sheep and coins that were not lost and to the elder brother who had always done right, thus characterizing them according to their own estimate of themselves. He likened the publicans and sinners to the lost sheep and coin and to the younger brother who became a prodigal, characterizing them likewise according to the Pharisees' estimate.

In the first part of Chapter 16 Christ gave instruction to His converts from the ranks of the publicans and sinners, in the parable of the unjust steward, to which reference was made above. The Pharisees scoffed at Him (v. 14). After a few pointed preliminary remarks (vv. 15-18), He addressed a parable to them, saying, "There was a certain rich man" (v. 19) and "a certain beggar" (v. 20). Here the "rich man" represents the Pharisees, and the "beggar," the publicans and sinners.

That the rich man stands for the Pharisees is crystal clear. As Christ had ironically termed them "whole" and "righteous" in Matt. 9:10-13, so here He likens them to one who was "rich." They thought themselves to be religiously well-off and in need of nothing (cf. Rev. 3:17). In other words, they were self-righteous. This rich man lavished his wealth upon himself: he was habitually attired in costly raiment and lived every day in mirth and splendor. The Pharisees were self-centered. *Dives* is charged with no positive sins, for the Pharisees were outwardly righteous (Matt. 23:27-28). However, as the man in the parable was utterly lacking in ordinary compassion, for he did nothing to relieve the extreme need of the sick and famishing beggar, so the Pharisees were unconcerned about the sad spiritual state of the publicans and sinners. Furthermore, this rich man ignored the Scriptures, asked for signs and yet was impervious to the greatest of them — for his five brothers were obviously not different from himself (Luke 16:27-31). Such were the Pharisees: self-satisfied, self-centered, outwardly righteous, without compassion, disregarding of the Scriptures, demanding of signs and unmoved by them.

That the beggar stands for "the publicans and sinners" is equally evident, when we view him in the light of the Pharisees' estimate of

Rich =
"Dives"
Dives =
rich

Rich

them. To the Pharisees, these people were beggars indeed, though some of them were materially prosperous. Spiritually, they were looked upon as bankrupt and so destitute that all a Pharisee could say of any such was "God help him!" (which is the meaning of the name "Lazarus"). To bring out the disdain which those leaders had for these souls, Christ represents Lazarus as having been "flung down" at Dives' gateway, "as if contemptuous roughness is implied" in the verb used (Plummer). And then, to set forth the repulsiveness of the publicans and sinners in the eyes of the Pharisees, Christ pictures the beggar as covered with ulcers and left to the unclean dogs of the street.

A better representation of the case could not have been given. But now what? Both men die — the beggar first and the rich man later (being given still more time to repent). The beggar is carried by the angels into "Abraham's bosom" — "a Jewish phrase," says G. Campbell Morgan,³⁵ "used to describe the very heart of heaven, the chief place of joy in the life that lay beyond" (*The Teaching of Christ*, pp. 87-88). The rich man has a funeral in keeping with his station in life, but finds himself in Hades where he begs for some slight alleviation of his torment. As Lazarus had only asked for some crumbs from Dives' table, so Dives only asks for a dampened touch from Lazarus' finger.

What is the main point of this story? Is it difficult to locate? It would, rather, be hard to miss. The main point, plainly, is this: that the impenitent Pharisee and the repentant Publican, on departing this life, will have their places reversed (v. 25) — and unalterably so (v. 26). They will not both be reduced to the common level of nonexistence (or at least of unconsciousness), but the Pharisee will suffer torment and the Publican will enjoy comfort. Such is the whole thrust of the parable. Dr. Edersheim says, "Its first object was to show the great difference between the 'before men' and the 'before God'; between Dives as he appears to men in this world and as he is before God, and will be in the next world" (*loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 276). (By "the next world," he meant "after death" — *ibid.*, pp. 278, 280).

Edersheim goes on to state that whatsoever Christ said "must, when stripped of its Parabolic details, be consonant with fact" and proceeds to cite "the carrying up of the soul of the righteous by angels," which he affirms to be "fully in accordance with Christian thought of the ministry of Angels" (*ibid.*, p. 280). He calls Hades "the place of the disembodied spirits before the final judgment" (*ibid.*). Thus, the main ideas are "in accordance with the general teaching of the N.T. As regards the details, they evidently represent the views current at the time among the Jews" (*ibid.*). From all of this, it is clear that Dr. Edersheim in no wise concurred with the position of Seventh-day Adventism on this subject, but held to the continuity of personality beyond the crisis of death.

The four Gospels record some forty parables of Christ's. Anyone who

³⁵Appealed to on p. 126.

will go over them will see that, invariably, commonly-known ideas were employed to drive home spiritual truth. Christ never invented concepts unfamiliar to His hearers to do this work, but used material already at hand. In this case, He used the generally-accepted concept of existence after death — both that which was blessed and that which was anguished. He did not in the least oppose the concept. What He said in another context is applicable to this one: "If it were not so, I would have told you." Thus Christ clearly taught in this parable that the soul does not die with the body but survives it.

NOTE: The Banner of Truth Trust re-issued in 1960 a series of powerful messages — originally preached during the Irish revival of 1859 — by that remarkable man, Brownlow North, bearing the same title as this Appendix: "The Rich Man and Lazarus." (*Brownlow North: His Life and Work*, written by the eldest son of Alexander Moody-Stuart of Edinburgh, Kenneth, has also been re-published by the same concern.)

CHAPTER FOUR

Christ

Adventism's position on the two preceding subjects — those of Man and Death — determines its doctrine of Christ. This is inevitable, for Christ is man as well as God, and He, as well as we, has been subjected to death. The first and fourth sections of the present chapter deal, respectively, with these two matters.

1. Since Seventh-day Adventism holds that man consists, basically, of body and breath — all else in him being only derived from these two combined entities — its doctrine of the incarnation is necessarily materialistic. If the Son of God took manhood in its fullness upon Himself, then, according to the Adventists, He must have added to His eternal being nothing more than body and breath.

That this is the SDA concept of the incarnation to this day is clear indeed. We read in *Questions on Doctrine* that the divine Son “took upon Himself a human bodily form and accepted the limitations of human bodily life, as the mode of existence while on earth among men. Thus Deity was wedded to humanity in one Person as He became the one and only God-Man. This is basic in our faith” (pp. 50-1). This statement equates humanity (or human nature) with a bodily form. Hence, Christ's manhood is made to consist of what is material and nothing more.

The same teaching appears in other Adventist literature, where the Son of God is said to have assumed “human flesh.” Mrs. White writes: “The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery” (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, p. 246). A. E. Lickey speaks of “the advent of Christ in human flesh” (*Twentieth Century Bible Course*, Lesson XVI, p. 1). W. H. Branson, in what Adventism today describes as a “presentation of our distinctive message,” says: “He sits at the right hand of the Father today, clothed in human flesh” (*Drama of the Ages*, p. 85).³⁶ “That God should tabernacle in human flesh is the most

³⁶Listed on p. 629. Termed in the *C. of P.* a “presentation of our distinctive message.”

staggering truth of all times” (*ibid.*, p. 88). “By taking human flesh into heaven, He opened the way for His followers also to be saved in the flesh. Job declared: ‘In my flesh shall I see God’” (*ibid.*, p. 92). Carlyle B. Haynes says: “This flesh which Christ partook of was human flesh” (*The Return of Jesus*, p. 66). W. A. Spicer declares: “He came in human flesh with all its weakness. . . . He lived a life of perfect righteousness in human flesh. . . . The righteousness that He wrought out for man in human flesh” (*Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*, pp. 193-4). In *Know Your Bible Series* (No. 29), it is said that “the eternal Son took on Himself human flesh” (p. 4).³⁷

The Apostle Paul, in expounding the subject of resurrection, speaks of human flesh in I Cor. 15:39, when he says: “There is one kind of flesh of men.” That by “flesh of men” he means what is material is confirmed by his mentioning three other kinds of flesh, that of beasts, of birds and of fish. To say, then, that the Son of God took “human flesh” is simply to say that He assumed a material body and nothing more. Thus Adventism defines the incarnation as the Son's assumption of a human bodily form (animated, of course, by the breath of life). This means that the Person of Christ consisted of the divine Son, a physical body and a vitalizing breath.

So far is this from being the true doctrine concerning the constitution of Christ's Person that it is actually a repetition of the heretical teaching of Apollinaris of the fourth century. It is true that Apollinaris did not have the same view of man's nature nor of the incarnating act that Seventh-day Adventism has. He believed that human nature consists of a rational spirit, a material body and an animal soul, and that the incarnating act consisted in taking, not human nature in its entirety, but only the material body and its vitalizing principle. (He held that the divine Person of the Son occupied the place of the human rational spirit.) But all this amounts to saying that Christ Himself consisted of the Son of God, a physical body and its animating principle³⁸ — which is precisely what Adventism says. So the Christ of Adventism is the Christ of Apollinarianism.

Not only have the Adventists failed to repudiate this erroneous concept of the Person of Christ, their 1957 volume, *Questions on*

³⁷See also *R. and H.*, Centenary issue, p. 19; Meade MacGuire, *His Cross and Mine*, p. 15.

³⁸See Alvah Hovey, *Manual of Theology and Ethics*, pp. 194-5; cf. W. G. T. Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 394-5.

Doctrine, repeats it in essence. In fact, this view of the Person of Christ is basic in the SDA faith. Having taught a fundamentally materialistic concept of man, the Adventists logically teach a fundamentally materialistic concept of Christ also. (Observe the confusion of thought on pages 653-4, where we read: "In His humanity, He was a partaker of the divine nature," and where mention is made of "the divine soul.")

The correct view of Christ's Person grows out of a correct view of human nature. Since human nature consists of a rational spirit as well as of a physical body and its vital principle, Christ's Person consisted of these same elements in conjunction with His eternal personality and the divine nature.³⁹

2. The possibility of Christ's sinning is declared more than once in *Questions on Doctrine* (pp. 62-64, 653, 655). In keeping with this idea, Mrs. White said that God permitted His Son "to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49). "Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position. . . . He took the nature of man with the possibility of yielding to temptation" (*ibid.*, p. 117). "He was placed on probation with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross purposes with God" (*The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 26, 1899). "If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper" (*Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890).

Inasmuch as it is the personality that is the responsible agent in sinning, then, seeing that the personality of Christ is Divine,⁴⁰ to say that He could have sinned is to say that Deity could have done so. But some things are impossible to God, and one of them is sin — not because of any weakness in Him, but because of His infinite perfection (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2).

Alfred Edersheim, in *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, says: "There is a great difference between the statement that human nature, as Adam and Christ had it, was capable of sinning, and this other, that Christ was peccable [capable of sinning]. From the latter, the Christian mind instinctively recoils even as it is

³⁹Now that Christ is no longer in a state of humiliation, but in one of exaltation, His body is not vitalized in the same way as before.

⁴⁰When theologians speak of "the divine-human personality" of Christ, they only mean that His eternal Ego possesses all the *attributes* of manhood, as well as all the attributes of divinity. They do not mean to imply that His Ego is itself human as well as divine.

metaphysically impossible to imagine the Son of God peccable. . . . The Second Adam . . . was, with a peccable human nature, absolutely impeccable, as being also the Son of God — a peccable nature, yet an impeccable Person" (Vol. I, pp. 298-9). Similarly, Bishop Moule, in *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, declares: "The ultimate truth is *non posse peccare* [not able to sin]. The manhood of Christ is to be studied not in the abstract but in its actual, absolute, necessary harmony with His Deity, under His divine personality. Had the manhood sinned, the Christ would have sinned in His manhood; the highest moral impossibility" (pp. 62-3).⁴¹

The assertion is frequently made that the very fact of Christ's temptations proves the possibility of His sinning, and Adventism repeats it. But this assertion has its rise in a confusion of thought. Francis J. Hall remarks: "Temptation, or moral testing, does not depend for reality upon liability to sin on the part of the person tempted, but upon his moral freedom and possession of natural appetites to which temptation can appeal. Liability to sin decreases to zero in a perfectly emancipated will. Accordingly, impeccability does not preclude real temptation and painful effort in resisting it. Impeccability is neither a defect of volitional power nor an effect of external constraint; and it does not depend upon or imply a reduction of the natural appetites to which temptations appeal. Rather, it is a characteristic of perfect freedom, of entire exemption of the will from *servitude* to appetites. It characterizes moral perfection — initially present in Christ, and the ultimate goal of our spiritual growth. But just because it was not in Jesus Christ to do otherwise than to fight temptation and control appetites to the finish, He felt the pains of resisting temptation more fully than anyone else ever did. Therein lies our assurance of His sympathy."⁴² "St. Anselm (1033-1109), in his Dialogue on the Human Will and Freedom, clearly proves that inability to sin implies no restriction on free-

⁴¹Cf., e.g., W. G. T. Shedd, "Christ's Impeccability" (*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, pp. 330-49). He says that the creeds and theologians "have generally affirmed" the same. Also see L. Berkhof, *Summary of Christian Doctrine*, p. 95; Henri de Vries, *The Incarnate Son of God*, pp. 48-71; Canon Bright, *Leo on the Incarnation*, pp. 142-3.

⁴²*Theological Outlines*, p. 184; also *The Incarnation*, pp. 250-7; cf. H. C. Powell, *The Principle of the Incarnation*, pp. 220-30; A. J. Mason, *The Faith of the Gospel*, 3rd. ed., pp. 186-9; Francis Goode, *The Better Covenant*, pp. 341-50. Henri de Vries, *The Incarnate Son of God*, pp. 165-206; M. Dodd, *Incarnation of the Eternal Word*.

dom, but a freedom greater than ours" (Henri de Vries, *The Incarnate Son of God*, p. 71). Complete freedom from the love of self produces inability to sin, and Christ had just that.

3. Seventh-day Adventism has been charged repeatedly with teaching that although Christ never sinned, yet He had been born with a sinful human nature. *Questions on Doctrine* maintains, on the contrary, that His manhood was "perfect" (pp. 54, 55, 59, 62). It declares that it was "exempt from the inherited passions and pollutions that corrupt the natural descendants of Adam" (p. 383). Some of Mrs. White's *Testimonies* of 1870 are quoted to the effect that Christ did not possess "like passions" with us; that He did not possess "the passions of our human, fallen natures" (p. 59, cf. pp. 650-52).

Mr. Martin has a special note in which he defends the Adventists against the above charge (*The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*, pp. 86-8). The note consists of three parts. In the first part, he criticizes *The King's Business* for using an article from *The Signs of the Times*, which contains the following words of L. A. Wilcox: "In His [Christ's] veins was the incubus of a tainted heredity like a caged lion ever seeking to break forth and destroy. Temptation attacked Him where by heredity He was weakest, attacked Him in unexpected times and ways. In spite of bad blood and an inherited meanness, He conquered." It is not fair, Mr. Martin pleads, to consider this article expressive of SDA theology, because it was written by "a very young man" who was (privately) reprimanded for it, and who (thirty years later) acknowledged (in a letter, some of) the error.

In the second part, Martin reproves those who use a statement from *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* — which, I believe, was inserted in the 1914 edition — because it had been expunged in 1945. He does not quote the statement but indicates that it appears on page 174 of the 1944 edition. Here it is: "In His humanity Christ partook of our sinful, fallen nature. If not, then He was not made 'like unto His brethren,' was not 'in all points tempted like as we are,' did not overcome as we have to overcome, and is not, therefore, the complete and perfect Savior man needs and must have to be saved. The idea that Christ was born of an immaculate or sinless mother, inherited no tendencies to sin, and for this reason did not sin, removes Him from the realm of a fallen world, and from the very place where help is needed. On His human side, Christ inherited just what every child of Adam inherits — a sinful, fallen nature. On the divine side, from His very conception He was begotten and born

of the Spirit. And this was done to place mankind on vantage-ground, and to demonstrate that *in the same way* every one who is 'born of the Spirit' may gain like victories over sin in his own sinful flesh. Thus each one is to overcome *as Christ overcame* (Rev. 3:21). Without this birth there can be no victory over temptation, and no salvation from sin (John 3:3-7)."

An SDA minister, who is called by Adventists themselves "a clear-thinking Bible student" and "a Bible scholar," has this to say on the subject: "Our leaders assured Mr. Martin that 'the majority of the denomination has always held (the nature of Christ while in the flesh) to be sinless, holy, and perfect, despite the fact that certain of their writers have occasionally gotten into print with contrary views completely repugnant to the church at large.'

"If our leaders told Mr. Martin this, they told the greatest untruth ever. For the denomination has never held any other view than that expressed by Mrs. White in the quotations used in this article.⁴³ We challenge our leaders, or anybody, to produce proof of their assertion. How grossly untrue is the statement that certain writers got into print with views 'completely repugnant to the church at large.' Mrs. White was one of those who 'got into print'. . . . Mrs. White did not belong to the 'lunatic fringe' . . . nor did the authors of *Bible Readings*." These, we repeat, are the words of a prominent minister. The reference is to the passage from *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, quoted above.

In the Nov. 21, 1960 issue of *Christianity Today* (p. 39), Martin also reproves Dr. John Gerstner for citing this passage in his book, *The Theology of the Major Sects*, charging him with having totally ignored what is presented in *Questions on Doctrine*. This induced me to write to the periodical to point out that Representative Adventist Doctrinal Literature, listed in *Questions on Doctrine* (p. 629-637), presents the very same teaching. (I might have added that in 1960 I had purchased in an SDA bookstore the pamphlet *Bible Reasons why you should be a Seventh-day Adventist* — which was written in 1945 by Milton E. Kern, onetime President of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary — wherein this very statement which occurs in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, is defended.) On December

⁴³Viz., *Desire of Ages*, pp. 49, 117; *The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 26, 1899 and Apr. 25, 1901; *R. and H.* Feb. 18, 1890; *The Temptations of Christ*, pp. 30-31.

9th, the Managing Editor replied, saying that he was sure Mr. Martin would be interested in my comments, a copy of which was being forwarded to him. "Undoubtedly" I would be hearing from him. Perhaps the letter to, or the one from, Mr. Martin went astray, as I have not heard from him.

In the third part, Mr. Martin condemns Mrs. White's critics for objecting to the following sentences, found in her book, *The Desire of Ages* (published in 1898): "Our Savior took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation" (p. 117). Martin considers these sentences quite harmless. Yet, in the paragraph preceding that wherein they occur, we read: "When Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For 4,000 years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity" (p. 117). On page 49 of the same book, we read: "Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by 4,000 years of sin. Like every child of Adam, He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life."

In the light of these two passages, it appears that Mr. Martin's research was somewhat defective. The reader can readily see the import of the two sentences which Martin considers innocuous. He can also judge the import of some other statements made by Mrs. White. In *Selected Messages*, Bk. I, is an article which had appeared in the *Review and Herald* on July 28, 1874. It contains the following: "The Son of God humbled Himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. . . . the human family had been departing, every successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed. . . . He took human

nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race" (pp. 267-8). In *Early Writings*, Mrs. White says: "He would take man's fallen nature" (p. 150) and "Jesus should take fallen man's nature" (p. 152). In *Review and Herald* she writes: "He took upon Him our sinful nature" (Dec. 15, 1896). In *Signs of the Times*, we find: "Christ . . . took our nature in its deteriorated condition" (June 9, 1898). In *Special Instruction relating to the Review and Herald Office, and the work in Battle Creek*: "He condescended to connect our fallen human nature with His divinity" (May 26, 1896, p. 13). In the *SDA Bible Commentary* she spoke of Christ's "taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition" (Vol. V, p. 1131).

The reader will find it hard to see how all of these statements of Mrs. White's can be reconciled with the quotations made from her in *Questions on Doctrine*, referred to in the opening paragraph of this third section of the present chapter. I have read efforts at harmonization on the part of a prominent Adventist, but they do not carry conviction. *Questions on Doctrine* would fain explain Mrs. White's references to Christ's "sinful" or "fallen" human nature as relating not to His Person, but to His redemptive work (pp. 59-62). But the language she employed will not legitimately bear any such construction. Mr. Martin, in trying to defend Mrs. White where the Adventists have failed, explains that in using such terms, Mrs. White merely referred to "the physical properties of the race." He assures us, having read all that she has written on the subject, that her statements signify no more than that Christ "endured the aging process"! But weakness is not the same as sinfulness. So one explanation is as far-fetched as the other.

As for myself, I will consider that Mrs. White was not consistent in her teaching on this point — as she was not on others — but that at one time she taught one thing, and at another time, another. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that in *The Desire of Ages* she clearly maintained that Christ's manhood had in it the product of 4,000 years of sinning on the part of His human ancestors. This doctrine pervades Adventist literature, while the one attributed to her in *Questions on Doctrine* does not. I have already cited two prominent Adventists to this effect. It may be well to cite others. I begin with two men whom Mrs. White used to call "the Lord's Messengers," because "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Jones and Waggoner," at the Minneapolis Conference in 1888 (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel*

Workers, p. 91). Both of these men spent their last years outside the pale of the movement which she headed, but I will cite things which they wrote while yet inside. (When they were excluded, it was not for propagating this doctrine.)

Take first the writings of E. J. Waggoner, whose father joined the SDA church as early as 1852, and became one of its leading figures. While yet in Adventism he wrote *Christ and His Righteousness*, wherein he says: "The fact that Christ took upon Himself the flesh, not of a sinless being, but of sinful man — i.e., that the flesh which He assumed had all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies to which fallen human nature is subject — is shown by the statement that He 'was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.' David had all the passions of human nature. He says of himself, 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me' Psa. 51:5" (ch. 5). Again, in *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, he says: "He has taken away this sinful nature — taken it upon Himself that we might be delivered from it" (ch. 12).

Then take the writings of A. T. Jones, while yet in Adventism. In *The Third Angel's Message* (1895), he says: "All the tendencies to sin that are in me, were in Him" (ch. 14). "Christ Himself . . . was all the time in that sinful flesh of mine and yours which He took" (ch. 17). In Mr. Jones' work, *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*, which issued from the Pacific Press Publishing Association in 1905, he says: "We see Jesus made in the nature of man, as man is since man sinned; and not as man was before sin entered" (ch. 4). "Since the only flesh that there is in this wide world which He came to redeem, is just the poor, sinful, lost human flesh that all mankind have; if this is not the flesh that He was made, then He never really came to the world which needs to be redeemed" (ch. 6). "Both by heredity and by imputation, He was 'laden with the sins of the world'. . . Christ taking our nature as our nature is in its sinfulness and degeneracy" (ch. 7). "In the weakness and infirmity of the flesh — ours which He took — He was as is the man who is without God" (ch. 8).

A contemporary of Waggoner and Jones, Tindall, had this to say: "The spiritual nature given to Christ by the Holy Spirit was the same spiritual, sinless nature given to Adam at his creation; but this spiritual nature of Christ was conceived or begotten by the Holy Ghost and clothed with sinful nature in sinful flesh inherited through Mary His mother. . . This spiritual, sinless divine nature was placed in the degenerate human flesh [observe the

expression] after four thousand years of sin; thus demonstrating that there is power with the Holy Spirit to take degenerate humanity and give man a new sinless nature like His own, enabling him to be victor over the sinful nature of the flesh. These two natures, sinless and sinful, were not amalgamated, but kept separate and distinct, the same as the divine and human natures in Christ were kept separate and distinct and not amalgamated. It is very important to understand this relationship in order to see in Christ the pattern for the Christian. . . . If the human Christ possessed only a sinless nature, how could He be a pattern for us with our sinful natures? If He took only a sinful nature, where is the human struggle, since Christ could not use His divine power in His own behalf? If Christ had both sinless and sinful natures, the same as the born-again man has, we can understand where the human struggle is; it is between these two natures. The new man, backed up by the Holy Spirit, is at war with the old man with his inherited and cultivated tendencies, backed by the devil" (*General Conference Bulletin*, Dec. 30, 1899, Tindall, 11, 12, 8).

I stated above, in connection with Martin's criticism of Gerstner's book, that "Representative Adventist Doctrinal Literature," listed in *Questions on Doctrine* presents this teaching. The very first two books on the list do so. The first is *Bible Readings for the Home*, which is a revision and enlargement of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. The first paragraph in the note on page 121 contains the error, though it is well concealed. What the second book on the list says serves to reveal the import of the preceding. *Drama of the Ages*, by W. H. Branson, says: "The Catholic doctrine of the 'immaculate conception' is that Mary, the mother of our Lord, was preserved from original sin. If this be true, then Jesus did not partake of man's actual nature" (pp. 88-9). Branson here repeats what is argued in the passage previously cited from the 1944 edition of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. In all three of the volumes just named, the writers contend, under cover of combatting Romanism, that since Mary did not have a sinless humanity, neither did Jesus.

Carlyle B. Haynes is an author four times recommended in this "Representative Adventist Doctrinal Literature" (pp. 630-33). In his book, *The Return of Jesus*, he declares: "Only in our nature, sinful and fallen, could Christ be tempted as we are. . . . He partook of the essential nature of a fallen human being. . . . He partook of human nature as it now is. . . . He never sinned. But He did bear our sinful nature for thirty-three years during

His life. . . . He partook of that woman's nature just as it was, human nature with all its risks, liabilities and tendencies" (pp. 64-7). Then, pursuing the usual Adventist line, he adds: "To remove Christ from humanity by giving His human mother a nature entirely different from all others, is the very thing which the beloved disciple protests against, and which he sets forth as the identifying characteristic of the Antichrist" (I John 4:2-3).

All of these writers, as well as the authors of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* and *Bible Readings for the Home*, deserve to be considered well-informed and loyal followers of Mrs. White. Being well-informed, they were acquainted with her views; and being loyal, they would not consciously contradict them. The inevitable deduction is that their teaching on the sinfulness of Christ's manhood is a reflection of her own.

Now, how are we to refute this teaching concerning the sinfulness of Christ's human nature? In the first place, there are the words of Gabriel when he made annunciation to the Virgin Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). That which was born of Mary was that which she had previously conceived, namely, the human nature of Christ. Since that which was born of her was "that holy thing," then it was the human nature of Christ which was so denominated. But if His human nature was holy, it was not sinful.⁴⁴

In John 14:30, Christ declared: "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." Westcott translates the closing words: "and in me hath nothing," and explains them thus: "Nothing which falls under his power. There was nothing in Christ which the devil could claim as belonging to his sovereignty." But since sin in any form does fall under Satan's power, there must have been not even an inactive sinfulness in Christ.

Heb. 4:15 says that "we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The preposition "without" is the Greek *chōris* and denotes "entire separation."⁴⁵ A. C. Kendrick says that it means "apart from," and points out

⁴⁴Cf. Heb. 7:26, "undefiled." A. T. Robertson says that the Greek word occurs in the papyri and denotes "untainted, stainless"; cf. Heb. 9:14 and I Peter 1:19, "without spot."

⁴⁵It is derived from the verb *chōridzō*, which is translated "put asunder," "separate" and "depart" in the N. T. It occurs in 12 other places in this same Epistle (Heb. 7:7, 20, 21; 9:7, 18, 22, 28; 10:28; 11:6, 40; 12:8, 14).

that the words "apart from sin" are not to be connected with "tempted" or "in all points," but with "like as we are," thus "declaring that His temptation was after the likeness of humanity, except as to sin. From this element His temptations were exempt" (*American Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 65). A. T. Robertson comments thus on the words: "He did not yield to sin. But more than this is true. There was no latent sin in Jesus to be stirred by temptation" (*Word Pictures*, Vol. V, p. 365). Francis Goode, in *The Better Covenant*, says that the words denote "not only an exception of *actual* sin, but of the *bias* thereto" and presently adds: "Make this one exception of a sinful nature, and there is nothing whatever, of temptation from without, to which our Saviour was not exposed, just as we are" (pp. 343-4). So also Prof. Shedd: "This text teaches that the temptations of Christ were 'without sin' in their *source* and *nature*, and not merely, as the passage is sometimes explained, that they were 'without sin' in their *result*. The meaning is not, that our Lord was tempted in every respect exactly as fallen man is — by inward lust as well as by other temptations — only He did not outwardly yield to any temptation; but that He was tempted in every way that man is, excepting by that class of temptations that are sinful because originating in evil and forbidden desire. . . . See Ebrard on Heb. 4:15" (*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, pp. 343-4).

It is common for Adventists to argue that if Christ did not take our sinful nature, then He was not like unto us in all things and, therefore, could not save us (Heb. 2:17-18). But this argument destroys itself, for we not only have a sinful nature, but sinful habits resulting from sinful actions. Now if Christ cannot save us unless He has our sinful nature, neither can He do so unless He has our sinful habits. Otherwise, how, according to Adventists, can Christ save, for example, the habitual drunkard or the opium smoker? But if He does not have to be so fully identified with the sinner as to have sinful habits in order to save him, neither does He have to be so fully identified with him as to have a sinful nature, in order to do so. His identification with us is limited to His having manhood itself and all that pertains to it — but apart from sin, both of nature and action. The truth is that as a Christ having sinful habits would himself need saving, so one having a sinful nature would be under the same necessity.

Heb. 4:15 says nothing about Christ's being touched with the feeling of our depravity, but of our infirmities. One who has some infirmity can feel for another who has a different infirmity.

As Goode says: "It is not absolutely necessary for sympathy... that there should be an *exact identity of circumstances* in both parties, but only that the cases should be so far alike as to cause *feelings, in both, of the same kind*" (*The Better Covenant*, p. 342).

It is quite true, according to Heb. 2:14 — where "flesh and blood" stand for human nature — that the Son of God, in His incarnation, took our human nature; but taking our nature and taking our sinfulness are two different things. When God created human nature, He instilled holiness into it, but that holiness was not a part of the human nature. When Adam sinned, he exchanged the instilled quality of holiness for the quality of sinfulness, but lost no part of his manhood thereby. When the Son of God came into the world, He took of our human nature but not of our sinfulness.

Adventism's failure to make this important distinction has involved it in stupendous error. It looks upon the man Christ Jesus as in the same class with regenerate men who have in them the two opposite qualities of sinfulness by the first birth and holiness by the second. The quotation from *Bible Readings*, made above, teaches just that. It says that as Christ, by being born of the Spirit, had power to overcome the sinful nature He had received from Adam; so the Christian, by his new birth, has power to overcome his sinful nature. But the Scriptures which we have considered, conclusively contradict this unworthy concept of our Lord and Savior.

4. As Adventism's doctrine of man determines its doctrine of the incarnation, so its doctrines of man and of death determine its doctrine of the cross. We have noted that Seventh-day Adventism has a double doctrine of the first death, sometimes defining it as unconsciousness and sometimes as cessation of being. Adventism always holds, however, that the second death means the latter. It also teaches that whereas the first death is only a result of sin, the second is a punishment for it. A thief, for example, may be bitten by a dog, as a result of his house-breaking, but, if caught, he would be fined by a judge, which would be a punishment for his offense. "The first death is obviously the death resulting from Adam's transgression" (p. 524).⁴⁶

This idea is expounded at large by J. H. Waggoner in his *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Unjust*

⁴⁶See also Mr. Lickey in Lesson VI of the *Twentieth Century Bible Course* (p. 1).

(1870). He says: "All men die on account of Adam's transgression and not on account of their personal sins" (p. 5). "Mankind... do not die on account of their own sins... they do die on account of Adam's transgression" (p. 10). "Sinners die because of their relation to Adam... and not for their personal transgressions" (p. 14). "All die... just and unjust, on account of their relation to Adam" (p. 15). "All now die by virtue of their relation to Adam" (p. 22). Mr. Waggoner overlooked the fact that Scripture records numerous instances of men dying because of their own sins. E.g., in Gen. 38:7 we read: "And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD and the LORD slew him." If Mr. Waggoner had said that ordinarily men die because of Adam's sin, but that sometimes they are cut off prematurely because of their own sin, he would have been correct. The same mistake which he made ninety years ago is made by Adventists today when they say unqualifiedly, "The first death is obviously the death resulting from Adam's transgression."

On the other hand the Adventists declare that the "second death is associated with the final punishment of the wicked" (p. 524). This means that it is not death as unconsciousness but as annihilation that constitutes the penalty of sinners. "Man's whole being was forfeited by the fall" (p. 588). This penalty "will finally be meted out when the wicked stand before the bar of God and receive the just rewards of their deeds" (p. 534) — i.e., after resurrection. "Men are not to be rewarded or to receive retribution until the resurrection" (p. 560); "retribution comes after the resurrection" (p. 559).

Now the Adventists also believe (and rightly so) that the Son of God became man in order to suffer in His manhood the penalty of death which men deserve. (He could do so because of the infinity of His Person.) This is expressed in such passages as the following: "He became the one and only God-Man... The vicarious, atoning death of Christ on the cross was the inevitable outgrowth of this primary provision" (p. 50). "Man's substitute and surety must have man's nature" (p. 692). "A substitute and surety for humanity... dying in humanity" (p. 666). "As man He must endure the wrath of God against transgression" (p. 377). "Justice demanded the sufferings of a man" (p. 677). "It was human nature that died" (p. 650). Nothing could be more conformed to Biblical teaching than this.

Add these statements: "Christ, in counsel with His Father, instituted the system of sacrificial offerings, that death, instead

of being immediately visited upon the transgressor, should be transferred to a victim which should prefigure the great and perfect offering of the Son of God" (p. 678). "The penalty of sin was transferred to the innocent beast which thus became his immediate substitute and typified the perfect offering of Jesus Christ" (p. 669). "In dying upon the cross, He transferred the guilt from the person of the transgressor to that of the divine substitute" (p. 666). "Why was not the death penalty at once enforced in his [Adam's] case? Because a ransom was found" (p. 668). "He paid the ransom money for the whole world" (p. 690). "Transgression placed the whole world in jeopardy, under the death sentence... a ransom, Jesus Christ" (p. 673). "He paid the penalty for all wrong doers" (p. 669). "Christ has paid the penalty" (p. 441). "Christ has paid the penalty for sin" (p. 519). This idea of Christ's being the sinner's substitute and surety is declared over and over again.⁴⁷

It is said expressly: "He really accepted our place" (p. 376). "He assumed my responsibilities" (p. 398). "Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law" (p. 667). "Christ bore the penalty that would have fallen upon the transgressor" (p. 671). "As Christ bore the sins of every transgressor, so the sinner who will not believe in Christ as his personal Savior... will bear the penalty of his transgression" (p. 675). All this Christ suffered because of the immutability of divine law which "cannot be replaced or changed in one principle" (*ibid.*). Strict justice required that the Substitute should suffer what the sinner deserved (pp. 57, 377, 654, 667, 674, 677). The price demanded of us was paid by Him — that price and not another (p. 672).

Now if the penalty for human sin is annihilation, seeing that "man's whole being was forfeited by the fall" (p. 588), then the Son of God, having assumed manhood, must undergo its annihilation in order to redeem us. "Jehovah's Witnesses" (so-called) subscribe to this inevitable conclusion but, since the Adventists' hearts are better than their heads, they revolt at it and arbitrarily deny it — and thus deny that Christ suffered the penalty which they say was threatened in Eden. But how, then, can they consider Christ a Substitute and a Savior? Moreover, if Christ's substitutionary death was not the annihilation

⁴⁷*Q. on D.*, pp. 12.8; 22.7; 56 (twice), 57 (thrice), 60, 62, 64, 245, 347, 352, 377, 383, 388, 399, 400, 407, 500, 642, 650, 653-5, 658, 667, 670, 673, 674 (twice), 676, 691-2.

of His Manhood, then the final doom of the wicked cannot be annihilation either. Seventh-day Adventism must choose one thing or the other: it must either deny that the penalty of sin is annihilation or it must deny (what it emphatically affirms) that our heavenly advocate "retains human nature forever" (pp. 51, 660, 692). It cannot consistently hold both views, for the one logically excludes the other.

What, then, does Adventism teach regarding the death of Christ? It is regrettable that there is no chapter devoted to this subject, but that the one on the Incarnation is immediately followed by that on the Resurrection (chs. 6-7). However, inasmuch as the Adventists reject the logic of their premises and emphatically deny that the cross effected the everlasting annihilation of the manhood of the Son (in keeping with their definition of the second death), we are forced to frame their view of the Cross out of their teaching concerning the first death.

According to one of their views of the first death — that of the temporary cessation of the whole man until resurrection — the death of Christ would have involved the temporary cessation of His human nature. In this case, it would have effected the dissolution of the incarnation itself and the reversion of the Son for the time being, to pure Deity. But the contention that the Son, having become man, abides such forever, (pp. 51, 660, 692), indicates that Adventism rejects this view. All that is left, then, is their other view of the first death — that of a state of unconsciousness, self-contradictory as it is. Christ's soul and body must, therefore, be considered as having gone to the grave, where the body was lifeless and the soul unconscious (p. 522) — just like other men's souls and bodies are said to be in death (p. 13.10). But we have demonstrated in the preceding chapter that a supposed unconscious state of the soul is no real existence at all. Therefore, if no part of His humanity existed consciously during the time that His body lay in Joseph's tomb, then the incarnation was actually suspended for the time being.

If one's doctrine of Christ's death is in error, his doctrine of Christ's resurrection must be so, too, seeing His resurrection is simply the reversing of His death. To teach such things as involve the suspension of the incarnation in His death, is to make His resurrection the resumption of it.

Mrs. White, according to *Questions on Doctrine* tells us that "Jesus refused [after the resurrection] to receive the homage of His people until He had assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father" (p. 669). So the risen Son of God stood in

doubt about the efficacy of His death, on that Easter morning! As if God incarnate were capable of any such state of mind! In fact, He had previously declared the worth of His sufferings (e.g., Matt. 20:28; 26:28) and had stated that His utterances were the very message of God (John 17:8; cf. Deut. 18:18-19). Mrs. White proceeds: "He ascended to the heavenly courts and from God Himself heard the assurance that His atonement for the sins of men had been ample." Previous to this vocal assurance given to Christ, the Father (so we are told), on beholding the sacrifice, "bowed before it in recognition of its perfection." Comment is unnecessary. Compare the equally improper remark of Mrs. White in *Early Writings*: "It was even a struggle with the God of heaven whether to let guilty man perish or to give His darling Son to die for them" (p. 127).

The true doctrine of the death and resurrection of Christ is quite different. His death involved the temporary separation of the higher and greater component of His manhood (the part allied to God) from the lower and lesser component (the one allied to the animal kingdom). But the former of these retained full consciousness and activity during the separation. In resurrection, these two parts were reunited, never again to be rent asunder. Moreover, being glorified in resurrection, the lower component lost its alliance with the beasts, even as the bodies of Christians, when glorified, will lose theirs also, for it is only the physical man in his natural state that possesses this alliance with the animal world.

Such is Adventism's doctrine of Christ. Though it declares His deity, it degrades His humanity. It degrades it in four respects: by denying its integrity, impeccability, sanctity and perpetuity. Adventism denies the integrity of Christ's manhood by teaching that it is nothing but body and breath. It denies its impeccability by teaching that its temptations were not real unless He could have yielded to them. Adventism denies the sanctity of Christ's manhood by teaching that, though it never for one instant actually sinned, yet it possessed the sinful quality which is in us all. And, finally, it denies—in this case, not expressly, but by implication—its perpetuity, by teaching that He died our penal death for us, when that is erroneously defined as extinction of being. We maintain that this concept of the human nature of Christ is wholly unscriptural and, therefore, to be repudiated by every follower of His.

CHAPTER FIVE

Salvation

Before we enter upon an inquiry concerning Adventism's concept of salvation, it is necessary to point out its misrepresentation of Calvin's doctrine of predestination. On pages 405-6 of *Questions on Doctrine* we read: "While we believe John Calvin was one of the greatest of the Protestant Reformers, we do not share his view that some men 'are predestinated to eternal death, without any demerit of their own, merely by His [God's] sovereign will' (Calvin, *Institutes*, Bk. 3, Ch. 23, Par. 2)." These words of Calvin's have been divorced from their context and do not represent the Reformer's position. In the paragraph cited, he is merely rebuking, as Paul did in Rom. 9:20-21, the impudence of mortals who presume to challenge God. In paragraph 3, where Calvin deals with the actual facts of the case, he expressly says: "As we are all corrupted by sin, we must necessarily be odious to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty, but in the most equitable estimation of justice. If all whom the Lord predestinates to death are in their natural condition liable to the sentence of death, what injustice do they complain of receiving from Him?"

Thus Calvin taught, in effect, that God's past decision to consign some men to eternal death was based on their foreseen life records (including, of course, their resistance to the influences of His Spirit). Since God is omniscient, these life records were as well-known to Him in the past eternity as they will be on the Day of Judgment. The basis of the divine decision, whether made in the remote past or in the distant future, is one and the same. The date at which the decision is made is, therefore, immaterial. Such, in substance, was Calvin's view, and not that attributed to him by the authors of *Questions on Doctrine*.

I do not enter upon a discussion of Calvinism. I only call attention to the fact that Adventist leaders are not well-informed about the eminent Frenchman's teaching. *Questions on Doctrine* is no casual production, but is the fruit of the best scholarship of the denomination. According to the *Catalog of Publications*,

"This book is the product of two years of intensive study and extensive editing." R. R. Figuhr, the President of the General Conference, writing in the January, 1958, issue of the periodical, *Ministry*, said: "Probably no other book published by this denomination has been so carefully read by so large a group of responsible men of the denomination before its publication as the one under consideration. Some 250 men in America and in other countries received copies of the manuscript before it was published. The preliminary manuscript work by a group of some fourteen individuals had been so carefully prepared that only a minimum of suggestions of improvement were made. There was, however, a remarkable chorus of approval" (p. 29). Accordingly, the attribution to Calvin of the idea that God predestinated innocent men to eternal death, is a serious reflection on the theological knowledge of Adventist leaders generally.

Having made this necessary correction relative to Calvin's teaching on predestination, we now turn to see what the Adventists teach on salvation.

1. Do they believe that salvation is by grace alone? *Questions on Doctrine* repeatedly answers in the affirmative. We read: "One is justified, not by obedience to the law, but by the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (p. 13); "Salvation through Christ is by grace alone, through faith in His blood" (p. 22.13); "man is justified by faith" (p. 23.15). "That which saves is grace alone through faith in the living Christ. . . works. . . are the result or fruitage of salvation, not a means to salvation, in whole or in part. . . Salvation is never earned; it is a gift from God through Jesus Christ" (p. 102). "Nothing we can ever do will merit the favor of God. Salvation is of grace. . . we are not saved by works. . . neither the law of Moses nor the decalogue can save us" (p. 108). "There is, and can be, no salvation through the law or by human works of the law, but only through the saving grace of God. This principle, to us, is basic" (p. 135). "Salvation is not now, and never has been, by law or works; salvation is only by the grace of Christ. . . while works are not a means of salvation, good works are the inevitable result of salvation" (p. 141). "No works of the law, no deeds of the law, no effort however commendable, and no good works — whether they be many or few, sacrificial or not — can in any way justify the sinner. . . Salvation is wholly of grace; it is the gift of God" (p. 142).

It would seem that sounder pronouncements on the way of salvation could not be made. Unfortunately, however, it is with

this subject as it is with others: Adventism does not maintain consistency, but what it says in one place, it contradicts in another. *Questions on Doctrine*, in violation of its own dictum that "no parable or type can be applied in all details" (p. 396), presents such an extremely literalistic interpretation of Christ's parable in Matt. 18:23-35, as to make Him teach that God, having forgiven sin, will charge it against its committer afresh, if his subsequent conduct is not correct (pp. 439-41). This is to make one's pardon contingent on his future obedience. (A recent Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, on the *Doctrine of Christ*, plainly says: "God forgives our sins . . . subject to our future obedience to His law" — *Pastor's Book*, No. 1, p. 18). This is not salvation by grace. Again, I refer to a book recommended in *Questions on Doctrine* (p. 629), Mr. Branson's *Drama of the Ages*. On page 308 we read: "A Christian who through faith in Jesus Christ, has faithfully kept the law's requirements, will be acquitted; there is no condemnation, for the law finds no fault in him."

This view, found in *Questions on Doctrine* and the other contemporary literature just cited, has characterized Adventist teaching all along. It is what was declared, for example, some forty years ago by T. M. French, Director of Homiletics and Mission Policy in the SDA College at Berrien Springs, Mich., when he confessed: "We believe in justification by faith in Christ, but on the condition of our keeping the moral law." It is what was set forth by Joseph Bates, one of the founders of Adventism, in *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* more than seventy years earlier. Referring to Mrs. White, he said: "I believe her to be a self-sacrificing, honest, willing child of God, and saved, if at all, through her entire obedience" (p. 21).

But what is supremely significant is that Mrs. White herself — still regarded as a prophetess — repeatedly gave expression to this view. In one of her 1869 *Testimonies* we read: "Christ consented to die in the sinner's stead that man, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God" (Vol. II, pp. 200-1). She again expressed this idea when she spoke of "the righteousness of God in justifying the believer in Jesus on condition of his future obedience to the statutes of God's government in heaven and earth" (*Review and Herald*, April 24, 1888; quoted by A. G. Daniells in *Christ our Righteousness*, p. 35). Quite obviously, to receive pardon and justification by grace through faith, and to receive them on condition of later obedience, are entirely

different things, and no amount of explanation can ever make them one and the same.

In his review of *Theology of Seventh-day Adventism*, Martin takes Bird to task for saying that Adventism has revived Galatianism — the doctrine that whatever Christ has done for us, salvation is, in part dependent on our good works (*Christianity Today*, March 2, 1962). If the foregoing is not that error, what is it? In his criticism, Martin says: "Just how it is possible for SDAs to be Galatianists, whom God curses (Gal. 1:8, 9) and for there still to be 'some of God's' regenerate people in SDA 'and that this need not be questioned' (p. 130), is more than this reviewer can understand as the terms are mutually exclusive in the Galatian context" (*ibid.*). But the passage he cites from the Epistle to the Galatians shows clearly that the curse invoked by the Apostle was upon the *teachers* of the heresy, and not upon those who had been inveigled into accepting it. Accordingly, when Martin concludes by stating that Bird's book "cannot be said to be either thorough in its research or dependable in its charge that SDA is a revival of Galatianism," his judgment must be deemed unsubstantiated.

2. As Mrs. White taught that the present pardon and justification of the believer are only provisional and not absolute, so she taught that his present enjoyment of eternal life is only in promise and not in actuality. This idea, which is also foreign to Protestantism, occurs repeatedly in her various books. She declares: "Jesus has purchased redemption for us. It is ours; but we are placed here on probation to see if we will prove worthy of eternal life" (*Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 199). The time when the worthy ones receive this life, she informs us, is at the second advent: "Eternal life is instantly given to the saints when their Savior comes" (*ibid.*, p. 685).

On page 15 of Mr. Martin's book, *The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*, appears a statement from Mr. H. W. Lowe, Chairman of the Biblical Study Group of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Mr. Lowe takes Mr. Martin to task for misrepresenting Adventists by charging that they equate eternal life with immortality (and so deny its present possession). Mr. Lowe says: "We emphatically teach that a true believer in Christ has eternal life abiding in him now."

Any reader of *Questions on Doctrine* will fail to find such emphatic teaching in that book. Granted, it is said that the righteous "have by faith accepted eternal life in Christ" (p. 567), that "eternal life is the gift of God through faith in Christ" (Rom.

6:23), and that "he that hath the Son hath life" (p. 13.9); but none of these passages states unequivocally that this life is now actually possessed. On the other hand, it is said that the entrance into life everlasting occurs at the resurrection (p. 520). Moreover, we read that "the book of life is the register of those who have . . . made some start toward the goal of eternal life . . . candidates for eternal life" (p. 438); "if men . . . turn to God and are born again, they may have everlasting life" (p. 531) — not "they have it"; "man . . . is capable of immortality and there is offered to him resurrection from the dead and eternal life if he will receive it from God" (p. 597).

The idea that Christians are only "candidates for eternal life" appears in M. R. Thurber's very recent pamphlet, *Symbols of Salvation* (copyright 1961). On page 59, these candidates are said to include all "from Adam down to the very last person on earth who turns in yearning to God." It is also stated that "A complete and thorough check of all the candidates for eternal life will need to be completed before Christ comes." A later sentence is this: "Doubtless the names of all candidates for eternal life are considered in the order in which they appear in the book of life, starting with Adam and Eve" (p. 62). It need hardly be said that they who are merely candidates for eternal life do not as yet possess it.

Furthermore, Mr. Branson's book, *In Defense of the Faith*, (recommended on page 635 of *Questions on Doctrine*) says expressly (pp. 239-40): "Seventh-day Adventists believe that eternal life is received by faith at the time of conversion, but that in actuality this gift is not bestowed upon God's people until the return of Jesus. Until the resurrection day, it is 'hid with Christ in God' (Col. 3:3). This is clearly taught in the Pauline letter to the Corinthian Church, as follows" and then I Cor. 15:51-54 is quoted, wherein the Apostle speaks of *immortality*. Another volume, recommended in *Questions on Doctrine*, *Church Manual*, teaches the same thing (p. 53.16). The doctrine is found in Adventist literature generally. For example, in Alonzo L. Baker's pamphlet, *Belief and Work of Seventh-day Adventists*, he says: "Immortality is not conferred upon the righteous in actuality until the great resurrection day. Until that time, it endures in the promise of God; until that time our eternal life is 'hid with Christ in God,' Col. 3:3" (p. 80). The same idea appears in James Edson White's *Past, Present and Future* (pp. 143-5) and in Carlyle B. Haynes' *Life, Death and Immortality* (p. 89).

All of the quotations show that in Adventist thought, eternal life and immortality are equivalent terms, whereas the Scriptural doctrine clearly distinguishes between eternal life, which is a spiritual gift imparted now to the believer's soul, and immortality which is conferred on his body when the Lord returns.⁴⁸ In adopting this error, Adventism agrees with Russellism, otherwise known as "Jehovah's Witnesses."

These teachings — of a provisional pardon and a deferred possession of eternal life — are not to be confounded with the traditional Arminian view that one who has been saved can be lost again. They who hold this view are as emphatic as Calvinists in teaching that the instant a sinner repents and believes, he has the unqualified pardon of his past sins and the immediate possession of eternal life. They do not believe that pardon and eternal life are contingent on future behavior, though they believe that future misbehavior will result in the loss of blessings already enjoyed.

3. Furthermore, Mrs. White's writings continue to propagate the idea that Christ's death put man back into the position which Adam occupied before he sinned. In 1898 she declared that "the ransom of the human race was appointed to give fallen man another trial" (MS. 14). In the same year she stated in the *Review and Herald*: "That the transgressor might have another trial... the eternal Son of God interposed Himself to bear the punishment of transgression" (issue for Feb. 8). In 1899 she said that "the plan of salvation was designed to redeem the fallen race, to give man another trial" (*Signs of the Times*, April 26). In 1900, the *Youth's Instructor* contained material of hers, found in a manuscript written a few years before, declaring that God "looked upon the victim expiring on the cross, and said, 'It is finished; the human race shall have another trial'" (issue for June 21). Again we read: "He suffered in our stead that men could have another test and trial" (*Special Instruction relating to the Review and Herald Office*, p. 28). M. L. Andreasen, who is called "an able theologian" in the 1961 *Catalog of Publications* (p. 53), declares that "the death and resurrection of Christ place man in the position of Adam before the fall" (*The Atonement*, V, p. 2). Thus we are told that all the humiliation and agony of the Son of God merely placed us back where we had been in the beginning.

When Adventists speak of the race being placed where Adam

⁴⁸For a fuller discussion, see Ch. XI below, pp. 145.1.

was before he fell, they refer, of course, only to those who repent and believe.⁴⁹ It is of such that Mrs. White writes: "The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the Covenant of Grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden — harmony with God's Law, which is holy, just and good" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, 1900 ed., p. 391). "As Jesus was accepted as our substitute and surety, every one of us will be accepted if we stand the test and trial for ourselves" (*Review and Herald*, June 10, 1890).

Now what was Adam's position before he fell? It was a midway position. He stood before the bar of God without any transgressions charged against him, but he did not yet possess a title to eternal glory. He was on probation, being tested on the matter of perfect obedience to God. If he should deviate in the very least from such obedience, he would come under the sentence of death. If he should not deviate, he would be advanced to a state of endless bliss. Such was the character of Adam's trial in Eden.

Accordingly, believers, if put into Adam's midway position, would not only be without the burden of any transgressions, but would also be required to perform perfect obedience in order to avoid the sentence of death coming upon them again, and in order to attain to endless bliss. It ought to be evident, then, that one least slip on the part of a new Christian would involve him in irreparable disaster. Just one deviation would be fatal.

4. However, Adventists, inconsistently, do not believe this. They maintain, instead, that believers are required to develop a perfect character, and thus, and only thus, may they become eligible for salvation. The "Fundamental Beliefs" of Adventists declare "that every person in order to obtain salvation must experience the new birth; that this comprises an entire transformation of life and character" (p. 12.4). The verb "comprises" is used on pages 22.2 and 36 in the sense of "including" or "consisting of." We are, therefore, obliged to understand the new birth of Adventism as including, or consisting of, an entire transformation of life and character — in other words, of absolute perfection.

This agrees with what the Year Books prior to 1931 present in Section 5 of "Fundamental Beliefs": "the new birth comprises

⁴⁹Adventists repeatedly stress the necessity of repentance and faith (e.g., *Q. on D.*, section IV; *The Bible Made Plain*, pp. 15-21; *Bible Readings for the Home*, pp. 71-7).

the entire change necessary to fit us for the kingdom of God, and consists of two parts: First, a moral change wrought by conversion and a Christian life (John 3:5); second, a physical change at the second coming of Christ, whereby, if dead, we are raised incorruptible, and if living, are changed to immortality in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Luke 20:36; I Cor. 15:51, 52." This means that regeneration is not an instantaneous act of God, but includes the Christian life and even glorification, when the entire man attains perfection.

Mr. A. E. Lickey gives an equivalent definition of regeneration when he says: "To be born again means that God fulfills His law in us" (*Twentieth Century Bible Course*, VI, p. 3). God does not complete the fulfilling of His law in us until we are perfect; therefore, the new birth would have to wait until our perfecting, in order to be completed. Since the Adventists acknowledge that none can obtain salvation without this birth — only by it does one enter into the Kingdom of God (John 3:3-5) — it follows that none can be saved until he has become absolutely perfect. In short, the procurement of salvation is made contingent on one's attaining perfection of character.

Precisely the same doctrine appears in the pamphlet on Brinsmead, published last December: "That the soul temple of each believer must be cleansed from sin in order for him to be saved, is an incontrovertible fact that no informed Adventist can deny. . . . The truth is that the cleansing of the soul temple of the believer must *precede*, must be experienced *before and prior* to examination of his case by the investigative judgment [see ch. IX]. Otherwise it will be eternally too late" (pp. 32-3). On page 39 of the same pamphlet appear quotations from Mrs. White on present perfection. "At every stage of development our life may be perfect" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 65). "Sanctification is. . . an advance from one stage of perfection to another" (*My Life Today*, p. 250). "Every day we may advance in perfection of Christian character" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 274).

The parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22:1-14) is cited in the pamphlet on Brinsmead in support of this view (pp. 35-38). Mrs. White is quoted thus: "The wedding garment represents the character which all must possess who shall be accounted fit guests for the wedding. . . . By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. . . . It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal

Savior." "When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. *This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.* Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. . . . *All must pass the scrutiny of the great King, and only those are received who have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness*" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 307-12; cf. *Testimonies*, Vol. VI, pp. 295-6; *Great Controversy*, p. 428). Hence on page 23 "righteousness by faith" is called "a living experience." It is said to be a robe freely available "to every soul who will with humble, child-like faith accept Jesus as his Savior and Lord, and who through His enabling grace will obey His voice and walk in the way of His commandments" (*ibid.*, italics mine). Compare Thurber, *Symbols of Salvation*, page 61.

So the Adventists today teach precisely what Mrs. White taught years ago. She also said: "Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God [i.e., be "certified for salvation," according to *Know Your Bible Series*, No. 27, p. 3] while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement" (*Testimonies*, Vol. V, p. 214). "All who receive the seal must be without spot before God — candidates for heaven" (*ibid.*, p. 216). "Those who receive the seal of the living God must reflect the image of Jesus fully" (*Early Writings*, p. 71). "When the Lord's people reach this mark [the perfection of His character] they will be sealed" (*Review and Herald*, June 10, 1902). "All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of Heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ⁵⁰ and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 483). This perfection of character naturally involves a perfect performance

⁵⁰Here, as in many other places, Mrs. White refers to the imparted, rather than the imputed, righteousness of Christ. See, e.g., *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 158; *Testimonies for Ministers*, pp. 91-2; *Testimonies*, Vol. V, p. 81; *R. and H.*, Mar. 27, 1894. Thus do other SDA writers as well.

of all the will of God. No wonder Mrs. White said: "Those who accept the Savior, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or feel that they are saved. This is misleading" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 155). We shall see further reason why an Adventist should be uncertain of his eternal safety, when we come to ch. IX on "The Investigative Judgment," for if that dogma be true, no believer can possess assurance beyond the present moment.⁵¹

Mrs. White, following her husband, taught, furthermore, that the last generation of Christians will actually be people of spiritual perfection: the 144,000 will be so free from sin that they will be able to do without Christ's priestly ministry. In 1847 James White published *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* in which he said that the saints on earth during the seven last plagues, "the time of trouble," will have no heavenly intercessor, because Christ will have laid off "His priestly attire and put on His most kingly robes, to execute His judgment on the living wicked" (pp. 2-3, cf. pp. 8-10).

Mrs. White declares that these things were made clear to her in visions which she received shortly after her husband had published his views, namely, on Jan. 5, 1849, in Sept., 1850 and on May 14, 1851 (*Early Writings*, pp. 36, 52, 71). Her report of the last of these visions includes the following: "I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord, without a High Priest in the sanctuary, through the time of trouble. . . there will be no mediator to plead their cause before the Father." Again we read: "In that fearful time, after the close of Jesus' mediation, the saints were living in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor" (*ibid.*, p. 280). More than thirty years later (1884) Mrs. White expanded this subject in *The Great Controversy*, where she says: "Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a Mediator. Their robes must be spotless. Their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling" (p. 425). When "all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received the seal of the living God, then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. . . . When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time, the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor" (pp. 613-4). The same

⁵¹See Appendix at close of present chapter: *Sabbath-keeping and Salvation*.

idea is expressed later in the same volume: "Now, while our High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Savior be brought to yield to the power of temptation. . . . Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's Commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble" (pp. 622-3; cf. p. 649).

It is not difficult to see that if Christians are required to develop a perfect character in order to be successful candidates for heaven, they cannot be said to stand where Adam stood before he fell, because at that time there was no flaw in his character. God had pronounced all His handiwork, including man, "very good" (Gen. 1:31). Since Adam, created perfect, was charged to obey a specific command relating to his outward conduct (Gen. 2:16-17), his position was far removed from that of a fallen creature called upon to make himself perfect, albeit with spiritual means divinely provided.

Moreover, to denominate either arrangement a "covenant of grace" is absurd, for in the latter case as well as in the former, the boon of eternal glory is made contingent on human works. It was, indeed, gracious of God to offer Adam so much for so little, but, after all, what was promised was conditioned on Adam's performance. Similarly, it would, indeed, have been gracious of God to offer believers eternal glory under the terms the Adventists specify, but the grace shown would have consisted only in giving men another opportunity to make good under a covenant of works. To call such an arrangement a covenant of grace is to misuse both the Bible and the dictionary.

Surely, this teaching about perfection of character, as a prerequisite for salvation, is foreign to the Scriptures. (See, for example, Rom. 3:21-26; 4:1-5; Gal. 3:1-14; Eph. 2:1-10; Phil. 3:7-9; Titus 3:4-8a; I Peter 1:3-9.) It is so far removed from Protestantism that it is simple Romanism. This is the fallacy that the Reformers were forever refuting, as anyone acquainted with their writings knows.

This, then, is Adventism's doctrine of salvation. It teaches that we are pardoned by grace alone, but presently reveals that the pardon is only provisional, being contingent on our subsequent right conduct — which is Galatianism. It teaches that we have eternal life the instant we repent and believe, but soon discloses that we have it only in promise, not in actuality —

which is Russellism. It also teaches that the redeeming work of the incarnate Son has put us back where Adam was before he fell, but then declares that our eternal glory hinges upon the formation of a perfect character, for which we are responsible — which is Romanism.

Thus Adventism's soteriology is a mixture of Galatianism, Russellism and Romanism. In opposition to it, we place that of the N.T., as it has been expressed in Protestantism. We hold that Christ, by His redeeming work, provided, both negatively and positively, all that is necessary for our salvation. He not only procured for us deliverance from the sentence of death, but also the bestowment of eternal life, with title to the state of glory. That which is required of us sinners is a penitent trust in the incarnate, sacrificed and glorified Lord. We hold unqualifiedly that such a trust in Him will bring forth in us gratitude, love and service; but we deny emphatically that we can ever, in this life, do without the intercession of our great, compassionate and faithful High Priest. This is the gospel that brings peace to the sinner's conscience, holiness to the believer's soul and glory to the Triune God.

APPENDIX

Sabbath-keeping and Salvation.

Perfection of character involves a perfect performance of the divine will. All non-Adventist Christians agree that it is their duty to seek to please God in all things, but few of them consider that they are able, even with divine aid, to attain, in this mortal state, to a perfect performance of His will. They fully concur with the confessions of the writers of the N.T. Paul does not present himself in Phil. 3 as one who had reached that height, nor does James in his Epistle (ch. 2:3). John does not make this claim in his first letter (ch. 1:8), where he says: "If we say that we [including himself] have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." It is otherwise with Adventists. Their literature abounds in assertions that they can render perfect obedience, by Christ's help, even here and now. So confident of this was James White that he said: "A life of obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus⁵² will be a sufficient passport through the golden gates of the city of God" (*Life Incidents*, p. 359).

To Adventism, the most important of all God's commands is the one

⁵²By "the commandments of God," Mr. White meant the ten commandments; and by "the faith of Jesus," the N. T. precepts and doctrines (*Life Incidents*, pp. 257, 259).

requiring the keeping of the Sabbath. Mrs. White calls it "the greatest commandment in the decalogue" (*Early Writings*, p. 65). On April 7, 1847, in a letter to Joseph Bates, she recounted a vision in which she had "passed into the Holy of holies" in heaven. There, she declared, she saw the ten commandments shining brightly, the fourth brightest of all. "The holy Sabbath looked glorious — a halo of glory was all around it." Presently we read these words: "I saw that the holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question to unite the hearts of God's dear waiting saints. And if one believed and kept the Sabbath and received the blessing attending it and then gave it up and broke the holy commandment, they would shut the gates of the Holy City against themselves, as sure as there was a God that rules in heaven" (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* pp. 18-19).

Observe carefully that Mrs. White says that the Sabbath — which she identified with Saturday — is now "the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers." Likewise, in recounting a vision she had on March 24, 1849, ("The Open and the Shut Door," in *Early Writings*, pp. 42-3), she declares that God's people are being "tried on the Sabbath truth," "they are being tested on the Sabbath question." "The present test on the Sabbath," she says, began in October 1844. Those who died prior to that date, "rest in hope," even though they had not kept Saturday, "for they had not the light and the test on the Sabbath which we now have." Mrs. White adds: "I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about its being a test for us now." The implication is clear: to refuse Adventism's message on the Sabbath is spiritually fatal.

A short time before (January 5, 1849), Mrs. White had a vision in which she saw "a company who were howling in agony." She reports: "On their garments was written in large characters, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.' I asked who this company were. The angel said, 'These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up.' I heard them cry with a loud voice, 'We have believed in Thy coming, and taught it with energy.' And while they were speaking, their eyes would fall upon their garments and see the writing, and then they would wail aloud. I saw that they had drunk of the deep waters, and fouled the residue with their feet — trodden the Sabbath underfoot — and that was why they were weighed in the balance and found wanting."⁵³

These two quotations from Mrs. White clearly prove that she taught that Sabbath observance is necessary to salvation in the case, at least,

⁵³*Early Writings*, p. 37. This is a part of Mrs. White's "broadside," "to those who are receiving the Seal of the Living God," published Jan. 31, 1849. That same month Joseph Bates published his tract on the Sabbath, *The Seal of the living God*. The two publications agree, of course.

of those who have heard its message. By so teaching she denied that salvation is always to be had apart from lawkeeping and, therefore, by grace. Almost twenty years later (1868), her husband, Elder James White, published *Life Incidents*, in which he asked pointblank: "If the Sabbath is of so little importance as not to be a test... of eternal salvation... why not abandon it?" (p. 333).

It is undeniable, therefore, that both Mr. and Mrs. White taught that Sabbath-keeping is necessary to salvation in the case of those who have heard the Adventists' message. It is also undeniable that the other founder of the movement, Joseph Bates,⁵⁴ held the same view. As a matter of fact, it was through him that the Whites were brought to believe Saturday was to be sacredly observed.⁵⁵ Listen to Bates as he discourses in the pages of *The Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (1850-51). On page 58 he calls the Sabbath "the crowning truth of all, and consequently, the seal of the living God; because the sealing cannot take place until the truth is first believed. See Ephesians 1:13" (cf. *Great Controversy*, p. 640). Earlier in the same volume appears an article of his on "N.T. Testimony" concerning the Sabbath (pp. 10-13). He concludes his remarks with an application which begins thus: "Dear Reader: — examine for yourself and be not deceived, and led blindfolded. Your salvation is at stake on this point."

Down through the years, the SDA church has consistently adhered to this position which had been taken by its founders. Anyone who makes some research will soon see that what the founders said, their followers spread. Take a few examples. In the early part of this chapter on Salvation, I referred to Mr. French's confession that justification was by faith in Christ, but on the condition of keeping the moral law. By "the moral law" Adventists, like many others, mean the ten commandments. Now since the fourth of these concerns the observance of the Sabbath, it is plain that Mr. French held Sabbath-observance to be necessary to salvation. O. A. Johnson, Instructor in Bible and History in Union College, College View, Nebraska, directly stated: "One of the conditions of salvation and having our names retained in the book of life, is to keep the Sabbath."

So far from obsolete is this doctrine in contemporaneous Adventism that it continues to be propagated, and that, not merely by the dissemination of Mrs. White's literature. For example, we read in Charles T. Everson's booklet, entitled *The Mark of the Beast*, that the great decision about the Sabbath "involves eternal life and eternal death" (p. 42). Again, I read in No. 27 of the current *Know Your Bible Series*: "The Sabbath question is the last great test by which men will decide

⁵⁴L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, Vol. IV, p. 972. This set of books, which is listed on p. 633, is the fruit of 20 years of research and contains an immense amount of valuable historical material, carefully arranged and beautifully published. It must, however, be read cautiously.

⁵⁵See James White, *Life Incidents*, p. 269; Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, ch. XII, and also her *Biographical Sketch*, ch. XI.

their eternal destiny" (p. 7). This view is so up to date that the current *Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* (Senior Division, No. 264, Second Quarter, 1961) states that the Sunday-observing churches are "Babylon." So important to some Adventists is the observance of the Sabbath on Saturday that it is incorporated into the new convert's act of initiation. A Presbyterian missionary in Brazil, in a letter published in *Christianity Today* (July 21, 1958), said: "Before me is one of their decision cards. ... 'My decision. Jesus, I come to Thee. Recognizing that the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath, is the day of the Lord, I promise with the help of God, to observe it as His holy day and obey all the rest of the holy commandments'" (p. 26).

I am well aware that Dr. Barnhouse declared in *Eternity* magazine (Sept. 1956) that Adventist leaders had stated in writing to Mr. Martin that they "repudiated absolutely" the view that keeping the Sabbath "is in any way a means of salvation." But so long as these confessedly uninspired leaders continue to advocate the inspiration of Mrs. White, they cannot dismiss her teaching as a thing of the past. If Mrs. White had the gift of prophecy, then her pronouncement is final.

CHAPTER SIX

The Sabbath

The importance of this subject is self-evident; for the term "Sabbath" is included in the very name of the movement, which was chosen by its own leaders. We have already seen (in the Appendix to Ch. V) the high estimate which Mrs. White placed upon the Sabbath, in that she affirmed it to be a test of salvation for those who have heard its message. Moreover, in the missionary work of the denomination, it seems to be the decisive doctrine by which to win converts, at least from other churches. Adventists may regard the sanctuary teaching as the heart of their message, but the Saturday Sabbath is the one which makes most impact upon outsiders.

Adventists hold that God created the world in six solar days (p. 24) and then rested on the day following (pp. 162-3); that is, that He made the world from Sunday to Friday and then rested on Saturday. They also hold that Adam, in accordance with the divine actions recorded in Gen. 2:3, likewise rested on Saturday, and that the observance of that day has been kept in unbroken succession through all generations to the present time.

But this basic tenet of Adventism involves two difficulties. The Fourth Commandment (Exod. 20:8-11) makes it clear that, in keeping the Sabbath, men are to imitate their Maker in working six days and resting one. The Adventists stress this (e.g. M. L. Andreasen in *God's Holy Day*, which is listed on page 630 of *Questions on Doctrine*). But if Adam was created on Friday and rested on Saturday, then he violated this principle from the outset. If, on the other hand, Adam first worked for six days before resting one, then his rest day would have fallen on Friday, instead of Saturday.

In spite of these initial difficulties, the Adventists contend that the only proper day to be observed is Saturday. (They used to think it should begin at 6 P.M. See *Review and Herald*, Vol. I, p. 71; *Present Truth*, pp. 11, 57.) It is true that this, apparently,⁵⁶

⁵⁶Some Biblical scholars, for different reasons, question this point.

was the day divinely prescribed for the nation of Israel, and it is certain that in Christ's time the last day of the week was the Sabbath observed by Himself and His nation. This fact the Adventist considers decisive for ourselves today. He confidently asks for some N.T. ruling that the day of worship has been changed (pp. 162, 165, 171, 175). When no such ruling is produced, his confidence becomes boundless. However, what ground has he for thinking that God makes known His mind only by specific declarations?

God may make known His mind by what He implies in express declarations He has made,⁵⁷ or even entirely apart from anything He says; He may make it known by what He does. He certainly did so in the house of Cornelius, when He poured out the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles in precisely the same way that He had poured Him out on the Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 10:44-47). Thereby He revealed the spiritual equality of believing Gentiles with believing Jews (ch. 11:15-17). To this divine act the Apostle appealed at the subsequent Council of Jerusalem (ch. 15:8-9). At that same Council, Barnabas and Paul appealed, not to anything God had said but to what He had done, in behalf of their preaching salvation by grace to the Gentiles (v. 12). The signs and wonders which He had wrought in conjunction with that preaching served to show that He approved it. As man's actions speak louder than words, so do God's.

Now God gave special sanction to the observance of the first day of the week by what He did. To quote Dr. James Orr: "The day had special Divine sanction. The selection of it in Providence as the day of resurrection was itself a fact of great significance.⁵⁸ It could not be without design that *this* day was chosen for so glorious an event. 'Circumstances,'

⁵⁷See Jonathan Edwards' Sermon on I Cor. 16:1-2.

⁵⁸See Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19.

The contention of some few writers that Christ arose on Saturday is refuted by the fact that He died on the "Preparation" (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14, 31, 42). The "Preparation" signifies Friday (John Lightfoot, in his Rabbinical study of the Gospels; John Gill, famous for his Talmudical learning, Commentary *in loco.*; Edersheim, the Christian Jewish scholar, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 616; Dean Alford, *The N. T. for English Readers*, on Mark 15:42; Sir Robert Anderson, *The Coming Prince*, pp. 112-13). See also F. F. Bruce, who calls attention to any modern Greek dictionary, which defines the word to mean "Friday," and adds: "It is, in fact, the ordinary word for 'Friday' in modern Greek" (*The Books and the Parchments*, pp. 68-9).

notes!
 says Mr. Gilfillan, 'might have been so arranged that Jesus should have risen on the seventh day of the week; but it was not so ordered.' Christ slept in the grave on the old Sabbath, but rose in the power of an endless life on the day succeeding. This was practically to declare the old day abrogated and a new day to be instituted in its place.

"But more special sanctions followed. Our Lord met with His disciples on five different occasions on the day of His resurrection... the next recorded meeting was eight days after — that is, again on the first day of the week (John 20:26).

"Yet more special was the sanction given to the day by its being chosen for the fulfillment of the promise of the Father in the gift of the Spirit to the waiting Church at Pentecost.⁵⁹

"No interpretation could be given to these facts which did not imply that the first day of the week was henceforth, in preference to the old Sabbath, to be the great festival day of the Christian Church" (*The Sabbath Scripturally and Practically Considered*, pp. 64-65).

Thus all three Persons of the Godhead — first the Father, then the Son and finally the Spirit — openly put honor on the first day of the week which They might have put on the seventh. Thereby they depressed the dignity of the last day and exalted the first in its place. The Adventist himself must consider that, had the blessed Trinity performed these acts on the seventh day, that day would have had its glory unspeakably enhanced. But they were not performed on that day.

The Apostles, possessing true spiritual insight, perceived that God meant Sunday to be the supreme day for the new order of things. Speaking of this, Dr. Orr adds: "Lastly, the observance of the day had Apostolic sanction. It began in churches under the care and guidance of Apostles enjoying the special direction of the Spirit. We cannot, therefore, for a moment hesitate to

⁵⁹That Pentecost occurred on a Sunday is suggested in the ancient Syriac N. T., which, divided into lessons for public worship, lists the Sunday of Pentecost (Wood, *Heaven once a week*, p. 58). Dr. Philip Schaff — appealed to on p. 63 — says: "The Church always celebrated Pentecost on Sunday." So Lange and many other scholars.

It is believed by some (not all) scholars that the starting-point of the fifty days (Lev. 23:15-16) was Nisan 16, which was the day following the crucifixion, i.e., Saturday (see preceding note). In that case, seven full weeks would terminate on Saturday, not Sunday. However, Edersheim informs us that "Owing to the peculiarity of the Jewish calendar, Pentecost did not always take place on the 6th Sivan. Care was taken that it should not occur on a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday" (*The Temple*, p. 261, n. Italics mine).

set aside the view... that the Lord's Day was ordained by the Church... and to adopt that of Paley and Hesse, that it was a truly Divine and Apostolic institution, binding on Christians to the end of the dispensation to which it belongs" (*ibid.*, p. 65).

Acts 20:7 and I Cor. 16:2 are instances of Apostolic sanction of the first day of the week, however much disinclined the Adventists are to acknowledge it. From Acts 20:6 we learn that Paul and his fellow-travelers, including Luke, spent seven days in Troas. In the next verse, Luke says that on the first day of the week, "we were gathered together [not to bid Paul farewell, but] to break bread." The very same Greek words occur in the *Didache* or "Teaching of the Twelve," which dates from about A.D. 100,⁶⁰ to denote the observance of the Lord's Supper. This parallel proves that Luke's words refer, not to a social meal (as some have contended) but to the Holy Communion. Observe, then, that the saints in Troas did not gather together for the Lord's Supper on the seventh day of the week, but on the first. They waited until the Jewish Sabbath was past and assembled on Sunday.

The Adventists tell us that this assembly, "on the first day of the week," must have taken place on Saturday evening, because the Jewish day always began at sunset the evening before. However, they fail to show reason why these Gentile believers in Asia Minor⁶¹ should have followed Jewish custom instead of Roman, especially since Troas was a Roman colony possessing the *jus Italicum*.⁶² Now the Romans reckoned time, as we do today, from midnight to midnight. Thus the disciples assembled on Sunday, and not Saturday, evening. Hackett remarks: "as Luke had mingled so much with foreign nations and was writing for Gentile readers, he would be very apt to designate the time in accordance with their practice." (cf. F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, p. 408, n.) This constitutes additional reason for considering that the gathering took place on Sunday evening, and

⁶⁰This document records "the usage of the churches in or around Antioch [Syria], probably, about the end of the first Christian century" (F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments*, p. 55).

⁶¹On Paul's first visit to Troas, he evidently did not tarry to preach there. (Acts 16:8-11). His second visit was just after his long stay in Ephesus, as he was en route to Macedonia (ch. 20:1; cf. II Cor. 2:12-13). Then it was that he won converts in that place. Acts 20:5-12 pertains to the Apostle's third visit.

⁶²I.e., it was granted exemption from land tax, just as if it were a part of Italy itself.

not on Saturday evening, as the New English Bible interprets, not translates, Acts 20:7.

To the churches of Galatia, as well as to the congregation in Corinth, Paul had previously given direction about a religious collection and had associated the matter with the same day of the week (I Cor. 16:1, 2). The Adventists try to prove that "the laying by in store" relates simply to an act performed at home. But the close of verse 2 quite negates this idea, for this act was to be performed in order to obviate the necessity for taking up a collection after Paul's arrival. Accordingly, N. J. D. White, in the article "Lord's Day" in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, says: "'Lay by him in store' conceals the fact that it (the collection) must have been made at the weekly meeting; otherwise, collections would have been necessary on St. Paul's arrival, the very thing he was anxious to avoid." He adds that the Greek words in verse 2 mean: "Let him assign a certain sum as he is disposed and put it into the church treasury" on the first day of the week.

J. S. Clemens, in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, says: "As Paul urges this course so 'that no collections be made when I come'; and as the whole work is described in v. 1 as a 'collection,' it is most natural to infer that there was not only a setting apart of gifts but also a paying into a local fund week by week" (Vol. I, p. 707b). "When as Zahn observes, we find that in the second century, there was a widespread custom of laying charitable gifts for the poor on the church dish in connection with public worship, it is difficult not to connect this with St. Paul's words here" (*ibid.*).

Thus we have two instances of church acts linked up with the first day of the week in Apostolic days. But there is not one instance in the Acts, the Epistles or the Revelation where the early church's life is identified with the Jewish day of worship. Paul's going to the synagogue on the Sabbath was for the purpose of evangelization, not for that of Christian worship (Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 16:13; 17:1-2; 18:4). The only mention of "Sabbath" in the Epistles is Col. 2:16, though there the weekly Sabbath as such cannot be intended, but the weekly Sabbath in its Jewish form (see, e.g., H. C. G. Moule in the *Cambridge Bible*). At any rate, the Sabbath referred to is shown to be one of those things about which we are not to judge others if they do not observe them.

But what about "the Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10) being a designation for the seventh-day Sabbath as the Adventists contend (pp.

149-50)? This is mere assertion and demonstrably baseless. The adjective translated "Lord's" is identical with that used in I Cor. 11:20, where "the Lord's Supper" is mentioned. It is a word that "was in current use in the whole Greek-speaking world," says J. S. Clemens, who cites it in a term denoting the "Imperial treasury" (See "Lord's Day" in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*). Deissmann says that it "comes from the official language of the imperial period" and adds, "frequent examples of its occurrence in the sense of 'imperial' are to be found in Egyptian inscriptions and papyri and in the inscriptions of Asia Minor" (*Encyclopaedia Biblica*, Vol. III, p. 2815). So we have "the Imperial Supper" and "the Imperial Day." As the Supper is one instituted by Christ, it is fair to judge that the Day is also one instituted by Him, the incarnate Son. But He did not institute the seventh-day Sabbath, for it existed long before the incarnation. As the Lord's Supper is an institution similar to, but distinct from, the Jewish Passover, so the Lord's Day is an institution similar to, but distinct from, the Jewish Sabbath.

However, this is not all there is to be said. Allusion has been made to the *Didache* in connection with Acts 20:7, where we read: "and upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread." In evident reference to Luke's words, the *Didache* says: "And on each Lord's Day of the Lord, be ye gathered together and break bread" (ch. 14.1). This shows that the saints at the close of the Apostolic age considered the Lord's Day to be the first day of the week. Hence Clemens speaks of this as "an undisputed early example of the use of 'the Lord's Day' " for Sunday. Deissmann calls the Lord's Day "a technical name for Sunday." N. J. D. White, in his article referred to above, says: "The Greek Fathers, from the *Didache* . . . onwards . . . use the Lord's Day . . . only in the sense of Sunday." Clemens proceeds to say: "The expression . . . could not have been a new term about A.D. 100, since *Kuriakē* (Lord's) alone is used" for the Lord's Day (the abbreviation omitting the word "day"). We find the same abbreviated form in the letters of Ignatius who was martyred in A.D. 117. This man — who was perhaps a disciple of St. John⁶³ — speaks of the day of Christ's resurrection as "the Lord's (Day)" in his Epistle to the Magnesians (Par. 9).

When the *Didache* speaks of "The Lord's (Day) of the Lord" there is probably intended an allusion to the O.T. expression,

⁶³Eerdmans' edition of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (Vol. I, p. 45).

"The Sabbath of the Lord" — thus connecting the Christian day with the Sabbath of the O.T. though distinguishing it from the Jewish aspect of the day.⁶⁴

We see, then, that when John speaks of "The Lord's Day," he refers to the first day of the week. But the fact that he uses the term without any explanation shows that it was not one just coined. The designation must have been one that was well-known to the seven churches to which he wrote, as a title for the first day of the week.⁶⁵

Here, then, we have a further expression of the divine choice of the first day of the week. On this day, not on the seventh, John was granted the vision of the glorified Christ, authorized to send heavenly messages to the seven churches of Asia, rapt away into the upper world to behold things indescribable and granted the revelations of the Lamb's triumph over all the evil in the universe, as well as the sight of the new heavens and new earth wherein righteousness dwelleth and God is all in all. Surely this is a fitting climax to the divine sanction of the first day as over against the seventh. He that hath eyes to see will see the significance of this fact.

Thus in Jerusalem; in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe; in Corinth; in Troas; in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea — that is to say, among both Jews and Gentiles, in the Holy Land and out of it; and out of it, both in Asia and in Europe; from the time of Christ's resurrection to that of the Apostolate's termination; the first day of the week was honored by God and celebrated by His

⁶⁴Thus C. Taylor in his lectures on the *Didache*, and Turner in *Studies in Early Church History*. The reader is also referred to Schaff's *The Oldest Church Manual*, ch. XIII: "The Lord's Day and the Christian Week."

⁶⁵The use of this term in Rev. 1:10 constitutes the ground of one of Prof. Godet's arguments for the late date of the Revelation. He says: "It is well known that the Apostolic writings of a date anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem, never speak of this day except as the first day of the week. The expression, 'The Lord's Day,' is of purely Christian origin, belonging to the ecclesiastical and technical language of the later times of the Apostolic age, when the Church had broken off all connection with the Synagogue" (*Biblical Studies on N. T.*, p. 339). In harmony with Godet's statement is that of Clemens when he says: "No difficulty in point of time emerges concerning the use of 'the Lord's Day' in Revelation, which is reasonably assigned to the reign of Domitian" who ruled from A.D. 81-96 (*Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, Vol., p. 708a). DuVeil, on Acts 20:7 cites Sozomen as saying that Sunday was "called the Lord's Day" by Christians, but "the first day of the week" by Jews.

saints. Yet Seventh-day Adventism tells us that Sunday observance will be the mark of the beast (chs. 18-19).

Accordingly, they who hold that a change has been made in the day to be observed, have no difficulty in furnishing evidence that the "obvious intent of Holy Writ" (p. 165) supports their contention. The insistence on a "definite Scripture mandate" (p. 175) is both unreasonable and irreverent, for as God can make known His mind otherwise than by mandate, so He is at liberty to do so.

As for Matt. 24:20, the Sabbath is mentioned as the last of four difficulties which the disciples, fleeing from doomed Jerusalem, might have to overcome. Two of these are spoken of in v. 19 and two in v. 20. Reverence for the seventh day on the part of unbelieving Jews could hinder travel, just as winter conditions could. The usual Sabbath day's journey was only a mile, (Du Veil, a Jew, on Acts 1:12), which would not be far enough to secure safety.⁶⁶ But even if this is not the explanation of the passage, the very most that can be made of it is that Palestinian Christians in A.D. 70 would still be scrupulous about the traditional mode of observing the seventh day. Acts 21:17-26 shows their zeal for the old customs only thirteen years previously.

But now we meet some strange assertions in *Questions on Doctrine* concerning the church's practice:

1. It is stated that "The seventh-day Sabbath continued to be kept by Christ's followers for several centuries" (p. 152) — a statement which surely implies while it does not specifically state that it was kept by all such. This agrees well with that made by W. W. Prescott, the contributor of the Adventist article on "Sabbath" for *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*. He says: "According to church history the seventh-day Sabbath was observed by the early church and no other day was observed as a Sabbath during the first two or three centuries" (p. 2633b). Mr. Prescott cites S. R. Driver's article on "Sabbath" in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* in proof of this statement. However, all that Driver said was that the Lord's Day was not called the Sabbath for the first three centuries — not that the Lord's Day was not observed. A worse perversion of another author's words would be difficult to imagine.

Johann L. von Mosheim states in his celebrated *Ecclesiastical*

⁶⁶See Alford's *The N. T. for English Readers* on this verse. Alford is appealed to on p. 583 of *Q. on D.*

*History*⁶⁷ that whereas there was much diversity in the practice of the Christians of the first century, "yet there are a few regulations which may be considered as common to all Christians. . . . The Christians of this century assembled for the worship of God and for their advancement in piety on the first day of the week, the day on which Christ reassumed life; for, that this day was set apart for religious worship by the Apostles themselves and that after the example of the church of Jerusalem it was generally observed, we have unexceptionable testimony" (Century I, Part II, Chap. IV, Par. 4). Concerning the Christians of the next century, he says: "They met on the first day of the week and here and there also [not "only"] on the seventh day, which was the Jewish Sabbath" (Cent. II, Part II, Chap. IV, Par. 8). As to the practice of the third century Christians, Mosheim states: "As to the forms of public worship and the times set apart for it, it is unnecessary here to be particular, as little alteration was made in this century" (Cent. III, Part II, Chap. IV, Par. 2). Concerning the following century, he says: "The first day of the week, on which Christians were accustomed to meet for the worship of God, Constantine required by a special law to be observed more sacredly than before" (Cent. IV, Part II, Chap. IV).

Philip Schaff, a later historian, in his *History of the Christian Church*, confirms Mosheim thus: "The Lord's Day took the place of the Jewish Sabbath as the weekly day of public worship. . . . The day was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, not on the ground of a particular command, but by the free spirit of the Gospel and by the power of certain great facts which lie at the foundation of the Christian church. It was on that day that Christ rose from the dead; that He appeared to Mary, the disciples of Emmaus and the assembled Apostles; that He poured out His Spirit and founded His church; and that He revealed the Mysteries of the future. Hence, the first day was already in the Apostolic age honorably designated 'the Lord's Day.' On that day Paul met with the disciples at Troas and preached until midnight. On that day he ordered the Galatian and Corinthian Christians to make, no doubt in connection with divine service, their weekly contributions to charitable objects according to their ability. It appears, therefore, from the N.T., itself, that Sunday was observed as a day of worship and in special commemoration of the Resurrection,

⁶⁷From which some facts are cited on p. 576.

whereby the work of redemption was finished. The universal and uncontradicted observance in the second century can only be explained by the fact that it had its roots in Apostolic practice" (Vol. I, pp. 477-9).

Schaff testifies, in his *History of the Apostolic Church*, to the temporary observance, on the part of Jewish believers, of the seventh-day as well as the first: "So far as we know, the Jewish Christians of the first generation, at least in Palestine, Scripturally observed the Sabbath, the annual Jewish feasts and the whole Mosaic ritual and celebrated in addition to these the Christian Sunday, the death and resurrection of the Lord and the Holy Supper. But this union was gradually weakened and was at last entirely broken by the destruction of the temple. . . . The Jewish Sabbath passed into the Christian Sunday" (p. 118).

In the third edition (1891) of the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, under the heading "Sunday," we have the following: "Sunday. . . the first day of the week, was adopted by the early Christians as a day of worship. . . . Sunday was emphatically the weekly feast of the resurrection of Christ, as the Jewish Sabbath was the feast of the Creation. It was called 'the Lord's Day' and upon it the primitive church assembled to break bread (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2). No regulations for its observance are laid down in the N.T., nor, indeed, is its observance even enjoined; yet Christian feeling led to the universal adoption of the day, in imitation of Apostolic precedent. In the second century its observance was universal." All this quite well refutes the claims of the Adventists in *Questions on Doctrine* and very definitely the strong statement of Prescott.

2. It is also asserted on p. 152 of *Questions on Doctrine* that "the festival of the resurrection" (meaning Sunday) "was observed at least from the middle of the second century." Leaving aside for the moment the evidence of the N.T. given above and witnessed to by these church historians, the implication that it was not observed earlier is false, seeing both the *Didache* and Ignatius' Letters, which mention the observance of Sunday, are dated respectively at the very dawn of that century and in its second decade.

3. Still a third misrepresentation occurs on the same page, where we read "The first recorded observance" of Sunday "was at Rome" (see also p. 166). The First Apology of Justin Martyr, Chapter 67, is cited as proof. But no such statement is made by Justin, as a reference to Chapter 67 will show. He speaks not of Rome, but of "the cities" wherein Christians resided. His first

chapter plainly says that in this Apology addressed to the Emperor, he is describing Christian practice throughout the whole Empire. What Justin does say in Chapter 67 includes these words: "On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. . . . Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead."⁶⁸

4. It is further asserted in *Questions on Doctrine* that "the earliest authentic instance, in early church writings, of the first day of the week being called 'Lord's Day' was by Clement of Alexandria, near the close of the second century" (p. 166). This is not so either, as the remarks on the *Didache* and the Epistles of Ignatius demonstrate.

5. On the same page Frank H. Yost is cited as authority for saying: "The first ecclesiastical writer, known definitely to teach that the observance of the Sabbath was transferred by Christ to Sunday, was Eusebius of Caesarea (died about A.D. 349)." This is another assertion likely to mislead the unwary, for it suggests that Sunday observance was delayed until the fourth century — which is not true. In writing about the dispute that arose over the proper time to observe Easter — whether on the fourteenth day of the month, regardless of the day of the week, or on Sunday — Eusebius says that the churches of Asia followed the former plan. Then he adds that "it was not the custom to celebrate it in this manner in the churches throughout the rest of the world, who observe the practice that has prevailed from Apostolic tradition until the present time, so that it would not be proper to terminate our fast on any other day but the day of the resurrection of our Savior," namely, on Sunday (Bk. V, Chap. 23).

6. Finally, it is claimed on pp. 169-182 that the Roman Church changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday (see also Mrs. White, as quoted on p. 178) and therefore that Protestantism pays homage to Rome in observing the latter day. The facts presented already are more than sufficient to disprove this claim and the deduction made from it. The assertions of Roman

⁶⁸Justin was born in a city of Samaria about A.D. 110 and died about A.D. 165. So he was a native of the Holy Land.

writers, treated seriously on pp. 178 and 182, are simply absurd. Peter Greiermann himself, in his *Manual of Theology for the Laity*, says that Sunday has been kept holy as the Lord's Day ever "since Apostolic times." Yet he is quoted on pp. 170 and 182 as teaching that Rome changed the day. Equally absurd are the "admissions" of Protestants (that we have derived the Sunday idea from Rome) listed on pp. 171-3. Plainly, then, even if the beast of Rev. 13 were the papacy, the observance of Sunday would not be his mark (vv. 16-17) and, consequently, the contrasted "seal of God" would be unrelated to the observance of Saturday. See Chap. VII below, on this beast.

If Seventh-day Adventism be asked whence the Roman church acquired the idea of substituting Sunday for Saturday observance, it answers: From Mithraism. Mithraism derived from the Persian worship of Mithra, the God of light and truth. It was a form of sun worship which was introduced to the pagan Romans about the middle of the first century B.C. In this system, Sunday was held to be specially sacred. The Adventists tell us that the apostatizing church of Rome adopted the holy day of Mithraism after the edict of Constantine in A.D. 321 and then transmitted it to all Christendom.

This view is set forth with great assurance by C. P. Bollman in his pamphlet, *Sunday: Origin of its observance in the Christian Church*, which constitutes his reply to D. M. Canright's book on *The Lord's Day from neither Catholics nor Pagans*. The fact that Mithraism and Christianity both observed the same day in the fourth century is enough to convince Mr. Bollman that the latter derived its day from the former. The infidel, H. G. Wells, is quoted in support of this notion. The author might as well have contended that since Saturday was the day dedicated to Saturn as well as to God, all who worship on that day are ensnared in idolatry.

Here, then, are no less than eight statements, in *Questions on Doctrine* and other works, relative to the testimony of church history, that are either false or misleading. They must be attributed to one of three things: to woeful ignorance, to shameful dishonesty, or to blinding prejudice. In view of the evidently extensive historical research prosecuted by the authors of *Questions on Doctrine*, it is impossible to attribute them to woeful ignorance. They must therefore spring from either shameful dishonesty or blinding prejudice. I prefer to ascribe them to the latter. It is simply amazing how devotion to a theory or a system can put out the intellectual eyes of good men.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Prophetic Chronology

Prophecy always has been and remains one of the main emphases of Adventism. We shall be dealing with ideas belonging to this realm in the course of the next five chapters. First of all, it is necessary to consider the relation which chronology bears to the subject.

The "year-day" theory is basic in Adventist prophetic interpretation. This theory is presented on pages 259-60 and 332-3 of *Questions on Doctrine*. According to this principle, a day in a symbolic prophecy means a year in its fulfillment. Time periods in literal prophecies are to be taken literally — a day means a day and a year a year — but not so in symbolic ones. Accordingly, we are told that the four hundred years of Gen. 15:13 mean four hundred years, and the seventy years of Jer. 29:10, seventy years; but that the "time and times and half a time" of Dan. 7:25 (with their corresponding "forty and two months" or "a thousand two hundred and three score days" in Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5) and the "two thousand and three hundred days" of Dan. 8:14, mean, respectively, 1260 and 2300 years. If this system of interpretation were correct, then we should understand years for days in Christ's symbolic prophecy in John 2:19: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." But when He said "days" he meant "days" and not "years"; which, in itself, is enough to disprove the system.

A number of Scriptures are appealed to, nevertheless, to support this theory. Among them are Num. 14:34 and Ezek. 4:4-6 (pp. 260, 333). But a look at these texts (with their contexts) will show that they warrant no such idea. The first only says that as the spies searched out the land for forty days, so the children of Israel should wander in the wilderness for forty years, being punished a year for every day of spying — not because the spying was wrong, but because the people's response to the spies' report was (Num. 13:25 — 14:10). The second text says that the prophet was to lie upon his left side three hundred and ninety days to typify the judgment upon Israel for three

hundred and ninety years of sinning, and then to lie upon his right side forty days to typify the judgment upon Judah for forty years of sin. The actual judgment upon both Israel and Judah was the captivity. Tregelles⁶⁹ says: "This is not a symbolic prophecy at all but simply a symbolic act" (*Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel*, p. 117). In both passages, days mean days and years mean years. Neither means the other. Thus both texts disprove the very thing they are supposed to prove.

But the main passage appealed to by year-day advocates is Dan. 9:24-27, which contains the prophecy of "the seventy weeks." It is argued that each week with its seven days stands for seven years (pp. 309-10). The same view is expressed by L. E. Froom in *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* (e.g., Vol. IV, p. 205).

Now, there are two stubborn facts which militate against this construction of Dan. 9. One is that the prophecy is not symbolic but literal. Strange to say, this is acknowledged on p. 227, of *Questions on Doctrine*, where we read: "Dan. 9:24-27 is a continuation of the literal explanation of the symbolic vision." Inasmuch as the literal explanation of a prophecy is to be taken literally (*ibid.*), it follows that, on Adventist principles, Dan. 9:24-27 is not to be taken symbolically but literally. So, even if the Hebrew word translated "week" meant "seven days," there would be no way of converting it into "seven years."

The other stubborn fact is that the Hebrew word translated "week" does not necessarily mean seven days, but often in itself merely denotes a unit of seven, just as "dozen" represents a unit of twelve. Gesenius, in his Hebrew Lexicon, simply defines it as "a septenary number" and adds that sometimes it is applied to days and sometimes to years. The context must determine which it is. In Dan. 10:2, 3 there is an accompanying word, defining the sevens to be those of days. In the preceding chapter, it was not necessary to have an attendant word defining the sevens to be those of years, because the occasion of the prophecy was Daniel's consideration of the "seventy years" foretold by Jeremiah (vv. 1-2). Over against those seventy are now set seventy sevens. As the former were years, the latter must be such too.

Accordingly, E. B. Elliott, the learned author of the monumental *Horae Apocalypticæ* and a firm believer in the year-day idea, admitted that "the Hebrew word... has been shown to be

⁶⁹Appealed to on p. 476.

a word etymologically of ambiguous meaning, signifying any septenary and applicable to seven years as well as seven days" (Vol. III, p. 962). Again, strange to say, this fact is acknowledged on pp. 276-7 of *Questions on Doctrine*, where we read that the Hebrew word "simply denotes a unit of seven and may designate a period of either seven days or seven years. The intent must be determined by context and usage." (Cf. *The Bible Made Plain*, p. 42; Thurber, *Symbols of Salvation*, p. 32) Thus the idea that Dan. 9:24-27 is an instance of the year-day principle, advanced on pp. 309-10, is doubly refuted on pp. 276-7!

This refutation of its own contention about Dan. 9, on the part of Seventh-day Adventism, annihilates the case for the year-day theory. Nevertheless, Adventists infer that the pre-Christian Rabbis and the early Fathers adhered to it, because they understood "the seventy weeks" as seventy weeks of years. However, we have positive evidence from their own writings that the Fathers did not follow this line of interpretation. Justin Martyr, in his "Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew," says: "He who Daniel foretells would have dominion for a time and times and an half, is even already at the door, about to speak blasphemous and daring things against the Most High. But you, being ignorant of how long he will have dominion, hold another opinion. For you interpret the 'time' as being a hundred years. But if this is so, the man of sin must, at the shortest, reign three hundred and fifty years" (Chap. XXXII). Irenaeus, the Apostle John's spiritual grandson, says that the three and a half times mean "three years and six months" (*Against Heresies*, Chap. XXV. 3).

As a matter of fact, *Questions on Doctrine* itself shows that the early church could not have followed the year-day idea. On pages 467-8 we read: "Premillennialism was strong in the early Christian Church. The believers looked for a breakup of the Roman Empire and the coming of a malign anti-Christ who would persecute the saints for three years and a half, followed by the personal advent of Christ. They expected a literal first resurrection at the advent and the setting up of a thousand-year kingdom of the saints reigning with Christ... This belief they based on the N.T. prophecies together with the historical prophecies of Daniel, in which they found themselves under the fourth kingdom. They expected the further unfolding of these events in history soon after their day, for they looked for the second advent shortly... The millennial kingdom... was generally understood to be on earth with the saints reigning over the

nations in the flesh." This accurate account shows that the early Fathers could not have contemplated any prolonged period as preceding Christ's return. (Incidentally, note the difference between primitive eschatology and that of Adventism.)

It was not until medieval times that Jewish and Christian teachers actually advanced year-dayism (cf. pp. 260, 310). It was first set forth by the former group in the ninth century, and by the latter three centuries later. Joachim of Floris, in Italy, at the close of the twelfth century, applied it to the 1260 days of Rev. 12. Shortly after him, other writers applied it as well to the 1290, 1335 and 2300 days found in Daniel. Joachim was one "whose object it was to exalt the Papacy on the ruins of the episcopacy" (Jas. H. Todd on Antichrist, p. 453). The writers who immediately followed him were defenders of extreme authority for the Pope.

These historical facts are very damaging to this system of interpretation. Sober men are not likely to favor a principle that "was altogether unknown by the Jewish Church before the Christian era, by the Apostles of our Lord, by the primitive Church, by the Fathers—in short, that no one ever thought of... during... the first twelve centuries of Christianity" (S. R. Maitland in *Second Enquiry respecting the prophetic period of Daniel and St. John*, p. 77). Moreover, such men will not have their reservations removed by observing that it originated in apostate Judaism and was developed by the Church of Rome. These considerations give strong reasons for suspecting the validity of the theory.

It is true that most, though not all, of the Reformers, from Wycliffe down, applied the year-day principle to the interpretation of prophecy, but it is plain that they derived it from Rome. The remark of John Robinson, at the departure of the Mayflower Pilgrims from Holland in 1620, is appropriate here: "It is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once." It is plain, therefore, that "completing the work of the Reformation" involves discarding the year-day theory. Yet Seventh-day Adventism, which claims to be divinely called to this work of completion, has this very theory as its bed-rock foundation,⁷⁰ so that to discard it would be to destroy itself.

Now let us consider three of the prophetic Scriptures to which

⁷⁰See the next two chapters for amplification.

Adventism applies the year-day idea, and see how unwarranted its conclusions are. I refer to Dan. 7 and 8, and to Rev. 13. Inasmuch as Adventists link Dan. 8 and 9, the preceding treatment of Dan. 9 should be followed by that of Ch. 8. Since Dan. 7 and Rev. 13 concern the same prophetic figure, it will also be best to handle those two chapters in succession.

1. Daniel 8. In v. 14 we read that after 2300 days, the sanctuary was to be cleansed. Some scholars consider the Hebrew expression to denote half that number (e.g. Wm. Hendriksen in *The Banner*, March 20, 27, 1942). Adventists maintain that the 2300 days symbolize 2300 years (pp. 260, 333). They argue that these days must be taken symbolically because the ram and the goat, set forth in the prophecy, are symbolic (p. 259). They further declare that the starting-point of the supposed 2300 years coincides with the beginning of "the seventy weeks" of Ch. 9:24-27, for they hold that the 490 years of that prophecy constitute the opening portion of the 2300 years. Inasmuch as they date the beginning of "the seventy weeks" in the seventh year of the Medo-Persian king, Artaxerxes Longimanus (Ezra 7:7-8), they also date the starting-point of "the 2300 days" at that time, which, they say, was in 457 B.C.⁷¹

Now, even if the 2300 days were 2300 years, they could not have begun so early as 457 B.C., whether we consider the terms of the prophecy or the interpretation of it by the Adventists. As to the terms of the prophecy, Dan. 8 tells us of the conquest of Medo-Persia by Greece, of the subsequent quartering of Alexander's empire and of the emergence of a "little horn" out of one of these four divisions. This little horn, who is called "a king of fierce countenance" (v. 23), takes away the daily sacrifice and casts down the sanctuary (v. 11). When one angel asks another how long this state of things is to continue (v. 13), the answer given is: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (v. 14). Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary is to occur 2300 days after its desecration. But if the desecration was to be inflicted subsequently to the death of Alexander — which occurred in 323 B.C. — how could the starting-point of the period be 457 B.C.? The question answers itself.

But Seventh-day Adventism's own interpretation of the prophecy makes matters still worse. *Questions on Doctrine* tells us

⁷¹Q. on D., pp. 278-9, 291, 295, 301; Horn and Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*.

repeatedly that the little horn of Dan. 8 means Rome, both pagan and papal (pp. 254-7, 336-7). Furthermore, it says that "the taking away of the 'daily' [sacrifices] by *pagan* Rome represents the desolation of the Temple in A.D. 70... and second, that the taking away of the 'daily' by *papal* Rome represents the introduction of... papal innovations" (p. 256). Accordingly, the earliest date from which to reckon "the 2300 years" would be A.D. 70 — which is over 500 years subsequent to 457 B.C.

The termination point of the supposed 2300 years is said to be 1844, 23 centuries after 457 B.C. (p. 14.13).⁷² This is the very heart and soul of Adventist prophetic interpretation.⁷³ But if the 2300 years began after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., their very earliest termination could not occur before 1978. And if they began in A.D. 70, they would not end for still another 252 years. Thus the whole contention for 1844 is utterly baseless. Hence, all the arguments on behalf of 1844 as the end of the 2300 year-days, advanced in Ch. 25 of *Questions on Doctrine*, and all the "scholarly precedents," enumerated in Ch. 27, in support of the same, are irrelevant, while the chart on p. 294 is entirely erroneous, for it is obvious that 490 years cannot be the first installment of 2300 days.

Furthermore, the plea for the symbolical character of the 2300 days cannot be sustained, and for two reasons. First, as S. P. Tregelles pointed out in 1845, verse 14 "occurs in an explanation, so that the symbolic theory (even if it had any true foundation, instead of being, as it is, a gratuitous assumption) would avail nothing" (*Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel*, p. 123).

Secondly, in Dan. 4 we read of a tree which was to be cut down and of a sentence of judgment which was to extend over a period called "seven times" (vv. 16, 23). This period is understood by Adventists to denote seven years or 2520 days: "The majority of ancient and modern interpreters explain the Aramaic 'iddan, 'time,' here (also in vs. 23, 25, 32; Chaps. 7:25; 12:7) to mean 'year.' The LXX reads literally 'seven years'" (*Seventh-day Adventist Commentary*, Vol. IV, p. 790). Now since the tree is a symbol, the Adventists, to be consistent, must hold the 2520 days of the seven times to be symbols also. The tree symbolizes Nebuchadnezzar. Was a beast's heart to be given him for 2520 years? The explanation, given in vv. 25 and 32, mentions pre-

⁷²From 1 B.C. to A.D. 1 is only one year, not two.

⁷³See Ch. VIII below.

cisely the same period as that mentioned in the prophecy, namely "7 times." If the length of time in the fulfillment is the same as that in the symbolic prophecy in Ch. 4, then it must be the same in Ch. 8. Accordingly, the 2300 days mean 2300 days and not 2300 years.

So whether the terminus *a quo* of the 2300 days, or their true character, is considered, there is no warrant for fixing their terminus *ad quem* at A.D. 1844. Thus the structure of Seventh-day Adventism is shown to have no real foundation.

2. Daniel 7. Seventh-day Adventism maintains that the little horn of the fourth beast symbolizes the papacy (pp. 334, 337, 426, 459). V. 21 states: "The same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them." V. 25 announces that he "shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hands until a time and times and the dividing of time," i.e., for three and a half times. How long is a "time"? E. J. Young discusses this question in expounding Dan. 4:16, and concludes that it is possible, but by no means certain, that it means a year. Adventism has the support of other scholars, however, in understanding it to denote such a period. Three and a half times is, therefore, taken to mean three and a half years or 1260 days.⁷⁴ These 1260 days are then declared to symbolize as many years, namely the 1260 years extending from A.D. 538-1798 (pp. 330, 334, 426). This era is viewed as the period of papal domination, immediately preceding "the time of the end" (See Note 77).

But Adventism is not warranted in declaring that the three and a half times of Dan. 7:25 symbolize 1260 years. In the first place, this verse, like Ch. 8:14, belongs to the literal explanation of the vision. Therefore, on Adventist principles themselves (p. 277), the three and a half times cannot be a symbolic period, but must be a literal one. The 1260 days can only mean days; they cannot mean years.

Secondly, let us refer again to Dan. 4. There we are told that the king Nebuchadnezzar was to undergo severe judgment for just twice the period named as that of the little horn's supremacy, for he was to be punished for seven "times." Consistency, therefore, requires one of two things of the Adventists. They must either hold that the little horn holds sway for three and a half years or that Nebuchadnezzar was to eat grass with the beasts of

⁷⁴Q. on D., pp. 330-1; cf. *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. IV, p. 833; Vol. VII, p. 809; *Bible Readings for the Home*, pp. 184, 228.

the field for 2520 years. Since they believe that the King of Babylon was punished only seven years, they should also believe that the reign of the little horn will be three and a half, and not 1260 years.

In the third place, the three and a half times could not have terminated in 1798, for the prophecy indicates that the period continues until the second advent. In vv. 21-22 we learn that "the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." The same dating occurs in vv. 25-27. Both passages refer to the vision described in vv. 9-14, which Christ Himself, the Supreme Interpreter, says depicts His return (Matt. 24:30; cf. Ch. 26:64). If the termination point of the period prophesied is the time when Christ comes again, then it is plain that the period did not expire in 1798.

Any one of these three arguments is sufficient to disprove Adventism's contention that the little horn of Dan. 7 is the papacy and that the period of papal domination is represented by "a time and times and the dividing of time."

3. Revelation 13. Adventists are doubtless correct in maintaining that the first beast of Rev. 13 is identical with the little horn of Dan 7.⁷⁵ Each has a mouth speaking great things against God (Dan. 7:8, 11, 25; cf. Rev. 13:5, 6). Each makes war on His saints and overcomes them (Dan. 7:21; cf. Rev. 13:7). Moreover, each carries on his blaspheming and persecuting course for the same length of time—1260 days (called "a time and times and the dividing of time" in Dan. 7:25 and "forty-two months" in Rev. 13:5).

Another point of identity, which is not recognized by Adventists, is the fact that each has his wicked course terminated by the second advent. It has been pointed out above that the little horn's course is brought to an end in this way. It is the same with the beast, as a reference to Rev. 19:11-20 will demonstrate. When the King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes through the opened heavens, the beast is then taken and cast alive into the lake of fire.

These four points of agreement do, I submit, prove the identity of the little horn of Dan. 7 and the first beast of Rev. 13. Inasmuch as it has already been shown that the 1260 days of Dan. 7 are literal days and not years, it is evident that the 1260

⁷⁵Q. on D., pp. 179, 459; cf. *Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 223.

days of Rev. 13 are the same. But Adventists, having construed the former as years, naturally construe the latter similarly.

It is in regard to this chronological point that Seventh-day Adventism involves itself inextricably. It does so by its interpretation of Rev. 13:3: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Mrs. White says: "The infliction of the deadly wound points to the abolition of the papacy in 1798. After this, says the prophet, 'his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast'" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 579). The same explanation is given in *Bible Readings for the Home* (pp. 185, 232-3) — a book, it is said, that "adheres strictly to the teachings of the Bible... it is no different than reading the Bible" (*How to Handle Objections*, p. 28).

Since Adventism holds that the 1260 "year-days" of Dan. 7 cover the time of papal domination ending in A.D. 1798, and that 1798 was the time when the deadly wound was inflicted, then the period of papal domination must have preceded the infliction of the deadly wound. But the 1260 "year-days" of Rev. 13:5 follow that infliction, for they do not begin until the deadly wound has been healed. This is clear from what is said of the first beast in Rev. 13:3-7, and from what is said of the second one in vv. 11-14. According to the Adventists, then, there must be two periods of 1260 years: that of Dan. 7 before, and that of Rev. 13 after, the death-stroke is suffered.

As the "year-days" of Dan. 7 are said to have terminated in 1798, it is pertinent to inquire when the 1260 "year-days" of Rev. 13 begin. *Bible Readings for the Home* informs us that the deadly wound of the papacy was healed on Feb. 11, 1929, when, by means of the Lateran Treaty, Mussolini restored temporal power to the Pope (p. 232).⁷⁶ But Volume VII of *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, published in 1957, says that though that event was significant, "the prophet envisioned a much greater restoration. He saw the wound completely healed, as the Greek implies" (p. 817). Anyone can see that it is not completely healed yet. But since the prophecy of Rev. 13 makes clear that the forty-two months begin after the beast's death-stroke

⁷⁶See also A. E. Lickey, *God speaks to Modern Man*, p. 545. Listed on p. 629 of *Q. on D.*, and declared in the *C. of P.* to be "the most complete coverage of Adventist beliefs to be found between the covers of any single volume ever published."

is healed, then this second period of "1260 years" must still be future.

Adventism cannot escape from its difficulty by saying that the period of persecution will be forty-two literal months in length, seeing the prediction of the time occurs in a symbolic prophecy, and so, according to its own principles, must denote 1260 years and not days.⁷⁷ Inasmuch as Christ is not to return until that time is over, then if the persecution began today (1962), Christ would not be here until 1962 + 1260, which equals the year 3222. Yet Adventism tells us that He is to return in the present generation.⁷⁸

Finally, if the foretold persecution has not yet begun, neither have those events that are related to it in the prophetic account. I refer to the three angels' messages recorded in Rev. 14:6-12.⁷⁹ Adventism very frankly teaches that these three messages symbolize its own ministry (pp. 15.15, 25.5, 153, 189, 190, 194). The first proclamation is said to represent the preaching of the gospel in connection with the warning of approaching judgment, introduced in the U.S.A. about 1840 (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 368, 379-80, 611; *Early Writings*, pp. 232-7). The second proclamation is said to represent the summons to God's people to come out of apostate Protestantism, inaugurated in the summer of 1844 (*The Great Controversy*, p. 389; *Biographical Sketch*, p. 53). The third proclamation is said to represent the declaration on behalf of the seventh-day Sabbath (*Gospel Workers*, p. 156). However, Mrs. White says that the third angel's message embraces the messages of the first two angels (*Testimonies*, Vol. VIII, p. 197). "All are linked together" (*ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 17). Together, they form "the mighty cleaver of truth" for separating God's people from both the churches and the world, in order to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself (*ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 455). Nowhere do we find an Adventist's statement that Mrs. White was wrong in her view.

But this identification of Adventism with the three angels is

⁷⁷Adventism maintains that "the time of the end" began in 1798 (*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. IV, pp. 874-5, which refers to Mrs. White's works; *Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 193; W. A. Spicer, *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*, p. 303; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, p. 1029). Then, if the future 1260 years began today, "the time of the end" would be a period as long as that extending from the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 to the discovery of America in 1492!

⁷⁸See the first part of Ch. X below.

⁷⁹This is the fifth of the five distinctive doctrines of Adventism (p. 25).

an impossible one. Since the revived beast of Rev. 13, with his 1260 literal days of blasphemy and persecution, is yet to come, the third angel, at least, is yet future, because his message is a solemn warning against worshipping the revived beast (Rev. 14:9-11). This beast is viewed as present, not future, at the time of the angel's message. We have seen above, that Adventists themselves hold that the beast's resuscitation only began on Feb. 11, 1929 and is, as yet, not complete. According to their own chronology, then, their movement, begun in 1844, came at least 118 years too soon to qualify for identification with the third angel. Accordingly, they present a case of people who have mistaken their own identity.

Before concluding this chapter, we should consider "the mark of the beast," seeing that we have dwelt so much upon the beast itself. It is quite true that "the seal of God" and "the mark of the beast" are, in the Revelation, "symbols of the opposing forces of good and evil in the last great conflict before Christ comes the second time" (p. 25.4). But now, since, I submit, it has been shown in the sections on Dan. 7 and Rev. 13 that the beast is not the papacy — though the latter is largely animated by the same spirit as the former — it should be evident that "the mark of the beast" has no reference to the papal system. This being the case, Adventism is utterly in error when it identifies that mark with what it mistakenly thinks is a Romish institution: the observance of Sunday. It has been demonstrated, in the previous chapter, that Sunday observance was not introduced by Rome, but by the Apostles. In view of the notorious unconcern of Romanism and the growing carelessness of Protestantism regarding the sanctifying of Sunday, it is absurd to think that a sacred observance of that day will ever be made mandatory by any American system, political or religious, even though Mrs. White solemnly declared it would (*Great Controversy*, pp. 604-5). Finally, if the mark of the beast does not pertain to the observance of Sunday, then the seal of God — which is antithetical to the beast's mark (p. 180) — cannot pertain to the keeping of the Saturday Sabbath, as Adventism asserts.⁸⁰

Such is the character of Seventh-day Adventist prophetic chronology. Based upon the fallacious year-day theory and interpreting literal periods of time symbolically, it involves, among many others, two major errors: the ascription of prophetic significance to the year 1844 and the claim that the Adventist

⁸⁰This is the fourth of the five distinctive doctrines of Adventism (p. 25).

movement fulfills the symbolism of the flying angels of Rev. 14. The "hopeless conflict and contradiction" in Josephus, mentioned on p. 331, is really small in comparison with the inconsistencies of Adventist prophetic chronology. Yet, all the while, its exponents speak with a tone of finality that few will think justified.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Final Atonement

Among the criticisms levelled at Seventh-day Adventism by evangelical writers, one of the most serious has been that of the teaching of incomplete atonement. In this chapter, we shall seek to determine just what Adventists believe about the atonement wrought by Christ on the Cross, and what they mean by the so-called "Final Atonement" now being wrought out in heaven.

Before we deal with this subject, it is necessary to present some early Adventist history. During the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, there was a widespread belief on the part of devout students of the Scriptures, on both sides of the Atlantic, that the Lord would come in the near future. It was common to see publications on the subject venturing to set an approximate date for the event. Even so cautious a man as Bishop Daniel Wilson of Calcutta did not forbear to put out a pamphlet advocating the date of 1847.

In the U.S.A., an honest man named William Miller (1782-1849) gradually came into great prominence in connection with "the blessed hope." Today he is usually referred to more or less with contempt, but those who knew him esteemed him highly for his intelligence, integrity and spiritual earnestness. A fellow-Baptist, the scholarly Thomas Armitage,⁸¹ having conversed with Miller repeatedly, wrote of him as a man of "sincerest devotion," who was possessed of "many excellencies and spotless character" (*History of the Baptists*, p. 769).

William Miller came to the conclusion that the Lord would come "around 1843." He calculated this from various figures, including the 2300 days of Dan. 8:14, which he understood to be years. Since the Jewish year was believed to extend from Mar. 21—Mar. 21, Miller believed that the Lord would come sometime between Mar. 21, 1843 and Mar. 21, 1844; he finally

⁸¹*The Baptist Encyclopaedia* calls Dr. Armitage "one of the greatest preachers in the U.S."

fixed the date at Apr. 17 or 18, 1844.⁸² When the Lord did not appear, Miller was not greatly disheartened, for he was sure that his figures could not be far wrong. During the summer that followed, one Samuel S. Snow, an associate of Miller's (who later claimed to be Elijah), began promulgating the view that Christ would return on what was erroneously believed to be the Jewish day of atonement that Fall, namely on Oct. 22, 1844.⁸³ This date was eventually accepted by all in the movement, though Miller only concurred on Oct. 6. Thus it was firmly believed that 2300 years after the edict of Artaxerxes Longimanus, recorded in Ezra 7,⁸⁴ the Lord would assuredly come.

Oct. 22, 1844 came and went but Christ did not appear. The disappointment of tens, if not hundreds, of thousands was sharp beyond expression. At Port Gibson, N.Y., Hiram Edson, the local leader of the Millerites, wept all night with some of his group. In the morning, recalling that on previous occasions of trial "the Lord had answered by a voice and other ways" (to use his own words), Mr. Edson had some of his brethren join him in a season of prayer in the granary of his barn, where "the witness of the Spirit was given" that the disappointment would be explained. After breakfast, he and Owen R. L. Crosier, a younger man (with whom Edson and a Dr. Hahn were associated in publishing a paper, *The Day Dawn*), set out to encourage some of the brethren. While they were crossing a cornfield, "heaven seemed to open" to Edson and he "saw distinctly and clearly" that the end of the 2300 prophetic days of Dan. 8:14 marked the time when Christ the High Priest, instead of leaving heaven to return to earth, was to leave the holy place

⁸²Mrs. White tells us that Mr. Miller was repeatedly visited by angels, who gave him unprecedented understanding of the prophetic Word (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. I, p. 128). She also tells us that they accompanied him on his mission (*ibid.*, p. 132). The helpfulness of these angels may be questioned.

⁸³"The same evidence which led them to look for their Lord in 1843, led them to expect Him in 1844" (Mrs. White in *Early Writings*, p. 247). In *G. C.*, she says: "Of all the great religious movements since the days of the Apostles, none have been more free from human imperfection and the wiles of Satan, than was that of the autumn of 1844" (p. 401). These words, written in 1884, remind us of James White's in 1868; "Of all the great religious movements since the days of the first Apostles of our Lord, none stand out more pure and free from the imperfections of human nature and the wiles of Satan, than that of the autumn of 1844" (*Life Incidents*, p. 171).

⁸⁴See Ch. VII above, p. 96.

in heaven and to enter the holy of holies there.⁸⁵ It was, in Edson's opinion, the time when the Bridegroom came to the marriage (Matt. 25:10), the time when the Son of Man came to the Ancient of days (Dan. 7:13).

Before long, *The Day Dawn* came out with an article presenting this reconstructed view which was forthwith endorsed by James White (who married Ellen G. Harmon on Aug. 30, 1846) and Joseph Bates of New England. But Miller and practically all of his leading men — including Litch, Himes, Bliss, Galusha, Hale, Fleming and Fasset — rejected it.

On Feb. 7, 1846, a lengthy statement of the new view appeared in an Extra of *The Day-Star*, which was another Millerite paper, printed in Cincinnati, Ohio. The writer of the article was Edson's associate, Crosier, who set forth in it the results of months of study on the part of Edson, Hahn and himself. (Before long, however, Crosier renounced the whole movement). Mrs. White unqualifiedly endorsed his article. Writing a letter to Eli Curtis, under date of Apr. 21, 1847, she said: "The Lord shew [showed] me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light, on the cleansing of the Sanctuary, etc.; and that it was His will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the *Day-Star*, Extra, Feb. 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord, to recommend that Extra, to every saint" (*A Word to the "Little Flock"*, p. 12). Almost sixty years later, in combatting the contrary views of A. F. Ballenger, Mrs. White said: "It was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that the presentation of the Sanctuary question was given" (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, pp. 161-2).

Following the lead of the Edson-Hahn-Crosier statement, Seventh-day Adventism has taught that there is an actual temple in heaven containing two compartments (the original temple, after which the tabernacle reared by Moses was patterned). *Questions on Doctrine* says: "We believe there is a real sanctuary in heaven" (p. 367). "We regard the earthly tabernacle as but the shadow of the reality" (p. 368). At the close of the volume, it recommends a number of books that so teach. On page 635 it recommends Branson's *In Defense of the Faith* which declares:

⁸⁵"Seventh-day Adventists, as a distinct religious body, most correctly could be described as beginning at the moment that a new interpretation was given to the prophecy of the 2300 days" (F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry*, p. 478. Listed on p. 635 of *Q. on D.*). Arthur W. Spalding in *Footprints of the Pioneers*, speaks of Edson's vision (p. 75). So did J. N. Loughborough (*ibid.*, p. 79).

"Heaven is not the sanctuary, but the sanctuary is *in* heaven. . . . it is furnished in the same way as was the earthly. In Rev. 1:12 John speaks of seeing the candlesticks in the heavenly sanctuary; in Rev. 11:19 he sees the ark of the testimony; and in Rev. 8:3 he sees the altar of incense and the golden altar. . . . Since in the earthly [sanctuary] there were two apartments, there must necessarily be two apartments in the heavenly" (pp. 272-3). On page 636, *Questions on Doctrine* lists the *Church Manual*, which speaks of these two apartments as "the holy place" and "the most holy place" of the heavenly sanctuary (p. 51). On page 633, *Daniel and Revelation*, by Uriah Smith, is recommended, where we read of "the Temple in Heaven" (pp. 172, 178). Smith says: "That temple in heaven has two apartments, or it was not correctly represented by the earthly sanctuary" (*ibid.*, p. 183).

Into this supposed heavenly temple Christ, say the Adventists, entered at His ascension, to *begin* His priestly ministry. Mrs. White says: "After His ascension our Savior began His priestly ministry" (*Great Controversy*, p. 420; cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357). She had long before expressed the same view in her letter to Eli Curtis, referred to above. The article by Mr. Crosier, mentioned in that letter, expressly taught it. Later writers have concurred in this view.⁸⁶

Yet, prior to His ascension, Christ had offered Himself once for all as a sacrifice for sins forever (Heb. 1:3; 7:27; 9:14, 26b; 10:12), and that was certainly a priestly act. It is true that elsewhere Mrs. White, with characteristic inconsistency, says that Christ "garbed Himself with humanity, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 33; cf. *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 667b). It is obvious that both of her positions cannot be divinely inspired, but what Adventist is authorized to say which one is?⁸⁷

Adventism steadfastly maintains to this day that the exercise of Christ's priestly ministry in heaven is in two stages, corresponding to the two compartments in the supposed temple there.⁸⁸ *Questions on Doctrine* says that at His ascension, Christ entered into the first compartment to minister in a way of reconciliation

⁸⁶E.g., Uriah Smith, *R. and H.* editorial for July 15, 1886; J. H. Waggoner, *The Atonement*; W. H. Branson, *In Defense of the Faith*, pp. 274-6; C. H. Watson, *The Atoning Work of Christ*; M. L. Andreasen, *The Atonement*, V, p. 3.

⁸⁷Heb. 8:4 merely denies that Christ on earth would be a *Levitical* priest.

⁸⁸This is the first of the five distinctive doctrines of Adventism (p. 24).

— as the ordinary priests in Israel ministered in “the holy place” throughout the year (pp. 263-4, 343, 347). It also says that on Oct. 22, 1844, He left the first and went into the second compartment to minister (largely) in a way of judgment — as the High Priest in Israel ministered in “the holy of holies” on the day of atonement (pp. 245, 263-4, 343, 389, 429-30, 444).

There are two ideas here that require attention. One is that Christ’s ministry in heaven is divided into two stages, the one preceding and the other following Oct. 22, 1844.⁸⁹ The other idea is that the second stage is antitypical of the day of atonement (Lev. 16). It is important to consider both of these concepts.

1. The division of Christ’s ministry in heaven into two stages is positively disproved by the Epistle to the Hebrews. In Ch. 4:14 we read that Christ “passed through the heavens” (A.S.V.), indicating that as the court represented the earth (where the sacrifice was made) and the holy of holies represented the heaven of glory (where the intercession is being made), so the holy place, located between the court and the holy of holies, represented the heavens intervening between the earth and the heaven of glory. Hence, at His ascension, Christ passed through the antitypical holy place and entered into the antitypical holy of holies, heaven itself, and not into some antechamber, next to the ultimate destination.

Again, in Heb. 6:19-20 we are assured that Christ has already gone “within the veil.” Familiarity with their Scriptures would make the Hebrews understand “within the veil” to mean inside the holy of holies (Exod. 26:33; Lev. 16:2, 12, 15; Num. 18:7); just as “without the veil” denotes outside the holy of holies (Exod. 26:35; 27:21; 40:22; Lev. 24:3).⁹⁰ Accordingly, when our Forerunner entered within the veil, He entered into the antitypical holy of holies.

In Ch. 9:11-12 Christ’s entrance into the holy place is set forth as the counterpart to that of Israel’s high priest on the day of atonement (v. 7), who went into the inner compartment. (The latter, however, entered in “with” blood that was not his own, while Christ entered in “by virtue of” — not “with” — His own blood). So “the holy place” into which Christ entered at His

⁸⁹Early Adventists held that at the Ascension God moved His throne from the Holy of Holies into the Holy place, for they could not deny that Christ ascended to the throne of God. In 1844, according to their teaching, God moved His throne back again to the Holy of Holies.

⁹⁰“Before” the veil meant the same as “without” it (Exod. 30:6; 40:26; Lev. 4:6, 17).

ascension, was “the holy of holies.” Both Heb. 9:12 and 24 follow Lev. 16 in speaking of the inner sanctuary as “the holy place.” In that O. T. account of the day of atonement, the first compartment is called “the tabernacle of the congregation.” Lev. 16:2 and 4:7 prove these two preceding statements.

2. The idea that Christ entered the holy of holies on Oct. 22, 1844, to perform an atoning work is clearly set forth in Mrs. White’s writings. “At the end of 2300 days — the closing work of our High Priest in heaven, the finishing of the atonement” (*Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 58). “Jesus entered the most holy of the heavenly [sanctuary] at the end of the 2300 days of Dan. 8, in 1844, to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation” (*Early Writings*, p. 253). “Before Christ’s work for the redemption of men is completed, there is a work of atonement. . . . This is the service which began when the 2300 days ended” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 421). “At the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform the closing work of atonement, preparatory to His coming” (*ibid.*, p. 422). Again, Mrs. White speaks of “the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, in 1844, as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of atonement” (*ibid.*, p. 433). “At the termination of the 2300 days, in 1844 . . . our great High Priest enters the holy of holies . . . to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits” (*ibid.*, p. 480).

Accordingly, the period of history lying between Oct. 22, 1844 and the second advent, is repeatedly spoken of by Mrs. White as the day of atonement. It is said that we are “in the closing up of the great day of atonement” (*Testimonies*, Vol. V, p. 472). “We are in the great day of atonement” (*ibid.*, p. 520). “We are living in the great antitypical day of atonement” (*ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 218). It is “essential in this antitypical day of atonement that we understand the work of our High Priest” (*Great Controversy*, p. 431). “We are now living in the great day of atonement” (*ibid.*, p. 490). “We are in the great day of atonement” (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, p. 124). “We are living in the great day of atonement” (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 224, cf. p. 445). (Query: If the day of atonement began in 1844, is Adventism consistent when it declares that the sacrifice of the goat typified the sacrifice of Jesus Christ which took place more than eighteen centuries before?)

Mrs. White frequently speaks of Christ’s present atoning work. “He has taken the blood of the atonement into the holiest of all,

sprinkled it upon the mercyseat and upon His own garments" (*Signs of the Times*, April 19, 1905). "Today He [Christ] is making an atonement for us before the Father" (MS. 21, 1895; quoted in *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 685). "Our Savior is in the sanctuary . . . making an atoning sacrifice for us" (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 370). In *Early Writings*, she speaks of "the most holy place where He had gone to . . . make a special atonement" (p. 251, cf. p. 244). "Jesus has gone to make an atonement for His children" (*Review and Herald*, Feb. 25, 1890). "Jesus stands before the Father, continually offering a sacrifice for the sins of the world . . . because of the continual commission of sin, the atoning sacrifice of a heavenly Mediator is essential" (*The Youth's Instructor*, Apr. 16, 1903; cited in *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 683). "Christ entered the holy of holies to perform the closing work of the atonement" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 428-9, cf. pp. 430, 658). "Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 622). "All need to become more intelligent in regard to the work of atonement, which is going on in the sanctuary above" (*Testimonies*, Vol. V, p. 575). "Jesus . . . our High Priest in heaven . . . is making atonement for His people who believe in Him" (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 37). All this resembles High Churchism.

Since Mrs. White says that the *final* atonement began in 1844, she implies that some atoning work preceded it. Now if she were consistent, we could easily deduce that, in her view, this preceding work was carried on in the holy place from Christ's ascension to the year 1844. This deduction seems required by her words in her book on *The Acts of the Apostles*, where we read: "Christ's sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The *condition* of the atonement had been fulfilled" (p. 29; italics mine). From this, one would judge that Mrs. White did not look upon Christ's full and complete sacrifice as the atonement, for how could that sacrifice be both "the condition of the atonement" and the atonement itself? However, she does repeatedly apply the term to what Christ did on the cross, as the following quotations will show.

In Adventist periodicals, Mrs. White says that Christ "bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him" (*Review and Herald*, July 1, 1890). "The atoning sacrifice seen through faith brings peace and comfort and hope to the trembling soul weighed down beneath the sense of guilt" (*ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1890). "When the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son . . .

He said, 'The atonement is complete'" (*ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1901). "The atonement of Christ was not made in order to induce God to love those whom He had otherwise hated" (*Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1893). "When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people" (*ibid.*, June 28, 1899). "The seal of heaven has been affixed to Christ's atonement. His sacrifice is in every way satisfactory" (*ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1899).

The same view of Calvary appears in Mrs. White's Manuscripts and Letters. In 1897, three manuscripts, at least, contain it. In MS. 11 (or 111), she comments on the words "It is finished," by saying: "The redemption price is paid." In MS. 94, she refers to Christ as having "made full atonement," on the cross. In MS. 128 she declares that when He suffered without the gate, "a perfect atonement was made." The year following, Letter 97 states: "Christ made a full atonement, giving His life as a ransom for us." In 1906, MS. 29 says: "Christ died to make an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

Mrs. White speaks similarly in her books. "Abel . . . looked forward to . . . Christ dying on the cross of Calvary . . . trusting in the atonement that was there to be made" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 72). In her *Testimonies for the Church*, we find: "The ransom paid by Christ — the atonement on the cross — is ever before them" (Vol. V, p. 190). "Christ gave Himself an atoning sacrifice for the saving of a lost world" (Vol. VIII, p. 208). *Gospel Workers* declares: "The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster" (p. 315).⁹¹

Thus Mrs. White taught that Christ's death was an atonement and also the condition of the atonement. As these two ideas are mutually exclusive, the only way by which she can be cleared of the charge of doctrinal inconsistency is by admitting the charge of verbal inconsistency; sometimes she used "atonement" in one sense, and sometimes in another. Any criticism which she has incurred from such a practice is manifestly merited.

Questions on Doctrine acknowledges that "some" of the earlier SDA writers used the word "atonement" in two senses: "They preferred not to use the word 'atonement' as relating *only* to

⁹¹Most of the citations made in the three preceding paragraphs are quoted in Appendix C of *Q. on D.* along with many others, (pp. 661-92). The last one is quoted twice within the scope of nine lines (p. 661). It is interesting to note that strongly anti-Adventist literature does not cite this kind of passages.

the sacrificial work of Christ at Calvary" (p. 348). In what other sense did they use it? It is explained that they also used it to denote the application of the sacrificial atonement of the cross, to the seeking soul (*ibid.*). The same idea is presented later on where we read: "When, therefore, one hears an Adventist say, or reads in Adventist literature — even in the writings of Ellen G. White — that Christ is making atonement now, it should be understood that we mean simply that Christ is now making application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement He made on the cross; that He is making it efficacious for us individually, according to our needs and requests" (pp. 354-5).

Then come these words: "Mrs. White herself, as far back as 1857, clearly explained what she means when she writes of Christ's making atonement for us in His ministry: 'The great sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the *benefits of His atonement*'" (*Early Writings*, p. 260, italics supplied).

Thus *Questions on Doctrine* explains that Adventist speakers and writings — even the writings of Ellen G. White — employ the word "atonement" in two senses: sometimes to denote the "sacrificial work of Christ at Calvary," sometimes to denote the "application of the benefits" of that work. In other words, it comprises both the provision and the application of redemption.

Mr. Martin makes enthusiastic reference to this explanation in his note on "The Incomplete Atonement Concept" (see his book, pp. 88-9), but, inconsistently, declares that present-day Adventists have repudiated the idea that atonement was not finished on the cross. Surely, if the word "atonement" is employed in the two senses mentioned, that view has not been repudiated. F. D. Nichol, the present editor of *Review and Herald*, says plainly: "We believe that Christ's work of atonement was *begun* rather than *completed* on Calvary" (*Answers to Objections*, p. 408).

Furthermore, it is unfortunate for both the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* and Martin that the passage above, which is taken from Mrs. White's *Early Writings*, does not refer to the "final atonement," for it plainly pertains to the first Christians, just after Pentecost, not to those living after 1844. At that time, in Mrs. White's opinion, Christ was in the holy place, not in the holiest of all, and was *then* shedding upon His disciples the

"benefits of His atonement." It is, therefore, inaccurate to cite this passage in support of the explanation given in *Questions on Doctrine*, that when Mrs. White used the word "atonement" for Christ's present ministry in heaven, she merely intended the communication of the benefits of His atoning sacrifice. It is evident that when Mrs. White spoke of Christ's entrance into the holiest of all to make final atonement, she meant something other than this; otherwise, nothing new was introduced in 1844 — which is to deny Adventism itself!

But this is not the whole of the story. Adventist writers have also used the word "atonement" in a single sense, limiting it to the application of the benefits of the propitiatory sacrifice. Mrs. White herself did this when she declared that she had been shown in vision the correctness of the views propounded by O. R. L. Crosier in the *Day-Star Extra*, for Crosier's article expressly denies that atonement was made on the cross (p. 41, col. 3; see L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 1232-3).

James White considered the idea that atonement was made on the cross to be "subversive of the plainest and most important principles set forth in the Word of God." Accordingly, in 1872 he wrote that Christ "ascended on high to be our only Mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, with His own blood, He makes atonement for our sins: which atonement, so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is *the very last portion of His work as priest*" (italics mine). This statement, as a part of the first creed of Adventism, Mr. White published in the initial issue of *The Signs of the Times*, on June 4, 1874. (It is clear from this that the atonement was viewed as not beginning until Oct. 22, 1844.)

Uriah Smith, therefore, reflected the view of the founders of Adventism, when he wrote in his editorial for *Review and Herald* on July 15, 1886: "Christ upon the cross was acting as our sacrifice, not as our priest. . . . It is as priest that Christ makes atonement; but all His work as priest is performed in the heavenly sanctuary. Heb. 8:4-6. And from the type we learn that the atonement is *the final and closing work of His priesthood*" (italics mine). Similarly, in *The Sanctuary and the 2300 Days*, published nine years earlier and republished under another title in 1898: "Christ did not make the atonement when He shed His blood upon the cross. Let this fact be fixed forever in the mind" (*Looking unto Jesus*, p. 237). J. H. Waggoner likewise reflected the view of Mr. and Mrs. White when he wrote: "We might quote much to show the prevalence of the error, that the atonement

was made on the cross" (*The Atonement*, p. 190). Both Smith and Waggoner are cited by Martin, but summarily dismissed because they "wrote eighty years ago." He will find it harder to dismiss Mrs. White, who claimed divine inspiration, though she wrote her belief in this concept thirty-five years before (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 12).

Although Martin assures us that this view was held by only "a few scattered writers over a hundred-year period," yet M. L. Andreasen, who spent a long life in the movement, asserts that every Adventist who has ever written on the atonement has taught that it was not made on the cross. He not only mentions Mr. and Mrs. White and Messrs. Smith and Waggoner, but also J. N. Andrews, J. N. Loughborough, E. E. Andross, O. A. Johnson, H. R. Johnson, Camden Lacey, R. S. Owen and C. H. Watson. The last of these, though President of the General Conference from 1930-36, is given only passing mention by Martin as one who had been influenced by Smith and Waggoner.

Andreasen reports, further, that A. F. Ballenger, a prominent evangelist, was tried, condemned and excommunicated in 1905 for teaching that the atonement was completed on the cross. A committee of twenty-five leading men⁹² unanimously acted in the case and Mrs. White concurred in the decision. She declared that if Ballenger's views were condoned, "they would destroy the faith of God's people in the truth that has made us what we are" (Letters on *The Atonement*, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2, 1957; Jan. 19, 1958).

We see, then, that sometimes the word "atonement" is used in Adventism to denote both the provision and the application of redemption, and that at other times, it refers exclusively to a special aspect of its application (though not always to the same one). It is only fair, however, at this point, to say that in no case does Adventism formally deny the perfection of Christ's sacrifice for sin. But, considering its variations and looseness of language, it is hardly surprising that few readers of its literature ever gain clear conceptions of what it teaches on this subject. Neither is it surprising that it has been charged repeatedly with denying the redemptive efficacy of the cross, for the reader, not understanding the peculiar sense sometimes attached to the word "atonement" by the Adventists, naturally deduces that if any atonement occurs subsequently to Calvary, then the atone-

⁹²Including A. G. Daniells, I. H. Evans, S. N. Haskell, F. C. Gilbert, W. W. Prescott, J. L. Shaw and W. A. Spicer.

ment wrought there was incomplete. When a denomination uses theological terms differently from the church at large — and even uses them variously within its own ranks — it has no just ground of complaint when false charges are made against it. The responsibility plainly lies with the party that is guilty of confusing the public mind.

It yet remains for us to establish what the term "final atonement" actually does mean. To this end, I appeal to the writings of "the pioneers" themselves.

In Crosier's article, "The Law of Moses," in *The Day-Star Extra* of Feb. 7, 1846 — unqualifiedly endorsed by Mrs. White as the result of a vision — the word "atonement" is used in two senses. There we read: "The atonement which the priests made for the people in connection with their daily ministration was different from that made on the tenth of the seventh month. In making the former, they went no further than in the Holy [place]; but to make the latter, they entered the Holy of Holies — the former was made for individual cases, the latter for the whole nation of Israel collectively — the former was made for the forgiveness of sins, the latter for blotting them out — the former could be made at any time, the latter only on the tenth day of the seventh month. Hence the former may be called the daily atonement and the latter the yearly, or the former the individual, and the latter the national atonement" (p. 40, col. 1).

Under the heading "Antitype," Crosier adds: "When he [Christ] entered within the veil [at the ascension] he entered his tabernacle, of course the Holy [place], as that was the first apartment; and our hope, as an anchor of the soul, enters within the veil, i.e., the atonement of both apartments, including both the forgiveness and the blotting out of sins" (*ibid.*, p. 41, col. 1).

Crosier's words make plain that "the closing work of atonement" is to be understood of the blotting out of sins. James White endorsed his article by printing an abridgment of it in *The Advent Review* of Sept., 1850. In March of that year, Mr. White published, in *Present Truth*, an article by David Arnold, in which he spoke of "the atonement or blotting out" of sins (p. 60, col. 2). In December of 1850 he printed in *Review and Herald* an article by Joseph Bates wherein, referring to the Day of Atonement, Bates speaks of the High Priest blotting out sins (p. 22, col. 1). White, in the same periodical for June 9, 1851 mentions "two atonements" — "one was for the forgiveness of sins, while the priests only enter the Holy [place]; and to make it, they could enter that apartment 'always', or daily. The other

was the yearly atonement for the cleansing of the sanctuary, while the high priest alone entered the 'Holiest of all' (p. 101, col. 1). In *Life Incidents*, White says that Christ has entered the Most Holy Place "to make a special atonement for the blotting out of the sins of His people, or, which is the same thing, for the cleansing of the sanctuary" (p. 92). J. H. Waggoner (1820-1889), in *The Atonement in the Light of Reason and Revelation*, termed by L. E. Froom "an early standard work," four times defines the atonement as the blotting out of sins (pp. 186, 192, 219, 220). See also Joseph Bates in *Typical and Antitypical Sanctuary* (p. 7) and Uriah Smith in *Looking unto Jesus* (p. 236).

It was in 1884 that Mrs. White published *Great Controversy* wherein we find her using the word "atonement" in the same way as Crosier, Arnold, her husband and Waggoner. She says: "It was the closing work of atonement — a removal or putting away of sin from Israel. It prefigured the closing work of our High Priest in heaven, in the removal or blotting out of the sins of His people, which are registered in the heavenly records" (p. 352). "Before Christ's work for the redemption of men is completed, there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary . . . the removal, or blotting out of the sins which are there recorded" (*ibid.*, pp. 421-22).

Six years later, in 1890, Mrs. White published *Patriarchs and Prophets*. On page 358 we read: "In the type, this great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represented by the services of the day of atonement . . . in the final atonement the sins of the truly penitent are to be blotted from the records of heaven." Alluding to this passage, M. L. Andreasen declares it to present "the best definition" of atonement he had found in "a short explanatory phrase" (*Letters to the Churches*, Series A, No. 6, p. 2).

Although I have not discovered any place where Mrs. White uses the word "atonement" in connection with Christ's ministry in the first apartment, there can be no reasonable doubt that her thinking included that idea. Everything she says on this subject indicates that. Surely those around her, to whom I have just referred, reflected her views on this point. Moreover, she expressly approved Crosier's article which contained it. Accordingly, Mrs. White's doctrine of the atonement was that Christ's death on the cross fully satisfied the demands of God's law against all sinners, and that on its ground they may be both forgiven and relieved of the very record of their sins. Thus when she speaks of the final atonement, she does not mean — as *Questions*

on Doctrine represents — something positive (the conferring of the benefits of the cross) but rather something negative (the obliterating of the records of forgiven sins).⁹³ We shall examine this latter concept in our next chapter.

According to the teachings of Mrs. White, then, the initial atonement on Calvary is followed, long centuries later, by the final atonement begun in 1844. Adventists hold that the slaying of the goat for the sin-offering on Israel's annual day of atonement, typified the death of Christ as our sacrifice,⁹⁴ and that the high priest's act of entering the holy of holies typified His going into the second compartment of the heavenly temple in 1844. This means that the most important ceremony of the entire Levitical order contains no allusion to Christ's ascension to heaven nor to over 1800 years of His subsequent ministry there. Thus the Adventists engage in "a typological treatment of Lev. 16 which is very different from the treatment of that chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (F. F. Bruce in *The Witness* for May, 1957).

⁹³For a consideration of this matter, see Ch. IX below.

⁹⁴*Q. on D.*, p. 397; *G. C.*, p. 422; M. L. Andreasen, *The Atonement*, IX, p. 6.

CHAPTER NINE

The Investigative Judgment

In the preceding chapter, we saw that Mrs. White and her followers have taught that there is at present a work of atonement going on in heaven. This work is said to consist in the blotting out of believers' sins which are recorded there. It is now our task to consider more fully what is involved in this doctrine.

Mrs. White holds that when a sinner repents and believes, he is provisionally forgiven⁹⁵ and his sins are transferred to the first compartment of the heavenly temple. Writing of the ministry of the Levitical priests, as they served in the first compartment of the earthly temple, she says: "Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle, and placing his hand upon the victim's head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them to the innocent sacrifice" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 418). After mentioning the slaying of the animal, she adds: "The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil,⁹⁶ behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary. . . . Such was the work that went on, day by day, throughout the year" (*ibid.*). "The sins of Israel being thus transferred to the sanctuary, the holy places were defiled, and a special work became necessary for the removal of the sins. . . . Once a year, on the great day of atonement, the [high] priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355). "Once a year the high priest performed a special work of atone-

⁹⁵See Ch. V above.

⁹⁶This is incorrect. It was only the blood of the sin-offerings made for the high priest and for the whole congregation that was so administered (Lev. 4:1-21).

ment in the most holy, for the cleansing of the sanctuary" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 418).

Applying this, Mrs. White says: "So in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ, and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. . . . so the actual cleansing of the heavenly [sanctuary] is to be accomplished by the removal or blotting out of the sins which are there recorded" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 421-2). (In both cases, judging from the context, "the heavenly sanctuary" refers to the holy place, not to the holy of holies).⁹⁷

Questions on Doctrine shows us that Adventism today teaches the same thing: "The sins of the Israelites, recorded in the sanctuary by the shed blood of the sacrificial victims, were removed and totally disposed of on the Day of Atonement" (p. 432). "In the type, the sins of the Israelites defiled the sanctuary and on the Day of Atonement, it was cleansed of all these sins. . . . In the sanctuary in heaven, the record of sins is the only counterpart of the defilement of the earthly sanctuary. . . . It is the expunging, or blotting out, of these sins from the heavenly records that fulfils the type set forth on the Day of Atonement. In that way the sanctuary in heaven can be cleansed from all defilement" (pp. 434-5). (Again, the context indicates that the holy place and not the holy of holies, is in view).

We see, then, that, according to Adventism, the present "atoning work" (which is said to consist in the blotting out of believers' sins), effects the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. Confirmatory statements of Mrs. White's tell us that "as the priest entered the most holy once a year to cleanse the earthly sanctuary, so Jesus entered the most holy of the heavenly, at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, in 1844, to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation and thus to cleanse the sanctuary" (*Early Writings*, p. 253). "Jesus . . . had gone to cleanse the sanctuary and make a special atonement for Israel," i.e., the Church (*ibid.*, p. 251).

It is appropriate, at this point, to inquire of Adventists if the sins of the penitent, subsequent to Oct. 22, 1844, have been transferred to the holy of holies, seeing that — according to their teaching — there has been no priest in the holy place since then? It is also pertinent to ask why Christ should go into the second

⁹⁷Robert D. Brinsmead's view that the first compartment is defiled by the guilt of the believer's sins, and the second by the record of them, appears to be an innovation (*God's Eternal Purpose*, pp. 67, 73, 81).

compartment in order to cleanse the first? Moreover, how is it that the sprinkling of His blood in one case is said to effect the recording of sins, and in another, their removal (p. 432)?

It is claimed in *Questions on Doctrine*, that this cleansing was foretold in Dan. 8:14, which says that after the 2300 days, "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (p. 14.13-14). By "the 2300 days" Adventists invariably mean so many years (457 B.C. to A.D. 1844), as we have seen in Ch. VII above. By "the sanctuary," they specially mean the first compartment in heaven, as the foregoing should prove.

What shall we say to this interpretation of Daniel's text? First, the fallacy of taking the 2300 days as 2300 years has been demonstrated already; the Scriptures make no prediction whatsoever regarding the year 1844. Secondly, the prediction made in Dan. 8 relates to a sanctuary capable of being trodden under foot by evil men (v. 13). It consequently relates, not to a heavenly sanctuary, but to an earthly one, the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Lastly, the termination of the 2300 days marks the date of *the cleansing*, not merely the time when it is to start (p. 269, but contrast p. 429). According to Adventism, the cleansing only began in 1844, so that now, in 1962, it has been going on for 118 years, and none knows how much longer it is to continue.

But Seventh-day Adventism teaches that before Christ can effect this cleansing work something else is necessary. Mrs. White says: "Before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin, and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation — a work of judgment" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 422). "The Day of Atonement services . . . pointed forward to the . . . Investigative Judgment" (*Questions on Doctrine*, p. 343).⁹⁸

This judgment, we are told in the Adventist publication of 1957, began on Oct. 22, 1844, when Christ entered the holy of holies (pp. 14-15), and will end just before His second advent (pp. 25.2, 389, 423, 427). By it, Christ engages in an examination of the life record of everyone in human history (pp. 15.16, 25.2, 245, 264-5, 421, 427). Mrs. White seriously informs us that, in this judicial process, Christ began with the cases of those who first lived upon the earth, goes on to those of people in later

⁹⁸This is the second of the five distinctive doctrines of Adventism (p. 25). All five have now been dealt with.

generations — all in chronological order — and concludes with those of persons now living. And the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* tell us that they believe that this "description penned by Ellen G. White, is . . . based entirely upon the revealed truths of God's Word . . ." (p. 443). However, page 438 indicates that only "the candidates for eternal life" (professing believers) are to be thoroughly checked prior to the Advent — which would leave out all who never made any profession. Hence page 497 says that the decisions regarding the wicked who will be alive when Christ returns, will probably be made later on. So Mrs. White taught (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 660-1).

The *immediate* purpose in this investigative judgment, we are told, is to determine "who of the myriads sleeping in the dust of the earth are worthy of a part in the first resurrection and who of its living multitudes are worthy of translation" (p. 15). It is "to reveal which ones of all whose names have been entered in the Lamb's book of life have remained united with Christ to the end" (On Brinsmead, p. 19).⁹⁹ When Christ returns, the saved dead will rise and the saved living will be caught away from this world without dying. Now, in the light of the evidence presented in Ch. III of this review — showing that the saved dead are now in Heaven — it must be apparent that there is no need of any investigation to determine which of the dead are saved and, therefore, eligible to come forth in the first resurrection. Nor, in the light of God's omniscience and foreknowledge, is there any need of any investigation to determine who of all those alive at Christ's return, will be saved and, therefore, eligible for translation. Since all future facts are known to God from everlasting, He has always known just who are those to be saved from dying at that time. Moreover, on Adventist principles alone, no investigation of all the living would be needed. In its teaching about "the remnant church" Adventism tells us that all the saved living will be within the fold of Adventism when Christ returns (p. 194). So the only ones needing to be considered would be the members of the Adventist church at that time.

It is appropriate at this point to refer to Mrs. White's chapter on "The Third Angel's Message," which appears in *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. I, published in 1858. In it she reports her vision of

⁹⁹See Ch. V, where Adventism's teaching that forgiveness is bestowed only provisionally (so that ultimate salvation is uncertain until the judgment), is set forth.

William Miller, who had refused the Seventh-day Adventist message. She says: "At length Wm. Miller raised his voice against the light from heaven . . . he leaned to human wisdom instead of divine . . . God suffered him to come under the power of Satan" (pp. 167-8). However, Mrs. White, out of vision, conceded that others were mostly to blame for his attitude, and concludes thus: "But angels watch the precious dust of this servant of God, and he will come forth at the sound of the last trump" (*ibid.*, p. 168). In other words, Miller will participate in the first resurrection.

Inasmuch as Mrs. White taught that it is the investigative judgment that determines which of the dead shall be raised at Christ's return, it would appear that the case of William Miller had already been considered in 1858 and that the outcome had been communicated to her. But, as people are said to be examined in chronological order, then all records from Adam down to 1858 must have been searched already. Since Mrs. White held that Adam was created about 4,000 B.C., this means that 5858 years of human history had been covered by the investigative judgment in fourteen years, from 1844-58. It would seem, then, that the investigative judgment should have terminated long ere now!

While the determination of those worthy of partaking of the first resurrection and of being caught away without dying when Christ comes, is said to be the immediate purpose of the investigative judgment, this determination, we are later told in *Questions on Doctrine*, results in a decision regarding the destinies of *all* men (pp. 25.2, 423, 427). This is inevitably so, on SDA principles of interpretation, which fix the end of human history at the second advent when the investigative judgment terminates.

The *ultimate* purpose of this investigation is said to be that of vindicating God's love and justice before all the created intelligences of the universe (pp. 245, 264-5, 420-1, 498). Angels and men, holy and sinful — all are to be satisfied that God has been perfectly fair in His past government and in His final sentences (which issue in everlasting salvation or destruction). To this end, all records must be laid open to the scrutiny of His creatures. It follows, then, that all His creatures must be given opportunity to scrutinize those records.

But when is there such opportunity? At the time of the investigation itself, the dead of all the past are in a state of unconsciousness (according to SDA teaching), and, obviously, none

of the living has access to the heavenly sanctuary, where the investigation is said to be carried on. When Christ comes again, all the godless living are represented as rendered unconscious themselves for 1000 years, thus joining their predecessors in sleep (pp. 422, 497). So the opportunity must come at the close of the millennium. But there is none then either, for Adventism teaches that when Christ descends from heaven with His people at the close of that period, the wicked dead are raised, only to be seduced by Satan into assaulting the New Jerusalem, and "then, from the great white throne, the sentence of doom is pronounced upon the wicked. And the sentence is followed by immediate execution" (pp. 504-6).¹⁰⁰ Thus the lost are hustled away without any opportunity to scrutinize the data supplied, before their supposed annihilation.

Three times in the chapter dealing with this subject in *Questions on Doctrine* the judgment scene of Dan. 7:9-13 is referred to (pp. 421, 423-6, 435, cf. 15.15). In the historical section at the beginning of the preceding chapter, we observed that Mr. Edson believed that Oct. 22 of 1844 was the time when the Son of Man came to the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:13). Similarly, Mr. Branson, in his reply to Canright, states that Dan. 7:9-10 presents a graphic description of "the opening of the judgment in the heavenly sanctuary in 1844" (p. 300). Likewise, Mrs. White declares that Dan. 7:13-14 relates to Christ's entrance into the holy of holies in 1844 and not to His coming to earth at His return (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 479-80). Over against these declarations that Dan. 7:13 ("behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a Son of Man") does not refer to Christ at His second coming, we set His own statements, referred to in Ch. VII above. One of these He made on oath before the Sanhedrin: "Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64).¹⁰¹ Plainly, He was then only repeating what He had said two days before when, on Olivet, He announced: "They shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). In both cases, He was speaking of His second advent and of nothing else.

Furthermore, it is a mistake to consider that the Dan. 7 judgment

¹⁰⁰See also Mrs. White's statement in *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* pp. 11-12.

¹⁰¹This shows that the throne of Dan. 7:9-10 was seen as set on earth instead of in heaven. See Rev. G. R. Beasley-Murray's article in the *Life of Faith* for June 20, 1957.

ment relates to the records of the sins of all men, for the context plainly limits it to the record of the blasphemy and cruelty of the little horn. It is "occasioned by the great words" he spoke (p. 425); his wickedness precipitates it. It has already been proved that his supremacy lasts only 1260 literal days (see ch. VII). Then, seeing these days immediately precede Christ's return, it is perfectly clear that the judgment is yet future and could not possibly have been set in 1844.

Thus upon the basis of Scripture and upon a consideration of Adventist literature we must conclude: (1) the cases to be considered at this investigative judgment are not clear, (2) the primary purpose of its proceedings is altogether unnecessary, (3) its ultimate design is frustrated and (4) the date set for its solemnities is simply indefensible.

Those who pass the scrutiny of the investigative judgment are, we are told in *Questions on Doctrine*, to have their sins blotted out (pp. 435, 439, cf. *The Great Controversy*, pp. 485-6). Thus it is implicitly denied that the believer's sins are already blotted out. David's cry in Ps. 51:1, 9 for the blotting out of his transgressions and iniquities could not be answered, then, before A.D. 1844. Yet it is said (pp. 442-3) that the removing of transgressions "as far as the east is from the west" is the same as blotting them out. But David said that God had already removed his as well as others' transgressions so far away (Ps. 103:12)! Isa. 44:22 is not quoted in *Questions on Doctrine*; there God says: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." Note, too, that this verse says that those who are redeemed have their sins blotted out. Therefore, they whose sins are not blotted out are not redeemed. (See Gal. 3:13; I Peter 1:18.)

Peter's exhortation in Acts 3:19 ("Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out") is clearly equivalent to that in Acts 2:38 ("Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"). On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle charged the Jews with having crucified and slain the Messiah whom God subsequently raised up and exalted (Acts 2:23-24, 32-33). He said the same thing in Acts 3 (vv. 13-15). In both cases, he pointed out that the attitude of the Jews toward Jesus was diametrically opposite to that of God, which meant that his countrymen were plainly guilty in heaven's eyes. He therefore summoned them on both occasions to repentance. In Acts 2, he said: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ"; in Acts 3, he said: "Repent . . . and

be converted." In both instances, the reference is to both the inward and the outward. In the first case, the inward act is repentance, and the outward is baptism; in the second case, the inward act is also repentance and the outward is conversion. On this latter A. T. Robertson remarks: "Turn to God in conduct as well as in mind (*Word Pictures in the N. T.*, Vol. III, p. 45).

And what will be the outcome of this two-fold action, inward and outward, on the part of the Jews? In Acts 2 we read: "for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v. 38b). Thus there will be a two-fold blessing: the one, negative, in the remission of sins; the other, positive, in the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is precisely the same in Ch. 3. There we read: "that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (v. 19, A.S.V.). Here, too, we have first a negative blessing (the blotting out of sins) and then a positive one (seasons of refreshing). The Greek word rendered "refreshing" occurs in Symmachus' Greek version (made about A.D. 200) in translating Isa. 32:15: "until there be refreshing from on high." The Hebrew is: "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." Thus the word "refreshing" was used by Symmachus to denote the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit. Note further that the seasons of refreshing are to come "from the presence of the Lord," who is viewed as absent. Hackett's comment is: "The blessings in question are laid up where He is (see 2:28) and must be received thence" (in *An American Commentary on the N. T.*). So this is just another way of saying what was said at Pentecost, that the Spirit is outpoured by the departed Jesus.

Now this benefit of the Spirit, which in Ch. 2 is said to attend the remission of sins, is said in Ch. 3 to attend their blotting out — which completes the parallelism of the two Petrine sermons. As repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ lead to the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost in the first sermon; so repentance and conversion lead to the blotting out of sins and the seasons of spiritual refreshing in the second. Thus the blotting out of sins is manifestly equivalent to their remission. To contend otherwise is to violate the whole structure of Peter's two sermons.¹⁰²

¹⁰²John Punenovs' article on "God's Way in the Sanctuary" arbitrarily interprets Acts 2:38 of "the early rain" and Acts 3:19 of "the latter rain," making the two passages to refer to events separated by some 2000 years (*The Church Triumphant*, Series A, No. 4, 1961).

Adventists appeal to Heb. 9:23 ("It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these") for support of their doctrine, for they hold that the cleansing of the heavenly things with better sacrifices than the Levitical, refers to removal of the records of believers' sins, begun a little over a century ago. But this is to ignore the context (v. 24) and to miss the whole point of the argument of the chapter: that when Christ died on Calvary — then, and not eighteen centuries later — this cleansing took place. Nor have Biblical expositors outside SDA ranks ever dreamed of any other meaning in this text.

Furthermore, it is said that the record of believers' sins "is the only counterpart of the defilement of the earthly sanctuary" and that the obliteration of this record is what constitutes the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary (pp. 431-5). But since the sins of the unbelieving are also said to be recorded in heaven (pp. 435-7, 497), how can the mere obliteration of *believers'* sins effect the full cleansing? Moreover, this cleansing of the sanctuary is said to be completed just before the second coming (pp. 421-2, 431, cf. 444), and yet Adventism believes in the sinning of all the ungodly a thousand years later (p. 505). Evidently, all the sins of these ungodly ones are ultimately to be blotted out too, for it is maintained that, finally, all sin whatsoever is to be obliterated (p. 17.21).¹⁰³ But, inasmuch as this blotting out of the sins of the godless cannot occur until after the millennium, how can the Adventists say that the heavenly sanctuary will be purified *before* the Lord's return? This just does not add up.

What a relief it is to turn from all of this confusion to the clear teaching of the Scriptures which assure us that when a sinner flees to Christ in penitence and faith, all his past sins are obliterated forever; and that when a believer wanders from the right path, God is faithful and just to forgive him, once for all, the instant he confesses and forsakes his sin. In neither case does God compromise His holiness and in neither case does the repentant soul lack solid ground for everlasting confidence.

¹⁰³*Q. on D.*, pp. 17.21, 267, 347, 353, 364, 389-90, 430, 439, 443, 508, 543, 586, 591. See also Ch. XI below.

APPENDIX *The Scapegoat*

The concluding act of the day of atonement in Israel was the ceremony of the live goat. Adventists complain that they have been grievously misrepresented in their teaching relative to this goat. Even so, they have surely laid themselves open to the misrepresentation by their unguarded statements, including, in particular, those of their avowed prophetess.

In dealing with the ceremonies of the day of atonement, we turn to the writings of Mrs. White, concerning whom the writers of *Questions on Doctrine* say that she possessed the gift of the Spirit of prophecy (pp. 16, 25). Mrs. White says: "The high priest... went into the most holy place... to make satisfaction for its [the law's] claims" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 420). Substantially the same thing is set forth in her volume, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, where we read: "On the day of atonement the high priest... went into the most holy place with the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercyseat above the table of the law. Thus the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied" (p. 356).

She proceeds: "Then in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself and bore them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, he confessed over him all these sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away and they were regarded as forever separated from the people" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 420). Similarly in *Patriarchs and Prophets*: "Then in his character of mediator, the [high] priest took the sins upon himself and, leaving the sanctuary, he bore with him the burden of Israel's guilt. At the door of the tabernacle, he laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat and confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' And as the goat, bearing these sins, was sent away, they were with him regarded as forever separated from the people" (p. 356). "Not until the goat had been thus sent away did the people regard themselves as freed from the burden of their sins" (p. 355).

The interpretation of this ancient ceremony is given in *The Great Controversy*: "While the sin-offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin-offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary, at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty" (p. 422).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴Mrs. White describes the devil in *Early Writings*, where she reports a

The implication of the foregoing quotations is evident: not until Christ, our High Priest, emerges from the heavenly realms at His second advent will His people's sins be "regarded as forever separated from" them. Only then will they be able to "regard themselves as freed from the burden" of them. Meantime, they are in a state of suspense.

Now, I am unwilling to charge Adventists with holding that Satan is our sin-bearer, but, surely, in the light of the preceding, they should not blame their critics for accusing them of so doing. Their interpretation of the scapegoat lays them wide open to such a charge. Although they do not expressly declare Satan to be our sin-bearer, they do so implicitly, as I now mean to show. Observe that Lev. 16 has three definite things to say about the live goat:

1. The live goat, along with the slain one, was a sin-offering for the people (v. 5); just as the live bird along with the one slain (in Ch. 14) was the offering for the leper's cleansing. The two goats together constituted one sacrifice.

2. The two goats were "set before the LORD" (v. 7), i.e., were dedicated to Him to serve as an offering. Both therefore were perfect specimens, unblemished animals. In v. 10 it is said of the live goat that he should be "set alive before the LORD."

3. The live goat was presented (v. 20) — the same thing as was said of the bullock (vv. 6, 11) and of the goat to be slain (v. 9). The idea in all three cases was that of presenting for actual sacrifice.

Seeing that the live goat was as much a part of the sacrificial offering as the one that was slain, Adventism must either say that the live goat does not symbolize Satan, or it must admit that its traditional teaching fosters the idea that Satan is our sin-bearer. It has to deny that this goat represents the devil or it has to retract the exposition it presents. It cannot legitimately maintain both positions.

Ch. 34 of *Questions on Doctrine* presents arguments to prove that "the scapegoat" (Heb. *azazel*) — mentioned in Lev. 16:8, 10, 26 of the King James' Version — means Satan (cf. pp. 397, 500). Even if it did, that would not help the Adventists, for the live goat is entirely distinct from *azazel*. Aaron was to cast lots upon the two goats. One lot was to be "for Jehovah" and the other "for *azazel*" (A.S.V.); i.e., one goat was destined for Jehovah and the other one for *azazel*. As the first goat certainly is not to be identified with Jehovah, so the second is not to be identified with *azazel*. Yet this is the blunder advocated. A careful reading of the authorities cited in Ch. 34 should have preserved Adventists from this blunder. Take, for example, Rotherham, who says that "*Azazel* . . . is the name or title of an evil being. . . to whom the live

vision of him: "His forehead commenced from his eyes to recede. . . His frame was large, but the flesh hung loosely from his hands and face" (pp. 152-3). If his banishment occurs at the second advent, why does he reappear on the scene a thousand years later? (Rev. 20:7-8). Surely Lev. 16 indicates that the goat, once let go in the wilderness, never returned.

goat on the great Day of Propitiation was sent" (p. 394). (He adds that "there is here no sacrifice offered to the evil spirit.")

Scholars are not agreed as to the meaning of "*azazel*." While some, such as Rotherham, understand Satan to be intended, others do not. Jamieson says that "it can be proved that the demon called *Azazel* did not become known to the Jews till the time of the Babylonish captivity. . . . The most eminent Biblical scholars hold that no personality is indicated by the word '*azazel*' and that, as it has the article prefixed, it was manifestly designed to be interpreted in another way." Tholuck, Bahr, Kellogg, Lange and others took the Hebrew word to signify "removal" and so the A.S.V. margin has it.¹⁰⁵

The meaning of the sin-offering, consisting of the two goats, may, therefore, very probably be that given by S. H. Kellogg. He says: "as the killing and sprinkling of the blood of the first goat visibly set forth the means of reconciliation with God (through the substituted offering of an innocent victim), so the sending away of the second goat, laden with those sins — the expiation of which had been signified by the sacrifice of the first — no less vividly set forth the effect of that sacrifice, in the complete removal of those expiated sins from the holy presence of Jehovah" (*Expositor's Bible* on Leviticus, p. 267; cf. Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture*, Vol. II, p. 338). Similarly, William Kelly: "The sending away of the people's sins, grounded on the sin-offering of Atonement-day, is the meaning." Alexander Maclaren speaks in the same strain, when he says: "The expiation was made within the veil; but a visible token of its completeness was given to help feeble faith in the blessed mystery of the unseen propitiation. The picture of the goat going away and away and away — a lessening speck on the horizon and never heard of more — is the divine symbol of the great fact that there is full, free, everlasting forgiveness and, on God's part, utter forgetfulness. 'I will remember them no more at all forever.'"

Thus it will be found that though expositors differ as to the identity of *azazel*, they agree that both goats constitute but one sin-offering. Because Seventh-day Adventism has not recognized the sacrificial character of the live goat, it has erred in making it a type of Satan. Adventists no doubt sincerely deny that they regard Satan as our sin-bearer, but their exegesis of this ceremony certainly exposes them to this charge. In this matter, as in their adherence to Mrs. White's "inspiration," (see once again *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 92), they must face the logical implications of their own teaching.

¹⁰⁵"It is noteworthy," says F. F. Bruce, "that in the treatment of the Day of Atonement in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the scapegoat plays no part at all" (*The Witness* for May, 1957, p. 106).

CHAPTER TEN

The Last Things

Answering the first of the "Preliminary Questions," the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* say: "In common with conservative Christians and the historic Protestant creeds, we believe . . . that He [Christ] will return in a premillennial, personal, imminent second advent" (pp. 21-22). This statement contains two serious errors. The first error is the implication that all conservative Christians believe in the premillennial advent. This would rule out all postmillenarians and all amillenarians as well. It would exclude such postmillenarians as Charles Hodge, A. A. Hodge, W. G. T. Shedd, David Brown and B. B. Warfield; and such amillenarians as Abraham Kuyper, Gerhardus Vos, Louis Berkhof, Oswald T. Allis and William Hendriksen. Such elimination is nothing short of absurd.

The other error in the Adventist statement is that the historic Protestant creeds declare the second coming to be premillennial. But the Augsburg Confession (1530), which is the only one generally recognized by Lutherans; the Calvinistic Confessions, among which are the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) and the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646); and the 39 Articles of the Church of England (completed in 1571), do not affirm premillennialism, although none of them, I believe, when fairly construed, condemns it.

Seventh-day Adventism says that it believes that Christ's return is imminent (pp. 22, 11, 207, 463). By "imminent," Adventists have always meant, "in this generation," according to other of their publications.¹⁰⁶ Yet we read on p. 207, in italics, "we set no date." Surely, to say that Christ is coming in this generation, while not setting a specific date, is setting some sort of time.

Adventists agree with expositors generally that Christ's Olivet Discourse contemplates two events: the destruction of Jerusalem

¹⁰⁶E.g., *Know Your Bible Series*, No. 19, p. 7; No. 29, p. 5; *Good News Series*, No. 28, p. 2; No. 32, p. 1; *20th Century Bible Course*, Lesson VII, p. 4.

in A.D. 70 and His glorious return at the end of the present age. They also agree that the first event was a foreshadowing of the second, and therefore, that "the prophecy has a double application" (*Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 275). In particular, they say that the tribulation refers, primarily, to the siege of the Jews by Titus, and ultimately, to the persecution of the church by Antichrist.

The persecution of the church, according to Adventism, was its suffering under the papacy. As we have seen in Ch. VII above, "the little horn" of Dan. 7 is supposed to typify that system, and the three and a half times of his supremacy, the 1260 years which began in A.D. 538 and ended in 1798. Let it be carefully observed that in Dan. 7 the *entire* period of supremacy is represented by cruel persecution. This would indicate, then, that the church's persecution would extend over the entire 538-1798 era. So W. A. Spicer acknowledges in *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*: "According to Daniel's . . . prophecy, the period of trial and persecution was to reach 'even to the time of the end.' Dan. 11:35" (p. 73, cf. p. 303 f.). We have seen that "the time of the end," according to Adventism, began in 1798.¹⁰⁷

Speaking of the signs of His return, Christ said in Matt. 24:29: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven." The same signs are mentioned in Rev. 6:12-13, where they are preceded by a great earthquake. Now the Adventists profess to be able to identify these three signs: they assert that the great earthquake was the one that occurred on Nov. 1, 1755, which affected nearly 4,000,000 square miles and destroyed 60,000 persons in six minutes in the city of Lisbon; that the darkening of the sun took place on May 19, 1780, when New England and parts beyond — in all, over several thousand square miles — were plunged into darkness for at least fourteen hours, beginning about 10 a.m.; and that the falling of the stars was seen on Nov. 13, 1833, when the earth, in its annual crossing of the orbit of a shoal of meteors, passed through the shoal itself and experienced an amazing meteoric shower. Recently, L. E. Froom devotes Ch. 13 of the fourth volume of his *Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* to these three signs and W. H. Branson writes concerning them in *Drama of the Ages* (pp. 448-51)¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷See Note 77.

¹⁰⁸E.g., James White, *The Second Coming of Christ*, pp. 35-50; *His Glorious Appearing*; Mrs. White, G. C., pp. 304-8, 333-4; E. J. Waggoner, *Prophetic*

It may be asked by some thoughtful person, How can the first two of these phenomena be said to follow a tribulation that terminated in 1798? The Adventists blandly answer that the tribulation "practically" ended by 1750! (*The Return of Jesus*, by Carlyle B. Haynes, p. 131). B. G. Wilkinson, in *Truth Triumphant*, holds that "the great tribulation can be considered to have ended in 1772" (p. 392). Arthur S. Maxwell fixes on 1773 (*Your Bible and You*, p. 418). *Bible Readings for the Home* says: "Within the 1260 years, but after the persecution" (p. 278), thus making a distinction where there is none, for the 1260 days or forty-two months are, as already shown, every whit marked by cruelty.

While Adventism links Matt. 23:36 ("Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation") with the impending destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, it links the similar words of Matt. 24:34 ("This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled") with the coming again of Jesus Christ. But it has shifted its position, again and again, in the latter case. James White in 1868 said that in the latter text "the Lord designed to teach that the people who should live at the time of the fulfillment of the last sign mentioned [that of the falling of the stars] and should hear the proclamation of the coming of Christ [in 1844] . . . should witness the scenes connected with His coming" (*Life Incidents*, p. 340). In 1868 it was difficult to believe that the generation alive at Christ's return would be the one that had seen both the dark day of 1780 and the meteoric shower of 1833. It was much easier to restrict it to the people who had seen the last sign alone. I have myself talked with one who was a fourth-generation Adventist, whose grandmother, having witnessed in her infancy the phenomenon of Nov. 13, 1833, was expected, most surely, to survive until Christ returned.

Although James White was not quite certain that the final generation was the one that had seen the stars fall, he asserted confidently that it *was* the one that had heard the Advent proclamation of 1844.¹⁰⁹ Speaking of the warning given at that time, he said: "It is evident that God reserves the warning to that generation which alone needs it . . . the warning respect-

¹⁰⁹Lights, pp. 123-126; W. A. Spicer, *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*, pp. 79-103; Carlyle B. Haynes, *The Return of Jesus*, pp. 129-43; Geo. E. Vandeman, *Planet in Rebellion*, ch. 10.

¹⁰⁹Hear him in *The Present Truth* (Apr. 1850), where he speaks of the "First Angel's Message" (Rev. 14:6-7): "This angel's message represents the last mission of mercy to the world; and it has been fulfilled" (p. 65).

ing the judgment is alone applicable to that generation which lives in the last days" (*Life Incidents*, p. 221). "God did not call [Noah] to warn the next to the last generation before the flood, but the very last" (*ibid.* p. 339). "The very generation of men who hear and reject the warning message, will drink the unmingled cup of the wrath of God. And those of this very generation who receive the message, suffer disappointment and endure the trials of the waiting position, will witness the coming of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 340).

As a matter of fact, the Adventists looked for Christ to return one year after the fateful Oct. 22, 1844. James White himself stated this, when, in 1847, he wrote: "It is well known that many were expecting the Lord to come at the seventh month, 1845. That Christ would then come, we firmly believed. A few days before the time passed, I was at Fairhaven [the home of Joseph Bates] and Dartmouth [both in Massachusetts] with a message on this point of time" (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 22). Dr. Froom mentions that some who gave up faith in the 1844 movement pushed the date forward to 1845, but he does not disclose that the Whites and Mr. Bates did so (*Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 838-9).¹¹⁰ The year 1843 had been proved wrong; Oct. 22, 1844 provided only disappointment; and Oct. 22, 1845 saw no fulfillment of the promise.

In 1883, G. I. Butler considered that "the last generation of men" had been reached (*Review and Herald Supplement*, p. 11). Strange as it may seem, in 1926, Carlyle B. Haynes wrote these words in *The Return of Jesus*: "It is doubtful if there are any living who saw the dark day" of 1780 — somewhat of an understatement. "Without doubt there will be some living when the Lord comes who saw the falling of the stars in 1833" — somewhat of an overstatement. He adds later on, in italics: "The present generation is the one which is destined to see the second coming of Christ." Then he concludes: "There is no mistake here. Just as surely as the great period of tribulation of the Church came to pass; just as surely as this period was followed by the occurrence of the dark day in 1780; just as surely as this was followed by the falling of the stars in 1833; just so surely will the coming

¹¹⁰F. D. Nichol cites the words quoted above from *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* but then merely adds: "James White was evidently carried along with the general enthusiasm and hope of those around him" (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 173). Can Mr. Nichol be quite sure that "those around him" did not include Mrs. White? Furthermore, was Mr. White a man to be easily swayed by others? He was not,

of Christ take place in the present generation. This is the clear teaching of the Word of God and the Scripture cannot be broken." I do not wonder that, thirty-five years later, Mr. Haynes' book has been discontinued by the *Review and Herald Publishing Association*.

Yet the Adventists are not discouraged, for, as I have pointed out in reference to the term "imminent," they are still declaring that "the present generation" will witness Christ's return. I would that they knew whereof they spoke, for it would be good news indeed for the heart of every true believer that his Lord and Savior was just at hand.

But this profession of belief in an imminent coming runs counter to what Adventism teaches about "the remnant church." On p. 187 of *Questions on Doctrine* Mrs. White is quoted thus: "In what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith." On p. 192 we read that "Adventists firmly believe that God has a precious remnant, a multitude of earnest, sincere believers, in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who are living up to all the light God has given them. The Great Shepherd of the sheep recognizes them as His own, and He is calling them into one great fellowship in preparation for His return." Presently Mrs. White is cited as saying: "Every jewel will be brought out and gathered, for the hand of the Lord is set to recover the remnant of His people."

Now this great fold and fellowship into which the Lord is to gather every jewel, is believed to be the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "We believe that finally the remnant people will include every true and faithful follower of Christ" (p. 194). "We believe that before the final hour of crisis and testing, all God's true children — now so widely scattered — will join with us in giving obedience to this message, of which the seventh-day sabbath is a basic part. . . . we believe it to be the solemn task and joyous privilege of the advent movement to make God's last testing truths so clear and so persuasive as to draw all of God's children into that prophetically foretold company making ready for the day of God" (*ibid.*, pp. 195-6).¹¹¹

In the past fifty years, the membership of the Seventh-day Ad-

¹¹¹*Q. on D.*, pp. 195-6. See also *Good News Series*, No. 28, p. 4; M. L. Andreassen, *God's Holy Day*, pp. 62-3.

ventist Church has increased from about 90,000 to 1,195,000.¹¹² Of course, not all of this increase has come from the ranks of other Protestant denominations; probably, most of it has not. The reasonable prospect, therefore, is that even another hundred years will be inadequate to bring all Christians into the fold of Adventism. How, then, can it say that it believes in the imminency of Christ's advent?

Moreover, the view expressed relative to the forty-two months of the resurgence of the beast of Rev. 13, involves (as we have seen in ch. VII) the conclusion that Christ will not come before the year 3222. The Adventists would not agree to that date, but their exegesis involves this conclusion and so virtually denies the imminency they proclaim.

When Seventh-day Adventism affirms its belief that Christ's return will precede the millennium, it shows that it considers Rev. 19 and 20 to be in chronological order. In Ch. 19:11-21 the Revelator describes the King of kings and Lord of lords coming through the opened heavens as a Man of war to destroy the beast and false prophet, together with the massed strength of their armies. This, Adventism takes to be a picture of the second coming (pp. 207, 422, 425, 490). It is not alone in so construing John's words, for most expositors concur. In Rev. 20:1-6 the Revelator describes the thousand years of the reign of Christ and His saints. Adventists speak of this era as following the event pictured in the close of the preceding chapter. Many expositors agree with them that the millennial reign of Christ and His saints follows the second advent, though many do not.

But while Adventism affirms its faith in Christ's coming before the millennium, it denies that, during that period, He will reign upon the earth. It holds, instead, that His rule will be in heaven (pp. 17.21, 489, 496).¹¹³ However, this view is not what has long been called premillennialism. Premillennialism is known as the belief that when Christ returns He will set up an earthly kingdom for a thousand years. It is true that, technically, the term "premillennial advent" does not involve an

¹¹²The precise figure given by Mr. Nichol is 1,194,070 ("Seventh-day Adventists," in *Britannica Book of the Year*, 1961).

¹¹³E.g., Mrs. White, *Early Writings*, p. 51; W. A. Spicer, *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*, pp. 354-5; C. B. Haynes, *The Return of Jesus*, pp. 299-300; C. D. Utt, *Answers*, p. 127; *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. VII, p. 881; W. H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, pp. 497-501; Geo. E. Vandeman, *Planet in Rebellion*, pp. 340-1; *Church Manual*, p. 52.

earthly reign of Christ during the thousand years, but in common usage, it implies that. Accordingly, Adventism is hardly justified in calling its eschatology "premillennial."

Here something should be said about the Adventists' concept of the church's glorified state. Mrs. White says that all the saints shall "come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam . . . is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. . . . Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will 'grow up' (Mal. 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 644-5).¹¹⁴

The saints are ushered into the holy city. "There they behold the Paradise of God, the home of Adam in his innocency" (*ibid.*, p. 646). The first man is made to "look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled. . . . now, through the work of the atonement, Adam is reinstated in his first dominion. . . . he beholds . . . the very trees whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved to care for. . . . he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored, more lovely now than when he was banished from it" (*ibid.*, pp. 646-8). Surely, a literalistic concept!

Wherein will the millennial reign of Christ and His saints consist? According to SDA teaching, it "may well involve a careful investigation of the records of evil men and a decision regarding the amount of punishment due each sinner for his part in the rebellion against God." It will consist, therefore, of the final stage of "the investigative judgment" (pp. 496-8). Mrs. White expresses the same idea in *The Great Controversy*: "During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection, the judgment of the wicked takes place. . . . At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God. John in the Revelation says: 'I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. . . .' In union with

¹¹⁴Mrs. White says that at creation, "Adam's height was much greater than that of men who now inhabit the earth. Eve was somewhat less in stature" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45). In *Spiritual Gifts*, she says that Adam "was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth" (Vol. III, p. 34). Others reason from Deut. 3:11 that full stature will be around 14 feet or so.

Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. . . . At the close of the thousand years, the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God for the execution of the judgment written" (pp. 660-1).

From this explanation, the millennial reign appears to be simply the convening of heaven's law court. It is true that in Scripture a king possesses judicial powers, but his powers go far beyond that of a judge who only weighs evidence and renders decisions. A king is a ruler, a governor, an administrator. Twice in this passage we read of the saints reigning with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4, 6). The verb used is *basileuō* and means "to exercise kingly power" (the word for king is *basileus*). It occurs twenty-one times in the N.T., seven of which are in the Revelation. Since in none of the other instances does the word denote merely a judicial action, there is no reason to say that it does so here. The reigning must include government.

What shall be the state of things upon the earth during the millennium? *Questions on Doctrine* declares it will be one of desolation. As that era begins, "the earth is in utter desolation, with dead bodies everywhere" (p. 492). Ch. 41 of *The Great Controversy* is devoted to a treatment of this subject. Therein Mrs. White says: "The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations" (p. 657).

According to Adventists, this desolate earth will be the prison-house of Satan during the millenium (pp. 444, 498-9). Mrs. White, in the book just referred to, says that "the expression 'bottomless pit' represents the earth in a state of confusion and darkness," and goes on to say: "Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds, to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen. It is in this sense that he is bound. . . . For a thousand years, Satan will wander to and fro in the desolate earth, to behold the results of his rebellion against the law of God. During this time his sufferings are intense" (pp. 658-60).

The Greek word translated "bottomless pit" in Rev. 20:1

occurs seven times in that book,¹¹⁵ but in the previous chapters where it is used, it does not mean the earth. It is, therefore, gratuitous to say that it means so here.

The Apostle tells us that the reason the devil is laid hold on, bound, cast into the pit, shut up there and sealed therein, is "that [*hina*, in order that] he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled" (Rev. 20:3). Surely this implies that there will be nations then. But Adventism declares that this is not so: the devil will not deceive the nations during the millennium because there will be no nations to deceive! (p. 500). There will be no nations, we are assured, because Christ at His advent will have transported all the godly to heaven and destroyed all the wicked remaining. Why, then, we ask, is it necessary to apprehend, bind and imprison the devil in order to prevent his deceiving work?

Adventists teach that Christ's kingdom will not be set up on earth until after the millennium. In other words, they believe that a thousand years will intervene between Christ's return and the inauguration of His kingdom on the earth. In this connection *Questions on Doctrine* refers the reader to Dan. 7:18 ("But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever") (p. 508), and to its parallel, Dan. 7:27 ("And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey Him") (p. 17.22). However, on page 424, Dan. 7:18 is interpreted in another way, for there we are told that the four beasts of Dan. 7 "represent four consecutive kingdoms or dominions, that were to rule the earth until the God of heaven sets up a kingdom," and that "this vision of Dan. 7 must reach from the time of the prophet to the second coming of Christ, at which time the everlasting Kingdom of righteousness will be set up." According to this, there is to be no thousand years' interval between Christ's coming and the inauguration of God's earthly kingdom. As to the parallel verse, Dan. 7:27, it expressly speaks of "the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven," i.e., on the earth. If Dan. 7:18 is to be realized at the second coming (as p. 424 declares), then Dan. 7:27 (being a parallel statement) must be realized then

¹¹⁵Ch. 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3.

also. Thus the Adventists would make both Dan. 7:18 and Dan. 7:27 to mean two entirely different things.

What does John say happens at the close of the millennium? Satan is loosed and goes out to deceive the nations once more, gathering them together to battle (Rev. 20:7-8). The following verse says: "and they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Then v. 10 adds: "and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." The rest of Ch. 20 is a description of the judgment at the Great White Throne. The second resurrection is described, and the execution of the sentence of doom upon all whose names are not found written in the Book of Life is declared. The second death, the lake of fire, is the punishment for the wicked.

Referring to Rev. 19-21, the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* say: "There seems to be nothing in these chapters to indicate that this is not a chronological sequence of events" (p. 490). In that case, the actions of Ch. 20:11-15 occur subsequently to those of Ch. 20:7-10. This means that Satan's deception of the nations, their destruction by fire and his own consignment to the lake of fire, all take place prior to the second resurrection and the final judgment.

However, we are told (pp. 479, 504-5) that it is the resurrected, not the living, wicked who constitute the nations deceived by Satan — as if there were no limit to his ability to delude! Mrs. White dilates on this matter in *Early Writings*: "Jesus called forth the wicked dead; and they came up with the same feeble, sickly bodies that went into the grave. . . . Then I saw Satan again commenced his work. He passed around among his subjects, and made the weak and feeble strong, and told them that he and his angels were powerful. He pointed to the countless millions who had been raised. There were mighty warriors and kings who were well skilled in battle and who had conquered kingdoms. . . . Satan consults with his angels, and then with those kings and conquerors and mighty men. Then he looks over the vast army, and tells them that the company in the city is small and feeble, and that they can go up and take it, and cast out its inhabitants, and possess its riches and glory themselves.

"Satan succeeds in deceiving them, and all immediately begin

to prepare themselves for battle. There are many skillful men in that army and they construct all kinds of implements of war. Then with Satan at their head, the multitude move on. Kings and warriors follow close after Satan, and the multitude follow after in companies. Each company has its leader, and order is observed as they march over the broken surface of the earth to the Holy City

"But fire from God out of heaven is rained upon them and . . . all are consumed together. I saw that some were quickly destroyed while others suffered longer. . . . Some were many days consuming, and just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering remained. . . . Satan and his angels suffered long. Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him" (pp. 292-5).

Here Mrs. White makes the fire from God out of heaven to be the means of punishing the wicked dead, but Rev. 20:11-15 declares that they will be punished in the lake of fire. This, however, presents no difficulty to Adventists, as the following statement from page 506 of *Questions on Doctrine* shows: "The drama of the ages ends in Satan's final and irrevocable overthrow, and his utter extinction — as well as that of all who follow him — when fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours him (II Pet. 3:10, 11; Rev. 20:9)." Then we read: "The very surface of the earth appears to melt, and becomes a seething 'lake of fire' (Rev. 20:10), for the judgment and 'perdition of ungodly men' (II Pet. 3:7)." If this be correct, is it not strange that the devil is to be "cast" into the fiery lake, and even more strange that this lake was existent a thousand years before, seeing the beast and the false prophet were cast into it then? (Rev. 20:10; 19:20). Remember, the Adventists themselves maintain that Rev. 19 and 20 are in chronological order (p. 490).

This chapter would be incomplete without a glance at Adventism's concept of the eternal state. Mrs. White quotes Isa. 11:6 and 65:21 as pertaining to the ultimate glory: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid"; "they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 675). Commenting on the latter text, James Edson White declares: "There are houses to build and country homes to be fitted up. . . . They will cultivate the soil Farming will not be the difficult occupation which it is at present" (*Past, Present and Future*, pp. 492-3); and W. H.

Branson says: "The saved will have an eternity in which to build a home and develop a country estate! . . . we shall have food there such as we never have had here" (*Drama of the Ages*, pp. 529, 491). A. E. Lickey, referring to Isa. 66:22-23, says that there will be "regular Sabbath worship in the city" — the New Jerusalem.¹¹⁸ Since we nowhere read of a repudiation of these views we are certainly warranted in taking them as the Adventist view of the eternal state.

Such, in the main, is the eschatology of Seventh-day Adventism. (See also chs. III and XI.) It is a unique millenarianism, which contains ingredients found in pre-, post- and a- millennialism. It is akin to historic premillennialism in that it advocates the coming of Christ before the thousand years and the literal character of the first resurrection. It is akin to postmillennialism in that it teaches a heavenly instead of an earthly millennium (Warfield) and the presence of Satan on the earth during its course (Brown). It is akin to amillennialism in that it denies a glorious future for Israel and the setting up of Christ's visible kingdom over the nations at His return. Thus the eschatology of Seventh-day Adventism is about as much like (and unlike) one of these three systems as another. But it differs from all of them in that it proclaims a heavenly millennium after Christ's return, a reigning with Him which is only judicial in character, a devastated earth wherein the powers of darkness are incarcerated, and, finally, a deluding, not of mortal, but of resurrected sinners by a devil who is actually, according to Scripture, already in the lake of fire.

¹¹⁸God speaks to Modern Man, p. 601; cf. e.g., *Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 379; A. L. Baker, *Belief and Work of Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 69.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Everlasting Punishment

"No topic within the range of human thought is approached by the majority of good men with greater reluctance than the topic of this essay." Thus Alvah Hovey in 1858 began his treatment of *The State of the Impenitent Dead*. It is the only proper spirit in which to deal with the subject at any time. Who that is possessed of any feeling wishes to believe in everlasting suffering? Undoubtedly, it is this natural aversion to it that lies at the bottom of disbelieving it. But divine revelation must always take precedence over human sentiment.

In this chapter, I will deal in detail with "Question 42" (pp. 533-43) which is presented in six parts, all aimed at convincing us that there is no such thing as unending conscious suffering. (It is well throughout this book to remember that we are dealing with Adventism as it is today.) Though Christ represented Dives — against whom no positive sin is charged — as ineligible to receive even so trifling an alleviation of his anguish as the mere moistening of his tongue, while he suffered in the flame, the Adventists represent all the worst transgressors in history as certain to receive the inestimable boon of ceasing to exist in the fire at all. God will put an end to their suffering and anguish.

The short introduction to this forty-second question should be considered first. In it Adventism expresses its unqualified belief in divine retribution as such. It maintains that as the love of God issues in the everlasting bliss of the righteous, so the justice of God issues in the eternal punishment of the ungodly. "There will surely be punishment . . . and this punishment, moreover, will not be remedial but punitive" (p. 534). The idea is that what will be visited upon the wicked will be sheer judgment without any admixture of mercy. But this divine judgment will not be the same in all cases, for "there will also be degrees of punishment" (*ibid.*, cf. p. 498). However, and this is significant, in the end all the ungodly will be annihilated.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷Whether or not the materials of which they are constituted will be obliterated, the idea is that the organized being will cease to exist.

Two things need to be said here. The first is that cessation of existence is not evil in itself. God, out of His infinite goodness, gave all things being when He created the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is. As He would not have been unjust had He not created, neither would He have been so had He planned to annihilate everything later on, even though it had not been marred by sin. Freedom to turn all back into its original nothingness was as much the Creator's right, as freedom to bring it out of that nothingness in the first place. No creature could have complained of any wrong done it; instead, it would have owed God thanks for giving it so much unmerited blessing during the time of its existence. Now if annihilation is not something essentially evil, how can it constitute the ultimate evil of punishment? Since it does not necessarily presuppose the presence of sin, it cannot be a proper punishment for sin.

The other thing to be said is this: that the suffering which the wicked will undergo before their supposed annihilation will be so severe that they will desire cessation of being. The more wicked they have been and, therefore, the severer their pain, the more intense their desire to lose their existence will be. If, in the days when the fifth angel sounds his trumpet (Rev. 9:1-11), "men shall seek death . . . and shall desire to die" physically, much more will they long for the second death — if it means annihilation. Annihilation, consequently, would be deemed a mercy and not a judgment and the more wicked the sufferer, the greater the mercy experienced. Now what kind of punishment is that which the criminal delights in? None at all. Therefore annihilation cannot be the sinner's penalty. It cannot be such, then, for two reasons: because it is not an evil in itself and because it is a good desired by the punished.

Part I maintains that punishment is not now going on, but that it will be inflicted only after the resurrection (p. 534). The chapter that follows (the 43rd) — on "The Rich Man and Lazarus" — is devoted to supporting this idea. It has been largely answered in the Appendix to Chapter III above, where I have carefully distinguished the main point of the parable from those minor details upon which so much labor was uselessly expended in the writing of pages 550-62 of *Questions on Doctrine*.

But one aspect of Ch. 43 yet remains for comment. I refer to the assumption by Adventism that the Hebrew word "Sheol" and the corresponding Greek word "Hades" mean simply "the grave" (pp. 522, 558). This is an unwarranted assumption. It is

true that Sheol or Hades sometimes denotes "the grave," but it is not true that these equivalent terms never mean something else.

W. G. T. Shedd points out that "as in English 'death' may mean either physical or spiritual death, so in Hebrew Sheol may mean either the grave or hell" (*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 633). Sheol clearly means the grave in many passages,¹¹⁸ but it just as clearly does not mean the grave, but a place of judgment, in others. For example, in Ps. 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into *Sheol* and all the nations that forget God." (But the righteous as well as the wicked go to the grave.) Again, in Prov. 23:14: "Thou shalt beat [thy child] with the rod and shalt deliver his soul from *Sheol*." (But no parent can, by discipline, keep his child from the grave.) Does "the lowest *Sheol*" (Deut. 32:22) mean "the lowest grave"? Of course not.

Hades in the N.T. has the same two meanings as Sheol has in the O.T. "The only difference is, that in the O.T., Sheol less often, in proportion to the whole number of instances, denotes 'hell' and more often the 'grave,' than Hades does in the N.T. And this, for the reason that the doctrine of future retribution was more fully revealed and developed by Christ and His Apostles, than it was by Moses and the Prophets" (W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 639). See also Wm. Hendriksen's *The Bible on the Life Hereafter* (pp. 85-86.)

Adventism falsely reasons that since sinners are to suffer after the judgment, they will not suffer before it (pp. 556, 560). Yet it is common knowledge that many a criminal, already shown to be guilty, has been shorn of all privileges and subjected to great discomforts, before suffering his final doom. Strange to say, Adventism unwittingly provides its own answer on page 535: "neither evil angels nor wicked men are now receiving final punishment for their transgressions. . . . Evil angels are reserved unto judgment (II Peter 2:4). . . . Concerning the wicked, we read that God reserves the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished (II Peter 2:9)." The word "final" in the first sentence ought to be underscored. Then observe that II Peter 2:4 tells us that while the evil angels are awaiting judgment, they are imprisoned in hell, where they are held in chains (or pits) of darkness. This involves suffering of some kind. And verse 9, properly translated, speaks of wicked men as undergoing punish-

¹¹⁸E.g., Gen. 44:31; I Sam. 2:6; Job 17:13, 14; Ps. 141:7; Hos. 13:14, cf. I Cor. 15:55.

ment *while they await* judgment. The American Standard Version reads thus: "the Lord knoweth how . . . to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment."¹¹⁹ A. T. Robertson says that the Greek for "under punishment" is the "present, passive participle of *kolazō* . . . present tense emphasizing continuity of punishment." Alford says the word here denotes being "actually in a penal state and thus awaiting their final punishment." So the case of the wicked dead is exactly like that of those evil angels mentioned in II Peter 2 — both are now undergoing punishment while awaiting the day of judgment. As A. H. Strong says, "The object of the final judgment is not the ascertainment, but the manifestation of character" (*Systematic Theology*, p. 1025). It is not to assure rebels "of their guilt and condemnation, but to exhibit before all finite beings the grounds of God's decision and the righteousness of His administration" (Hovey, *The State of the Impenitent Dead*, p. 72).

If sinners are not to be punished until the day of judgment, then they should not be punished before they die, anymore than after. Adventism so teaches in this opening part of Ch. 42. It is said that though men may suffer for violating the law of the land or for indulging in wrong habits of living, they do not suffer for transgressing the commandments of God. Yet even a casual reader of the Scriptures knows better. Or was the expulsion from the Garden of Eden no punishment? And what about the Flood in Noah's day and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah in Lot's? Were the ten plagues on Egypt no punishment and the captivity of Israel and Judah none? The citation of more instances is needless. God does punish sinners in the present life; and if in the present life, why not when it is over? The plain truth is that God begins the punishment of rebels while they yet live, intensifies it when they have died, and consummates it with everlastingness on the day of judgment — just as He blesses His people in this life, increases their good when it is past, but reserves the best until they have been glorified.

Part II lists several Biblical terms which denote the punishment that the wicked are to suffer (pp. 535-7). These are supposed to warrant the doctrine of annihilationism. Let us look at them.

1. "The wicked will die." But, that death does not always mean the same thing, is admitted on page 521. There it is

¹¹⁹Cf. e.g., English Revision; *Expositor's Greek Testament*; *American Commentary on the N. T.*; *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary*.

indicated that those who are dead may still exist, according to such passages as Eph. 2:1 and I Tim. 5:6. Other passages that teach the same thing are Matt. 8:22 and Rev. 3:1. Still others will be added shortly.

In spite of this admission, Adventists identify life with existence. Their syllogism run thus:

Life is existence
Death is the opposite of life
Therefore death is nonexistence.

But the syllogism is false, for, even in the realm of the natural, life is more than mere existence and death does not amount to nonexistence. A stone exists without having life and a dead tree has not ceased to be. In the realm of the spiritual, life is more than being; it is well-being. Hence the sinner is said to be dead and the believer alive.¹²⁰ Accordingly, the true syllogism runs thus:

Life is good existence
Death is the opposite of life
Therefore death is bad existence.

Consequently, everlasting life is not to be confounded with everlasting being. Yet the identifying of these two distinct things pervades *Questions on Doctrine* from cover to cover. And remember, *Questions on Doctrine* is the most recent and up-to-date expression of Adventist beliefs. According to its view, a dog would have everlasting life if its animal existence were perpetuated forever.

Then, Adventism considers immortality as equivalent to these two, when it is really a third thing. In the N.T. the word, when used of men, refers to their bodies, just as the cognate "mortal" does.¹²¹ Although the bodies of Christians die now, they will be rendered incapable of dying at the Second Advent.

The teaching of Scripture on this subject is therefore reducible to these three propositions:

- a. All men will exist everlastingly, so far as their personalities are concerned — not by any inherent power, but simply because God so wills;
- b. When any sinner owns Christ as Lord and Savior, everlasting life is imparted to his ever-existing personality;
- c. When Christ returns, immortality will be conferred upon

¹²⁰E.g., John 5:24; 6:47, 53-54; Eph. 2:1-5; I John 3:14.

¹²¹See Rom. 6:12; 8:11; I Cor. 15:53-54; II Cor. 4:11.

the bodies of those who have previously received everlasting life.

Thus perpetual being, eternal life and immortality are to be carefully distinguished. If they are thus distinguished, we can concur with the assertions that "Satan . . . is the responsible author of the doctrine that the sinner will live forever" (p. 530), and that "immortality is promised to sinful men only on condition that they have been saved by grace" (pp. 13.9, 530).

2. "The wicked will be cut off." But the passages cited (Ps. 37:9, 34; Ezek. 28:16) very evidently refer merely to physical death. It is incorrectly said that the Hebrew verb is *karath* in all three places. It is so in Ps. 37 but not in Ezek. 28. But what is significant is that *karath* also occurs in Dan. 9:26, where we are told that Messiah shall be "cut off." Yet Adventism does not wish us to think it teaches the annihilation of Christ. But — would this not follow?

3. "The wicked will perish." John 3:16 says that the believer will not perish but have everlasting life; hence to perish is the opposite of having this life. But since, as we have seen, this life means well-being, the perishing must denote ill-being, instead of non-being. Moreover, the Greek word is used repeatedly without so much as the possibility of its meaning annihilation.¹²² In Matt. 10:28 ("Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"), it manifestly means the same as in James 4:12 where "destroy" is set over against "save," not over against "create." In Matt. 26:8 where it refers to the breaking of the box of very precious ointment, it is used in the sense of "waste." Lastly, even the righteous, including God's prophets and priests, are said to perish, which, of course, merely denotes physical death.¹²³ Surely Adventism would not maintain that the righteous are annihilated.

4. "The wicked will be burned up." The first text listed (Mal. 4:1) plainly refers to the body (cf. v. 3 — ashes). The second (Matt. 13:30, 40) refers to that furnace of fire, where "shall be weeping and the gnashing of teeth."¹²⁴ The third (II Peter 3:10) does not relate to people but to the physical universe. The fourth (Rev. 20:15; 21:8) only mentions the lake of fire; it does not say that those cast into it will be consumed.

¹²²E.g., Matt. 9:17; 10:6, 39, 42; 16:25; Luke 15:8, 24; 19:10; John 6:39; 10:28; 17:12; Rom. 14:15; II Peter 3:6; II John 8.

¹²³See Isa. 57:1; Esth. 4:16; Luke 11:51; 13:33.

¹²⁴See v. 42, cf. v. 50; 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30.

It is taken for granted by Adventism that fire denotes the idea of consuming, whereas it only denotes that of tormenting, for there is no suffering more painful to men than that sustained from fire. The rich man was not being consumed but tormented in the flame (Luke 16:24). Departing into the eternal fire is going away into eternal punishment or pain (Matt. 25:41, 46). The beast and the false prophet will not be consumed in the lake of fire, even after being in it a thousand years (Rev. 19:20, cf. 20:10), and thereafter they and the devil will be tormented therein (ch. 20:10). The worshippers of the beast will be "tormented with fire and brimstone" (ch. 14:10-11). It is plain, then, that when fire is mentioned in connection with the punishment of the wicked, it is "the source of suffering . . . not of annihilation" (A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 1000). It is not spoken of "as a symbol of destruction" but as "a symbol of torment" (Hovey, *The State of the Impenitent Dead*, p. 91).

The lake of fire is called Gehenna, with allusion to the Vale of Hinnom outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem where perpetual fires consumed the rubbish of the metropolis. Christ warned against it repeatedly.¹²⁵ Twice He spoke of "the Gehenna of fire" (Matt. 5:22; 18:9) and once of "the judgment of Gehenna" (Matt. 23:33). He also spoke of "the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:42, 50), of the "everlasting fire" (ch. 18:8; 25:41), of "the unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43, 48), and of being "salted with fire" (Mark 9:49). On this last, Dr. Broadus comments: "Fire is usually destructive, but this unquenchable fire will act like salt, preserving instead of destroying" (on Matt. 25:46). Observe that it is in connection with Gehenna that Christ spoke of the never-dying worm, which is usually understood to refer to memory (cf. Luke 16:25: "Son, remember").

5. "The wicked shall be destroyed." The O.T. passage cited (Ps. 145:20) is clearly parallel with Ps. 37:38, where "destroyed" is equated with "cut off" (see no. 2, above). The first of the N.T. passages referred to is Mark 1:24, where an unclean spirit cried out in the synagogue, saying, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus Thou Nazarene? Art Thou come to destroy us?" Were these demons afraid of immediate annihilation? No, like others, they were afraid of being sent to "the abyss" to undergo torment (Matt. 8:28-29, cf. Luke 8:31).¹²⁶ Since demons are already in a

¹²⁵See Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47.

¹²⁶This place is mentioned repeatedly in the Revelation (ch. 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:18; 20:13).

wretched state, why should they seek to avoid destruction if destruction means annihilation? Adventism has no answer. (The Greek verb in Mark 1:24 is the same as that considered under no. 3, above.)

The second N.T. text is II Thess. 1:9 which says that the wicked "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." Thayer says that the word "destruction" as used here (*olethros*), denotes "the loss of a life of blessedness" — not "extinction of being." Some expositors think that this "destruction from the presence [face] of the Lord" is to be taken as signifying "unreturning banishment" (Lillie) and they link it up with Cain's penalty: "from Thy face shall I be hid" (Gen. 4:14, cf. v. 16). Others think it is to be viewed as declaring the source whence the destruction emanates (Govett) and they link it up with O.T. references to the Day of the Lord which shall come "as a destruction from the Almighty" (Isa. 13:6; Joel 1:15). Whether this "loss of a life of blessedness" be looked upon as a banishment inflicted at Christ's return or as an evil proceeding from Him at that time, makes little difference. The exile, the evil, is said to be everlasting — in contrast to the temporary sufferings of the persecuted saints (vv. 3-6).

The last verse cited is Heb. 2:14 where the word "destroy" represents a still different Greek word, which means not "to put out of being," but "to put out of action." It is also used in Rom. 6:6. What is peculiarly noteworthy in Heb. 2:14 is the declaration that the devil was destroyed through the death of Christ long ago, i.e., he was put out of action with regard to those who believe (as the following verse declares). So, though Satan has been "destroyed," he still continues to exist.

Three verbs are mentioned at the close of Part II which are supposed to be particularly impressive. The first ("burned up") is plainly used metaphorically (Matt. 3:12. II Peter 3:10 is irrelevant, as shown under no. 4, above). The second just as plainly refers to what is temporal ("utterly destroyed from among the people" — not in himself). The last (*apollumi*) is none other than the one considered under nos. 3 and 5 above, where it has been demonstrated to denote something quite different from annihilation.

Part III lists some "Figures and Similes" that illustrate the fate of the wicked (p. 538).

1. "The wicked are likened to combustible materials" — to fat, chaff and stubble. But there is absolutely nothing in the

passages listed to prove that anything more is meant than their complete removal from this earthly scene.

2. "Overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah is type of destruction of wicked." This overthrow is mentioned in II Peter 2:6 and Jude 7 as "an example" — the word used by Peter denoting "a pattern" and that by Jude, "a sample." The meaning is clear: the terrible punishment of these wicked cities serves as a warning to men to avoid the sins that precipitated it. But Jude adds another clause: "suffering [undergoing] the punishment of eternal fire," where the same word for "punishment" is used as that found in II Thess. 1:9.

The Adventists think that this "eternal fire" refers to the fire that consumed the cities with such terrible swiftness. They say it is termed "eternal" because its results are so (p. 539). But the word rendered "suffering" is a present active participle and therefore, refers to something now going on. Jude is manifestly calling attention, first to the fire that reduced the cities of the plain to ashes, and then to the fire which its slain inhabitants are now suffering — the same as that of which Dives complained. This latter is a fire that abides.

In considering Part II we noticed Peter's words about the unrighteous being kept under punishment while awaiting the day of judgment. These words follow immediately after his reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is plain, then, that Peter and Jude are saying one and the same thing: they are both referring to the punishment of the wicked dead.

It is understandable that a superficial reader of the Bible might conclude that the expressions cited in Parts II and III warrant belief in the annihilation of the wicked. But even such a reader should notice other expressions which are just as prominent. Annihilation is certainly not even remotely suggested in those passages wherein Christ spoke of the wicked as being "cast forth into the outer darkness" (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) or simply as "cast forth without" (Luke 13:28, cf. Rev. 22:15). Nor is it so much as faintly suggested in the solemn words of the Sermon on the Mount: "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:27); or in the equally solemn ones of the Olivet Discourse: "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Matt. 25:41); nor yet in those following upon the last: "these shall go away into eternal punishment" (v. 46). In all of these passages the wicked are envisaged as still existing, though excluded from the kingdom and city of God, distanced from the King of that

kingdom and from the citizens of that city. Accordingly, the death and destruction, etc., of the wicked, are such as fit into the framework of their continued existence. As the saved shall inherit or have their part in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:7; 22:19), so the lost shall have their part in Gehenna (ch. 21:8).

Before proceeding, let us observe that wherein Christ disagreed with current teaching, He registered a protest against it. Much of His doctrine was a correction of that of the rabbis (e. g., on the nature of the Kingdom of God and on the use of the Sabbath). Now, "the doctrine of the Eternity of Punishments seems to have been held by the Synagogue throughout the whole first century of our era", says Edersheim (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 792). "The Jews, to whom He [Christ] spoke, believed in Eternal Punishment" (*ibid.* p. 794). Wherein did Christ contradict, correct and condemn this generally accepted idea? In Edersheim's opinion, "the Words of our Lord, as recorded in the Gospels, convey this impression, that there is an eternity of punishment" (*ibid.*, p. 796). Furthermore, he says, "We put aside, as an unhealthy and threatening sign of certain religious movements, the theory, lately broached, of a so-called 'conditional immortality'" (*ibid.*, p. 794).

Part IV of Chapter 42 in *Questions on Doctrine* deals with the equivalent adjectives, "everlasting" and "eternal" (pp. 539-40). It is said that since "eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12) does not mean redemption going on through all eternity, "eternal judgment" (ch. 6:2) cannot mean an unending work of judgment. However, the word for "judgment" is not *krisis* (which would be used to denote a process of judgment) but *krima* (which denotes the execution of the sentence). Now, the execution of a sentence can be either short or long. In this case, it is endless. It is also said that since "eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9) does not denote endless saving, "eternal fire" (Jude 7) cannot denote eternal burning. However, we have shown in our discussion on Part III that this eternal fire does not refer to the past flames of Sodom and Gomorrah but to the present and abiding flames of hell.

Having decided that "eternal" pertains "to the result and not to the process" (p. 507, cf. p. 540), Adventism boldly asserts that "everlasting destruction" and "everlasting punishment" are to be thus understood (p. 506). The former of these we considered under Part II. Let us now consider the latter. In Matt. 25:34 the King-Judge pronounces a benediction on the sheep at His right hand: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Standing in sharp contrast to this is the woe pronounced on the goats at His left hand: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (v. 41). The contrast is best seen when set forth as follows:

Come	Depart
Ye blessed	Ye cursed
inherit the kingdom	into the eternal fire
prepared for you	prepared for the devil and his angels

Let us expand on the second sentence. "Depart" is a reminder of Matt. 7:23: "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (cf. Luke 13:27). As "ye blessed" means "those whom God has blessed," so "ye cursed" means "those who are under His curse." According to the O.T., this latter denotes that which is utterly vile and, therefore, devoted to vengeance.¹²⁷ It is the object of God's unmitigated wrath. The next words define the doom: "into the eternal fire." The Greek article precedes both the noun and the adjective. Broadus says the meaning is: into "that eternal fire which was a familiar thought to the minds of His hearers . . . the [two] great Jewish schools about the time of our Lord did both believe in Gehenna as a place of perpetual punishment for some persons" (on Matt. 25). Finally, the eternal fire is declared to be that which was prepared, not for men but for the devil and his angels, the original rebels against God.

In v. 46, the awful sequel is recorded: "and these shall go away into eternal punishment." The verb form of the Greek for "punishment" occurs in II Peter 2:9 and Acts 4:21. The former of the two was considered in dealing with Part I. Now what is punishment? It is suffering inflicted for wrong. Whatever is not painful, one way or other, to the wrongdoer, is not punishment. When the suffering ceases, the punishment is at an end. How long is this particular punishment to last? Christ answers that it is "eternal punishment." The sentence and the execution agree. The sentence is: "Depart . . . into the eternal fire." The execution reads: "These shall go away into eternal punishment." Eternal punishment in eternal fire is the doom of the wicked as they lie under the curse of God.

But Adventism insists that the "eternal punishment" denotes merely the eternal results of the punishment. We might well ask, which punishment? For Adventists teach a twofold punish-

¹²⁷See Deut. 7:25-26; 27:14-26; Josh. 6:17-26.

ment of the wicked, as my comments at the beginning of this chapter prove. They teach that there will be a particular punishment of the wicked (which will be varied according to their wickedness) and then a general punishment (which will reduce them all to nothingness). According to this scheme, it would seem that the lost will suffer for their sins before they are annihilated. On page 498 we read: "It is the suffering before the second death that can be measured out to fit the extent of the sinner's personal responsibility for his rebellion." Why, then, should the wicked be annihilated? On the other hand, if the second death is the penalty threatened in Eden (pp. 530-1), the sinner should not suffer something terrible in advance of that. Again, Adventism is self-contradictory.

Now this insistence on the part of Adventists that "eternal punishment" means simply that the result of the punishment or punishments is everlasting, is easily tested, for Christ declared that the wicked shall share the fate of the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). But we have already seen what Satan's fate is. It is not utter extinction, when the fire comes down from God out of heaven, as Adventism affirms (p. 506). It is, instead, consignment to the lake of fire where he "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:10). It is this torment his angels fear (Matt. 8:29). The word for "torment" occurs in a number of other places in the Revelation¹²⁸ and indicates, of course, conscious suffering. Clearly the "torment" of Rev. 20:10 is equivalent to the "punishment" of Matt. 25:46. As torment is conscious suffering, so is punishment. It hurts (Rev. 2:11; 9:4, 10, 19). The question to be settled relates to the duration of this punishment or torment. The last words of Rev. 20:10 state that it will endure "forever and ever" — which is equivalent to "eternal" in Matt. 25:46. Thus "eternal punishment" consists in being "tormented forever and ever."

The eternity of the devil's punishment is confirmed by the Biblical revelation concerning the angelical nature which the devil possesses. Christ said that angels are incapable of dying (Luke 20:36). The same idea underlies Heb. 2:9, where the writer indicates that it was in order to be able to die that the Son of God in His incarnation, took, not angelical, but human nature upon Himself. Since Satan possesses a deathless being, his torment must be interminable; and since the wicked will share his doom, their sufferings, too, must never end. For the wrath

¹²⁸See Ch. 9:5; 11:10; 14:10, 11; 18:7, 10, 15.

of God to abide on them, they themselves must abide (John 3:36). Eternal sin (Mark 3:29) brings an eternal suffering.

Part V takes up the expressions "forever" and "forever and ever" (pp. 540-2). The former of these is used variously—sometimes denoting a limited period (e.g., Exod. 12:17; 21:6) and sometimes an unlimited one.¹²⁹ The latter of the two ("forever and ever") invariably denotes endlessness, according to such standard Greek lexicons as Thayer's and Abbott-Smith's.¹³⁰

Commenting on "tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:10), Dr. Hovey says: "The Greek words in this clause are perfectly unequivocal. The idea of eternity is expressed with all the plainness with which the most perfect language ever spoken could give it; and we are unacquainted with any form of speech that would more surely convey to a mind familiar with the Greek tongue the idea of conscious suffering than the one here used. To attempt any modification of the *prima facie* import of such language seems to us a perilous tampering with the Word of God" (*The State of the Impenitent Dead*, p. 83). Bishop Moule, dealing with the words "forever and ever," as found in Phil. 4:20, remarks: "The idea conveyed by the phrase here is of circles of duration consisting of, embracing, other circles *ad infinitum*." Accordingly, the devil's being "tormented forever and ever" denotes his endless suffering.

The Adventists plead that this expression does not signify endlessness in Rev. 19:3 (p. 542). But it is undeniable that it does so in at least nine cases out of the twelve in the Revelation. Is it safe, think they, to construe the phrase in Ch. 14:11 and 20:10—relating to the punishment of the wicked and of Satan—according to one possible exception out of the other ten, rather than according to the nine indisputable instances? Such procedure can only come of deep-seated prejudice. Moreover, one of their chief advocates, H. H. Dobney (p. 583), "hesitates to deny the eternal misery of Satan" (Hovey, *loc. cit.*, p. 83). In other words, Dobney is not sure of Ch. 20:10. But since the same terms used there ("tormented," "fire and brimstone," "day and night" and "forever and ever") are also used in Ch. 14:10-11, another text must be in doubt too. This leaves only Ch. 19:3, which then proves useless to the Adventist cause. However, even

¹²⁹E.g., Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28.

¹³⁰This expression occurs 12 times in the Revelation: Ch. 1:18; 4:9, 10; 5:13; 7:12; 10:6; 11:15; 14:11; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5. It also occurs in Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; I Tim. 1:17; II Tim. 4:18; I Peter 4:11.

that text cannot be considered an exception when carefully studied. The symbolical harlot—spoken of as burned, according to O.T. practice (Gen. 38:24; Lev. 21:9)—represents people who do not worship God but idols. Her smoke going up forever and ever denotes their punishment, begun in time but continuing without end. Thus the wicked, sharing the devil's doom, will, like him, suffer endlessly.

It is also stated that this tormenting of Satan will go on "day and night." The same expression is used of the wicked in Rev. 14:10-11, where we read "and they have no rest day and night." The idea conveyed is that the torment which is endless, has no respite in it; it goes on continually. The same expression is employed in Rev. 4:8 of the four living creatures in their adoration of God and in Ch. 7:15 of the innumerable company of the redeemed in their priestly service, both of which take place in heaven. Neither in the case of the suffering parties nor in that of the blessed ones are the day and night to be taken literally: the expression only represents continuousness. Hence, the eternal punishment of the lost means a punishment, an infliction of pain, that is interminable and uninterrupted. This is the "sorer punishment" warned against in Heb. 10:29.

Thus Matt. 25:46, when speaking of "eternal punishment," means something more than an everlasting result of punishment. It means that the punishment itself is everlasting. The same adjective is used twice: as the sheep go into eternal life, so the goats go away into eternal punishment. Broadus comments: "It will at once be taken for granted, by any unprejudiced and docile mind, that the punishment of the wicked will last as long as the life of the righteous." Govett says: "It is . . . only the promptings of an uncandid and partial heart which can construe the 'life' as eternal happiness in its full sense, but the 'punishment' as woe coming to an end. If 'eternal life' be endless existence in joy, 'eternal punishment' in fire is everlasting existence in misery." Compare Dan. 12:2.

Why did Christ not employ antithetical terms here, placing "eternal life" and "eternal death" over against each other? Perhaps because "eternal death" might have been easily construed to mean annihilation. "Eternal punishment" naturally denotes eternal suffering and so avoids the ambiguity. It is worth noticing that a similar antithesis occurs in Rev. 20:15, where we read of "the book of life" and "the lake of fire" (instead of "the lake of death").

Dean Alford, in his "Greek New Testament," has this to say:

"Observe the same epithet ['eternal'] is used in the original for punishment and life — which are here contraries — for the life spoken of here is not bare existence (which would have annihilation for its opposite) but blessedness and reward (to which punishment and misery are antagonistic terms)."¹³¹

Part VI gives us the major reasons why Adventists reject the doctrine of eternal torment (p. 543).

1. "Because everlasting life is a gift from God (Rom. 6:23). The wicked do not possess this — they 'shall not see life' (John 3:36); 'no murderer has eternal life abiding in him' (I John 3:15)." So say the Adventists.

This argument is founded on the error of identifying life with existence. Its answer has already been given in my comments on the first section of Part II.

2. "Because eternal torment would perpetuate and immortalize sin, suffering and woe and contradict, we believe, divine revelation which envisions the time when these things shall be no more (Rev. 21:4)." As to the former part of this sentence, Adventism allows itself to indulge in some subjectivism. It is our business to consider simply what God has revealed on this matter. As to the latter part, Rev. 21:4 only envisions the time when sin, suffering and woe are forever excluded from the experience of the people of God. Verse 8 presents the rest of the picture — the lake of fire for the wicked.

3. "Because it seems to us to provide a plague spot in the universe of God throughout eternity and would seem to indicate that it is impossible for God Himself ever to abolish it." Again, the former part of the sentence is mere subjectivism. The latter part is unworthy of Adventism itself, which acknowledges the divine omnipotence. The many evils that now exist are no argument against God's ability.

4. "Because in our thinking, it would detract from the attribute of love as seen in the character of God and postulates the concept of a wrath which is never appeased." This thinking overlooks the fact that God's wrath is not vindictive but purely vindicative. It is not of the nature of personal resentment but is entirely judicial in its character. A loving-hearted judge can still sentence a criminal to the penitentiary.

¹³¹Cf. Alford's comments on Rev. 14:10-11, where he speaks of "everlasting torment." Yet the Dean is cited on p. 583 as a champion of "conditional immortality," that is, of the view that only the godly will exist forever. What is more, his *Greek N. T.* is said to support the doctrine, though no quotation is given.

5. "Because the Scriptures teach that the atoning work of Christ is to 'put away sin' (Heb. 9:26) — first from the individual and ultimately from the universe. The full fruition of Christ's sacrificial, atoning work will be seen not only in a redeemed people but in a restored heaven and earth." To this we reply that Adventism has yet to prove that the second branch of this thinking is Scriptural: that sin is eventually to be put away from the entire universe. Let it be observed anew that the description of the eternal state (Rev. 21:1-8, cf. 22:15) contains mention of the Lake of fire.

Such are Adventism's present-day arguments in support of its contention that there is no such thing as everlasting woe. There is nothing new in them; they have all been answered long ago. The charge which Adventists make that our doctrine has been derived from paganism is simply fantastic. Dr. Hovey, a full century ago, examined this charge with his characteristic thoroughness and then said: "We may now close this survey by stating the result of our examination in these words: The records of the primitive church, prior to A.D. 200, afford no evidence that a belief in the endless existence of the soul was brought over from pagan philosophy into the creed of the church, and no evidence that the early teachers and defenders of Christianity understood the impenitent to be threatened by the Word of God with extinction of conscious being as the penalty of sin hereafter" (*The State of the Impenitent Dead*, p. 141).

In dealing with the introduction to Ch. 42 of *Questions on Doctrine*, we observed that, according to Adventism itself, "there will be degrees of punishment" (p. 534). On p. 498 we read, "Justice demands that great sinners be punished more severely than those whose sins were of a lesser nature. True, all sinners will be punished with eternal death, but eventual extinction can hardly be conceived of as a graduated punishment. It is the suffering before the second death that can be measured out to fit the extent of the sinner's personal responsibility for rebellion." However, Adventism provides no opportunity for such varied penalties to be inflicted and borne. For it teaches that all past sinners either ceased to be at death or sank into a state of unconsciousness. It also teaches that none of them will be either recreated or resurrected until the close of the millennium, and that as soon as they live again, they will be deceived by Satan into assaulting the beloved city "in an endeavor to overthrow the kingdom of God" (p. 505). But, forthwith, the devil with his hosts of evil spirits and the wicked of all ages will

be blotted out of existence (pp. 505-6. See also *Bible Readings for the Home*, pp. 320-1; *Belief and Work of Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 75).

Thus there is no time in the Adventist program when graduated punishments can be administered. There is no opportunity for punishing the worst sinner one whit more than the best. Herod the Great, Judas, Caiaphas, Hitler and Stalin have no more to fear than decent, kind, generous sinners have. While advocating differing degrees of punishment, Adventism rules out any occasion for inflicting them. Once more, it has hopelessly contradicted itself.

Perhaps the Adventists will appeal to Mrs. White's words in *Early Writings* (pp. 292-5), quoted near the close of the previous chapter, as indisputable proof that they really do believe in degrees of future punishment. If so, they are now referred to the refutation of her interpretation which immediately follows that quotation. Careful exegesis forbids association of the lake of fire in any way with the fire coming down from God out of heaven in Rev. 20:9. *Questions on Doctrine* does not help matters when it says that the "graduated punishment . . . is the suffering *before* the second death." Since the second death is expressly identified with the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14, l.c.), then the wicked would have to undergo their varied degrees of punishment before they were cast into that place. How will Adventism support that view?

It seems appropriate to conclude this chapter by making a quotation from Dr. Haldeman, as he comments on Christ's words about Judas: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matt. 26:24). Dr. Haldeman says: "Never to have been born means never to have come into existence. If death [either the first or the second] means going out of existence, then never to have been born and to die are equivalent conditions; they mean the same thing — nonexistence. Why, then, did the Lord say it would have been good not to come into existence? Why did He not say (seeing the man was born and there was no use in wasting regrets over his birth) — why did He not say, 'It will be good for that man when he dies, for when he dies, he will then be just as if he had never been born — nonexistent?' Why did He not say that? If death means nonexistence, this is what He ought to have said. To say anything else — if death means nonexistence — was utterly meaningless.

"But if death does not mean the end of existence; if death means an eternity of condition; if in this conditioned eternity of being, Judas is to suffer for his deed of betrayal, then it is comprehensible why the Son of God should say it would have been good for that man if he had never been born — if he had never come into existence. On no other basis is the 'Woe to that man' of any intelligent force — because he would suffer no more than any other man who should cease to exist" (*Millennial Dawnism*, pp. 26-7).

Mrs. White's Visions

No treatment of Adventism can be deemed comprehensive which omits consideration of Mrs. White's visions.¹³² All of the inspiration attributed to her as a prophetess (see chapter I above), is based on this foundation. "If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream" (Num. 12:6). Elder G. I. Butler therefore declared that "the exercise of the gift of prophecy can be nothing else than having visions from the Lord" (*Review and Herald Supplement*, Aug. 14, 1883, p. 11).

Mr. Butler goes on to point out the vital connection existent between Mrs. White's visions and Adventism. "The blessings to this cause from its connection with the visions, have been many and great" (*ibid.*). He affirms that the union and strength of Adventism are to be attributed "to the influence of these despised visions more than to anything else but the Word of God. . . . They have exerted a leading influence among us from the start. They have first called attention to every important move we have made in advance. Our publishing work, the health and temperance movement, the College, and the cause of advanced education, the missionary enterprise, and many other important points, have owed their efficiency largely to this influence" (*ibid.*).

Butler consequently terms the visions "an essential part of the work itself" and adds: "If you give up the visions, you will soon give up the messages, and other truths. . . . nothing is surer than this, that this message and the visions belong together, and stand or fall together. This has been the case from the commencement, and will be to the end. . . . I can easily see how

¹³²James White informs us (in 1868): "She has probably had, during the past twenty-three years, between one and two hundred visions. These have been given her under almost every variety of circumstances, yet maintaining a wonderful similarity; the most apparent change being, that of late years they have grown less frequent, but more comprehensive. She has been taken off in vision most frequently when bowed in prayer" (*Life Incidents*, p. 272).

a person who has no faith in the movement we are engaged in, can cast aside the visions, but can see no reason or good sense in one's doing so who believes the message to be of God" (*ibid.*, p. 12).

The same estimate of the close relation between the visions and Adventism is expressed by W. A. Spicer, another president of the General Conference (1922-30). In his book on *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, he shows the effect of the Spirit of Prophecy on the Movement's "spiritual upbuilding" (ch. 8), on its progress as "an organized movement" (ch. 9), on its "development of the publishing work" (ch. 10), on its "building up of a system of Christian education" (ch. 11), on its "health and temperance and medical missionary activity" (ch. 12), and on its "world program" (ch. 13).

In harmony with this statement are the words of F. D. Nichol, who, writing in 1951, said: "No one can read the history of this Advent people without being repeatedly and forcefully impressed with the fact that it has ever been the counsels of Mrs. White, as she spoke by inspiration, that have guided and steadied the movement. . . . The thousands of pages of Mrs. White's writings clearly establish how great a part she played in creating the policies and directing the course of the Advent movement. . . . we had a frail handmaiden of the Lord in our midst who declared that by visions from God she saw what we should do and how we should plan for the future" (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 23-4).

All three of these men might have added that "the Spirit of Prophecy" played a very important part in the formulation of Adventist doctrine, as the quotations from *Testimonies for the Church*, Series B and *Gospel Workers*, made at the close of my first chapter, demonstrate. Years before these leaders were writing, Uriah Smith wrote his book on *Objections to the Visions Answered*, wherein he declared there were only two classes of people who had criticized them, viz., Adventists who refused to accept correction through the visions, and non-Adventists who hate the truth of Adventism. The latter, he said, "attack the visions as the most sure and effectual way of hindering the progress of that truth. In this they acknowledge the efficiency of the visions in advancing this work. They know them to be one of the great elements of its strength and prosperity" (quoted in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 14, 1883, p. 13).

In view of this vital connection between Mrs. White's visions and Adventism, it is manifestly necessary to discuss them before

concluding this book. I shall not deride them. Neither shall I hold up to ridicule those who sincerely believe in them. However, I shall aim to deal impartially with them, as I find the subject presented in the literature of Adventists themselves, including that produced by Mrs. White.

Adventists have strenuously maintained, and this they maintain to this day, that Mrs. White's visions are not to be attributed to the state of either her mind or her body, nor to the influence, either conscious or unconscious, of her associates. In brief, they deny that they are traceable to any natural cause or causes, whether subjective or objective. This means, then, that they attribute them to a supernatural source.

1. The very first vision that Ellen G. Harmon had is a case in point.¹³³ James White argues for its supernatural origin in *A Word to the "Little Flock"* (1847), where he says that "when she received her first vision, Dec. 1844, she and all the band in Portland, Maine (where her parents then resided), had given up the midnight cry, and shut door, as being in the past. It was then that the Lord shew [showed] her in vision, the error into which she and the band in Portland had fallen. She then related her vision to the band, and about sixty confessed their error and acknowledged their 7th month experience to be the work of God" (p. 22).

L. E. Froom, a prominent Adventist of our day, comments thus: "It is to be particularly noted that Ellen's first revelation could not be accounted for as in any wise springing subjectively from her personal beliefs or that of any of her friends or associates in Portland. Rather, it was their complete opposite. She and they, like the Millerite leaders, had previously come to feel that the Midnight Cry movement must have been a tragic mistake. The very fact that Jesus had not come was taken as evidence that their time calculation of the 2300 years, as ending on October 22, had been in error. But in the vision the Midnight Cry was declared instead to be a brilliant light, like the penetrating beam from a giant searchlight — an abiding truth which was

¹³³Its date seems uncertain. James White says in one place that "it was but a few weeks after the passing of the time [Oct. 22] in 1844" (*Life Incidents*, p. 271); in another, he declares that it "occurred in the month of December, 1844" (*Life Sketches*, p. 327). Mrs. White, in a letter to Joseph Bates, dated July 13, 1847, and also in *Experience and Views*, published in 1851, likewise places it in Dec. 1844 (*Life Sketches*, p. 104; *Early Writings*, p. 13); in another place she says: "I had no vision until 1845" (*Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 73; see also James White, *Life Sketches*, p. 221).

to illuminate the path of the advent people all the way to the city of God. This was accepted. And the fact that it served to change her own personal belief, as well as that of others, is strong evidence that it did not spring from her own consciousness" (*Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 982-3).¹³⁴

If James White and L. E. Froom are correct in saying that the contents of Mrs. White's first vision were not derived from herself or her associates, then they must, indeed, have been derived from a supernatural source.

According to Mr. White's account, Ellen G. Harmon and the other Adventists in Portland had given up "the midnight cry and shut door" sometime between Oct. 22 and December of 1844. The reference is to the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). The going forth of the virgins to meet the bridegroom (v. 1) was said to represent the general announcement by the Millerites of Christ's return, down to the spring of 1844 — the close of the Jewish year 1843, during which He was expected to come. The tarrying of the bridegroom, which occasioned the slumber and sleep of the virgins (v. 5), was believed to signify the period immediately following the disappointment of the spring, which issued in a condition of spiritual stupor among the Adventists. The cry at midnight, "Behold the bridegroom cometh," was thought to have its fulfillment in the proclamation, begun the following July, that Christ was to appear on Oct. 22. The shutting of the door, which was to occur when the bridegroom had come and the wise virgins had gone in with him to the marriage, was held to denote the closing of the opportunity of salvation to all sinners, when Christ had returned.¹³⁵

Listen to Mrs. White herself on this subject. In *Great Controversy* she says: "After the passing of the time when the Saviour was expected, they still believed His coming to be near; they held that they had reached an important crisis, and that the work of Christ as man's intercessor before God, had ceased. It appeared to them to be taught in the Bible, that man's probation would close a short time before the actual coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. This seemed evident from those scriptures which point to a time when men will seek, knock, and

¹³⁴Mr. Froom's comment mentions only the midnight cry; it says nothing about the shut door (cf. A. G. Daniells, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, p. 271). But the two things go together.

¹³⁵James White, *Life Incidents*, pp. 109-10, 164-5, 185-91; F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and her Critics*, pp. 162-4; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 816-18; G. C., p. 429.

cry at the door of mercy, and it will not be opened. And it was a question with them whether the date to which they had looked for the coming of Christ might not rather mark the beginning of this period which was to immediately precede his coming. Having given the warning of the Judgment near, they felt that their work for the world was done, and they lost their burden of soul for the salvation of sinners, while the bold and blasphemous scoffing of the ungodly seemed to them another evidence that the Spirit of God had been withdrawn from the rejectors of his mercy. All this confirmed them in the belief that probation had ended, or, as they then expressed it, 'the door of mercy was shut' " (p. 429). In this connection, we should recollect Mrs. White's words to Eli Curtis in 1847: "The Lord has shown me in vision, that Jesus rose up, and shut the door, and entered the Holy of Holies, at the 7th month, 1844" (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 12).

When, therefore, Mr. White says that the group in Portland gave up "the midnight cry and shut door," he means that it no longer believed that the proclamation that had been made about Christ's return had been a fulfillment of the parable, nor that the door of salvation had been closed on Oct. 22. Mr. Nichol expresses this clearly: "The 'band in Portland' . . . had decided that nothing happened, in fulfillment of prophecy, on Oct. 22, 1844. In other words, that the midnight cry and the shutting of the door were not 'in the past,' but were events still to take place. Hence their '7th month experience' [referring to Oct. 22 in the Jewish calendar] had not been of God."¹³⁶

Furthermore, Mr. White tells us that Ellen Harmon's vision showed the Portland band its "error" in giving up "the midnight cry and shut door." After she had related her vision, about sixty confessed their "error" and "acknowledged their 7th month experience to be the work of God." Consequently, their proclamation about Oct. 22 was again considered valid and the door of salvation was again thought to be closed. Thus Ellen Harmon's vision showed the Portland band that there was no more hope for sinners. F. D. Nichol says: "James White declares that Mrs. White's vision caused them to confess their 'error' in the timing of these two events" (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 177). Accordingly, they no longer considered "the midnight-cry and shut door" to be yet future, but already past. Yet Mr. Nichol

¹³⁶Ellen G. White and her Critics, p. 177, cf. pp. 175-6; see L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 829-31, 838-9.

would have us think that Mrs. White never believed that there was no more salvation for sinners (*ibid.*, p. 238). He does admit that "in the years immediately following 1844, they restricted His [Christ's] service to the household of faith, which was 'still within the reach of mercy and salvation' — *Review and Herald*, Dec. 1850, p. 14" (*ibid.*, p. 176, cf. pp. 179, 181, 188, 190, 194, 196-9). "The household of faith" denotes those who had been in the 1844 movement — no others. He also acknowledges that James White had not abandoned "the shut-door view in the summer of 1851" and that "*Review and Herald* continued to present the shut-door theory beyond the summer of 1851" (*ibid.*, pp. 268, 280). In fact, he thinks the periodical probably did not drop the theory entirely until about the middle of 1852 (*ibid.*, pp. 196, 615). A. W. Spalding, in *Captains of the Host*¹³⁷ concurs: "Joseph Bates, James White and Ellen Harmon were, at the beginning, believers in the shut door. . . . These three maintained the doctrine longer than most, until increasing light caused them to abandon it in 1852" (p. 149). It is certain that the Adventists' publications of 1849-52 present this view.¹³⁸

Now the contents of Mrs. White's vision harmonize with Mr. White's statement concerning it in *A Word to the "Little Flock."* It is a vision of the Advent people travelling on a straight and narrow path high above the dark world. "On this path," says Mrs. White, "the Advent people were travelling to the City which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the Midnight Cry. This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the City, they were safe. But soon some

¹³⁷Listed on page 636.

¹³⁸In *Present Truth*, see, e.g., David Arnold's article, "The Shut Door Explained" (Dec., 1849); George W. Holt's letter (*ibid.*); Mrs. White's letter (Mar., 1850); James White's remarks on "The Shut Door" (May, 1850); and Joseph Bates' letter (Nov., 1850). In *R. and H.*, Vol. I, see Joseph Bates' articles on "The Laodicean Church" (Nov., 1850), "Midnight Cry in the Past" (Dec., 1850) and "Duty to our Children" (Jan., 1851); also the letters of E. P. Butler (father of G. I. Butler) in the two issues for Jan., 1851. In *R. and H.*, Vol. II, see another article by Joseph Bates (Aug., 1851) on "Our Labor in the Philadelphia and Laodicean Churches." In the issue for Mar. 2, 1852, J. B. Cook, who later left Adventism, has an article on "The True Issue," in which he insists that the door was already shut (p. 98, col. 2). *Present Truth* was published by James White, and *R. and H.* by Joseph Bates, Samuel W. Rhodes, J. N. Andrews and James White.

grew weary, and they said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising his glorious right arm, and from his arm came a glorious light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted Hallelujah!

"Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled, and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected" (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 14).

The message is plain. All the wicked world had been rejected by God; and those Millerites who, when Christ did not come as predicted, irrevocably judged that God had not authored the message about His return on Oct. 22 — they too were rejected; and worst of all, both the world and the recanting Millerites were in such a desperate condition that salvation was impossible to them. They could not get up onto the path leading to the celestial city.

This idea is set forth in two other places in the 24-page booklet which contains the vision. First, Mr. White presents an article on "The Seven Last Plagues" (pp. 1-4), in which he says: "From the ascension to the shutting of the door, Oct. 1844, Jesus stood with wide-spread arms of love and mercy; ready to receive and plead the cause of every sinner who would come to God by Him" — which clearly implies that after Oct. 1844, Christ did no more pleading for sinners.¹³⁹

Secondly, Joseph Bates wrote some "Remarks," published on page 21, wherein he says that he believes Mrs. White's work was "given to comfort and strengthen His [God's] 'scattered,' 'torn,' and 'pealed' [peeled] people, since the closing up of our work for the world in October, 1844." (Similarly, in the *Review and Herald*, Vol. II, p. 13, Mr. Bates wrote: "We understand that He was a Mediator for all the world . . . from the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, until . . . the fall of 1844, . . . At this point

¹³⁹In keeping with this notion, Mr. White presently goes on to say: "I think the following is a prophecy which has been fulfilling since Oct. 1844," and then he quotes Isa. 59:14-16a. In quoting v. 16a ("and He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor"), he italicized the last word.

of time, then, the door was shut against the Sardis Church [Protestant bodies] and *the wicked world.*" Note that these last words are the same as those used by Ellen G. Harmon in her account of the vision.)

In the light of these statements, made by the other two founders of Adventism, the only fair construction to be put upon Mrs. White's words is that all non-Adventists had been rejected of God forever.

There is another item in the booklet (*A Word to the "Little Flock"*) that is pertinent to our subject. I refer to Mrs. White's sanction of Mr. Crosier's article which had appeared on Feb. 7, 1846, in the *Day-Star Extra* (mentioned in the historical account at the beginning of Chapter VIII). It may be recalled that a letter of hers, written to Eli Curtis on Apr. 21, 1847, is reproduced in the booklet, in which she stated that she had had a vision from the Lord, more than a year before, showing that Crosier should prepare this article. Therefore, she said; "I feel fully authorized by the Lord to recommend that Extra, to every saint" (p. 12). But, Mr. Crosier himself, seven years after its appearance, declared that he had written his article "for the express purpose of explaining and proving the doctrines of the 'shut door.'" This declaration was made in the columns of *The Harbinger* early in 1853, and was commented on, but not challenged by, James White in an editorial note on page 176 of *Review and Herald* for Mar. 17 of that year (F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 614). The reason White did not challenge Crosier's assertion is evident from the very contents of the article, for, as we have already seen, it maintained that Christ's priestly ministry in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary had to do with the forgiveness of sins while His ministry in the second had to do with blotting them out. It is, therefore, obvious that the position taken in the article was that the era for pardon ended on Oct. 22, 1844 when Christ passed from the holy place to the holy of holies.

Now the significant fact is that later Mrs. White denied that she had ever had a vision about the door of mercy being shut. Let us consider her own statements.

a) On Aug. 24, 1874, she wrote to J. N. Loughborough, one of the SDA pioneers: "With my brethren and sisters, after the time passed in forty-four, I did believe no more sinners would be converted" (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, p. 74). In 1883 she confirmed this in her *Explanation of Early Statements*, by saying: "For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in com-

mon with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world" (*ibid.*, p. 63).¹⁴⁰

We have already seen that she, with the Portland band, gave up this view prior to her first vision, and that it was that vision which returned them to it. However, in her letter to Mr. Loughborough, just referred to, she stated: "I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted."¹⁴¹ I suppose it would be technically correct to say that the subject of the first vision was the journey of the Advent people, rather than the hopelessness of recanting Millerites and of sinners generally; but it is certain that the latter idea is present.

b) In her *Explanation of Early Statements*, Mrs. White stultifies herself by saying that "all the wicked world which God had rejected" meant only such persons as had steadily resisted the Adventist proclamation from the beginning, together with those who had later renounced it.¹⁴² This was the revised shut-door doctrine (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, pp. 63-4).

This revised view of "the shut door" was a part of the new interpretation put upon the parable of the ten virgins, sometime after Oct. 22, 1844. The Adventists thenceforth declared that the parable has nothing to do with the second advent. The midnight cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," was still held to be the proclamation made in the last months preceding Oct. 22, but the marriage which took place within, was said to signify the wedding of Christ and the New Jerusalem in heaven on that date. Accordingly, the shutting of the door was no longer taken to denote the closing of probation for sinners, but was henceforth

¹⁴⁰In 1882 the three earliest of Mrs. White's books were combined in one volume and published under the title *Early Writings*. This induced Elder A. C. Long, of Marion, Iowa, to write an attack on Mrs. White and Adventism. The *R. and H. Supplement* of Aug. 14, 1883 was a rejoinder. During that same year, Mrs. White prepared this "Explanation of Early Statements," though it was not published for half a century (F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, p. 92). It now forms Ch. 5 of *Selected Messages*, Bk. I, (pp. 59-76). Cf. *R. and H.*, June 11, 1861; James White, *Life Incidents*, p. 186; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, p. 830. 3f.

¹⁴¹Cf. Uriah Smith's reckless words: "This we deny *in toto*," viz., that Mrs. White "saw in vision that there was no more salvation for sinners after 1844" (*R. and H. Extra*, Dec. 1887). The denial is constantly made.

¹⁴²E.g., *Earliest SDA Periodicals*, Preface, pp. 8-10; *Present Truth*, pp. 41-6, 78-9; *Advent Review Extra*, pp. 2-3; James White, *Life Incidents*, pp. 200-3; Mrs. White, G. C., pp. 426-7; *Selected Messages*, Bk. I, pp. 62-4; F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and her Critics*, pp. 175-82; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, pp. 830-2.

said to mean the rejection of those who either resisted or renounced Adventism.¹⁴³

However, such an interpretation of the parable is exegetically impossible, as anyone may see by referring to the account of Christ's Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24-25). After the declaration that the time of the second advent is unknown (ch. 24:36), there are four sections relating to this truth, each of which stresses the need of watchfulness. The last of these consists of the parable under consideration (ch. 24:37-42; 24:43-44; 24:45-51; 25:1-13). So the denial that this parable relates to Christ's return is a violation of the whole preceding context. It is likewise a violation of the succeeding context, for Ch. 25:14-30 pertains to the servants' labor during their Master's absence and to His settlement with them when He returns; and Ch. 25:31-46 expressly concerns a judgment to occur "when the Son of Man shall come in His glory."

The verb "to come" (*erchomai*), which is used in Matt. 16:27 and 23:39 to denote Christ's return, is used nine times in this discourse (ch. 24:30, 42, 43, 44, 46; 25:10, 19, 27, 31). It occurs in each of the four sections listed above, and therefore in the one comprising this very parable (ch. 25:10; the best Greek texts omit it from v. 6). Furthermore, this verb expresses the same idea as the noun for "coming" (*parousia*), which occurs four times in Ch. 24 for the second advent (vv. 3, 27, 37, 39).¹⁴⁴ Thus the coming of the bridegroom refers to Christ's return, and not to anything that is supposed to have happened in 1844. The shutting of the door, therefore, is yet future, contingent on that return. If we compare Luke 13:25, the only other place where the Gospels mention shutting the door, it will be seen that the phrase refers to the future.¹⁴⁵

c) Again, Mrs. White, after acknowledging that she, in common with the advent body, had held that the door of mercy had forever closed on the world on Oct. 22, says, in her *Explanation of Early Statements*: "This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position" (*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, p. 63). According to this statement,

¹⁴³It is not intimated in the Bible that the five foolish virgins were characterized by any stubbornness; they simply had not made necessary preparations.

¹⁴⁴The noun is so used elsewhere in the N.T. (I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; II Thess. 2:1, 8; James 5:7, 8; II Peter 3:4; I John 2:28).

¹⁴⁵See vv. 25-28; cf. Matt. 7:21-23; 13:40-42, 47-50; 24:51; 25:30.

made in 1883, almost forty years after the event, the "error" corrected by her first vision was that of believing that the door of mercy had been shut on Oct. 22; but according to Mr. White's account, published in 1847, within eighteen months of the time, the "error" corrected was that of believing that that door had not been shut then.

In the course of time, as it became obvious that sinners were still being converted, Mrs. White was compelled to disown the "revelation" received in her first vision. This proves that she no longer believed in its divine origin, and so, for the third time, she changed her mind. Immediately after Oct. 22, 1844, she thought the door of mercy was closed. Before her first vision, she came to think it was still open. That vision caused her to return to the view that it had been closed on that date. Later, she concluded that it was still open, after all.

Now if James White, L. E. Froom and Adventists generally are correct in maintaining that this vision is not traceable to natural causes, and is, therefore, of supernatural origin, then, seeing Mrs. White herself tacitly admitted that that supernatural origin was not divine, it necessarily follows that it was Satanic. As a matter of fact, she declared in one of her books that "The testimonies either bear the signet of God or that of Satan" (*Testimonies*, Vol. V, p. 98). In another she said: "My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God or of the devil" (*ibid.*, p. 671; cf. Vol. IV, p. 230). Accordingly, Mrs. White and her followers have bitterly resented and vigorously opposed the naturalistic explanation of the visions advanced by D. M. Canright and adopted by many subsequent writers. F. D. Nichol, in his apologetic, devotes no less than four chapters to refuting this view (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 26-86).

In *Experience and Views*, published in 1851, Mrs. White says in the opening chapter, "My First Vision": "I was sometimes tempted to doubt my own experience" (*Early Writings*, p. 22; cf. *Life Sketches*, p. 89). Sixteen years later, we find her confessing: "In the night I have awakened my husband, saying, 'I am afraid that I shall become an infidel'" (*Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 597). Does this mental state accord with the possession of the gift of prophecy? It does not. John Owen, in his monumental work on the Holy Spirit, points out that, in the case of persons inspired, the Scriptures show that there was "that light and evidence of Himself . . . as left them liable to no suspicion

whether their minds were under His conduct and influence or no. . . . His acting of the minds of the holy men of old . . . gave them infallible assurance that it was Himself alone by whom they were acted. Jer. 23:28. . . . it is impossible but that, in these extraordinary workings, there was such an impression of Himself, His holiness and authority, left on their minds, as did secure them from all fear of delusion" (Owen's Works, Vol. III, p. 133). We find no Biblical person, who was inspired, ever doubting that his utterances were of God. Accordingly, Mrs. White's doubts disprove her divine inspiration.

2. Another instance in which Mrs. White's vision was manifestly not of divine origin is the one defended by F. M. Wilcox in Ch. 13 of *The Testimony of Jesus* (1934) and by F. D. Nichol in Ch. 8 of *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* (1951). At the conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan, in May 1856,¹⁴⁶ Mrs. White, at an early morning meeting, reported a vision which she had just had: "I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.'" ¹⁴⁷

In order to understand this prediction, it is necessary to know that Mrs. White believed, in common with many able expositors, that the seven last plagues (Rev. 15-16) would be poured out on the living wicked immediately before the second advent (Rev. 19:11-16).¹⁴⁸ She, therefore, declared here that some of those present at the conference would die before these plagues were poured out ("food for worms"), while the rest would either suffer the plagues or "be translated to heaven at the second coming, without seeing death" (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II, p. 208).

A good deal is made of the fulfillment of the first part of the vision. Here is Mrs. White's account: "Sr. Bonfoey remarked to a sister as we left the meeting-house, 'I feel impressed that I am one that will soon be food for worms.' The conference closed Monday. Thursday Sr. B. sat at the table with us apparently well. She then went to the office as usual, to help get off the

¹⁴⁶The precise dates are somewhat in doubt. Mr. Wilcox says it was "following a conference session, May 27, 28, 1856, which had just closed." May 27, 28, 1856, fell on a Tuesday and Wednesday, but Mrs. White says: "The conference closed Monday" (*The Testimony of Jesus*, p. 109; *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II, p. 209).

¹⁴⁷*Testimonies*, Vol. I, pp. 131-2; James White, *Life Sketches*, p. 321; Mrs. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II, p. 208.

¹⁴⁸Rev. 17:1-19:10 is plainly parenthetical.

paper. In about two hours I was sent for. Sr. B. had been suddenly taken very ill. My health had been very poor, yet I hastened to suffering Clara. In a few hours she seemed better. The next morning we had her brought home in a large chair, and she was laid upon her own bed from which she was never to rise. Her symptoms became alarming and we had fears that a tumor, which had troubled her for nearly ten years, had broken inwardly. It was so, and mortification was doing its work. Friday about seven o'clock she fell asleep."¹⁴⁹

What about the non-fulfillment of the rest of the vision? Messrs. Wilcox and Nichol (each, successively, editor of *Review and Herald*) attempt to vindicate Mrs. White on the ground that inspired predictions are conditional. (See note 177 below.) They quote Jer. 18:7-10: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." A number of Biblical illustrations of this principle are cited by the editors, and Mrs. White is quoted in support of the idea that the time of Christ's return is contingent on the faithfulness of the Adventists. Had they not been remiss, that event would now be in the past.¹⁵⁰

According to Wilcox and Nichol, then, we are to conclude that the evil pronounced against the one group (that of being subjected to the seven last plagues) did not come to pass because those comprising it turned from their evil; and that the good promised to the other group (that of translation at Christ's return, without seeing death) failed to be realized because those comprising it did that which was evil in God's sight.

If these two groups exchanged positions, what one did would cancel out the other's deeds. The same two groups that existed when the prophecy was made would still exist, although not composed of the same persons. Accordingly, the prophecy would

¹⁴⁹*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II, pp. 208-9. See also James White, *Life Sketches*, pp. 321-2; Mrs. White, *Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 132, note.

¹⁵⁰*Selected Messages*, Bk. I, pp. 67-9 (1883); *R. and H.*, p. 629 (issue for Oct. 6, 1896); *Testimonies*, Vol. VI, p. 450 (some time during 1891-1900); *General Conference Bulletin*, 35th Session, p. 9 (reporting a sermon preached Mar. 28, 1903.)

remain in full force! Thus, the endeavor to account for the failure of Mrs. White's prediction of 1856 is worthless, and the failure itself demonstrates that the prediction did not emanate from God.

3. It is needless to pursue further the analysis of individual visions, for the two we have examined sufficiently illustrate their fallacious character. But we should make this general observation before leaving the subject: that inasmuch as they are pervaded by unscriptural doctrines — as, I submit, has been demonstrated in the foregoing chapters — they cannot be derived from the same source as Holy Writ; they cannot be of God. Consequently, Mrs. White was deluded in thinking that they were.

But it has been divinely declared that "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (I John 4:2), and it is urged by Adventists that Mrs. White made this very confession. However, there is more in this text than appears on its surface. For one thing, the confession required is not merely verbal, for we read in the Gospels of evil spirits bearing witness to Christ. It was evident to all men that He was *human*; but the demons called Him "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24), "the Son of God" (ch. 3:11) and "the Son of the Most High God" (ch. 5:7). Thus, they made verbal confession that He, the divine Son, had come in the flesh. So the Apostle's words must mean something deeper than this.

Just what, then, does this confession involve? I can do no better than quote from Robert Law's exposition of John's First Epistle, *The Tests of Life* — a book of which James Denney said: "no more masterly contribution has for long been made to N. T. exegesis and theology." Mr. Law writes thus on these words: "The statement, simple as it is, is of exquisite precision. 1. The verb used (*erchesthai* [come]) implies the pre-existence of Christ. 2. The perfect tense [of that verb] (*elēluthota*) points to His coming not only as a historical event, but as an abiding fact. The Word has become flesh forever. 3. The noun (*sarx* [flesh]) indicates the fulness of His participation in human nature, the flesh being the element of this, which is in most obvious contrast with His former state of being (John 1:14). It is out of the question to understand by *sarx* 'human nature as having sin lodged in it' (Haupt). 4. Even the preposition *en* [in] is of pregnant significance. It is not altogether equivalent to 'into' (*eis*). The Gnostics also believed that Christ came into the flesh. But the assertion is that He has so come into the flesh as to abide therein; the Incarnation is a permanent union of the

Divine with human nature. 5. Finally, this union is realized in the self-identity of a Person, Jesus Christ, who is at once Divine and human" (p. 99; cf. *American Commentary on the New Testament*).

The numerals are mine. It will at once be manifest to the reader of Chapters II and IV of this book, that Mrs. White's doctrine fails to meet the requirement of the third point in Mr. Law's exegesis of I John 4:2. It fails in two respects. It denies the fulness of Christ's manhood and it asserts that sin is lodged in it (albeit held in complete subordination to His will). As verse 2 contains the positive, verse 3 contains the negative side of the matter: "and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

It is imperative to point out that to say Mrs. White was deceived is far from saying that she was a deceiver and, therefore, an evil woman. Our first mother, Eve, was deceived (Gen. 3:13; II Cor. 11:3; I Tim. 2:14), yet she was the one perfect woman this world has seen. As we do not vilify Eve when we say that she was deceived, neither do we vilify her daughter, Mrs. White, when we say that she was. Instead of vilifying her, we commiserate her. It is one thing to meet Satan as a roaring lion and quite another to meet him as a subtle serpent; one thing to meet him in his true colors, and an altogether different thing to meet him when transformed into an angel of light. We cannot avoid the conclusion that Mrs. White was Satanically ensnared and that those who follow her, however sincere and upright, are equally so.

APPENDIX

The Historian's Witness.

Isaac C. Wellcome was born on May 8, 1818 at Minot, Maine, a small town about thirty miles (as the crow flies) N.E. of Gorham, where Ellen G. Harmon was born in 1827, and about sixty-five miles S.W. of Palmyra, where James White was born in 1821. Mr. Wellcome, like his two contemporaries, was in the Millerite movement. He was personally acquainted with both Mr. and Mrs. White; in fact, Mr. White baptized him.

Mr. Wellcome reports that he "has never been admired as a preacher, has made no converts to himself, formed no party cliques.... He has purchased over ten thousand bound books and more pamphlets, on the

Advent faith, and tracts without number, and circulated them as the Lord opened the way, either by selling or giving.... In 1854, he wrote his Treatise on Matt. 24th and 25th chapters, which has gone through six editions. In 1862, he wrote his pamphlet on War, which has passed through five editions. In 1863, he wrote his *Christian Baptism*, which has passed through four editions. In 1869, he prepared the Berean's Casket; the first edition is nearly sold. He has published fifteen thousand books of his own...with over two million pages of tracts of his own writings and selections from others."

In 1874 Wellcome published a volume of 700 pages, entitled *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*, from which the above quotation is taken (p. 571). In the Preface, he says that his account contains some items "very unpleasant to recall", and adds that he would never have recorded them "did not the cause of truth and righteousness demand it". He disclaims the possession of any literary attainment, and tells us that he "entered upon the work, believing duty led in that direction". What he wrote, he wrote "for the study, information, and contemplation of sober thinkers". He "aimed to collect the most important historical matters and many valuable criticisms bearing on the subject at issue, whether they favored our views or otherwise". "We write for Christ and His cause, not for persons or parties. . . . Some will conclude it had been better to cull only the good, the pleasant matters, and pass the evil by. But our work was history."

Wellcome's book is used over forty times by L. E. Froom in the fourth volume of his work on *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*. On page 752 of this volume, he says: "Considerable draft is made in this section on Historian Wellcome, for he was a contemporary, with access to all contemporary facts and sources". F. D. Nichol also makes some use of Wellcome's book in *The Midnight Cry* (pp. 107, 205). On page 557, Mr. Nichol states that the *History of the Second Advent Message* is "particularly valuable because of biographical sketches of various men who participated in the [Millerite] movement."

In view of the spirit in which Mr. Wellcome wrote, and of this double acknowledgement of his reliability as an historian, I consider it proper to quote from him on the subject of the Shut Door theory, and related matters. Here are extracts from his account (all italics, his):

"This notion originated with Joseph Turner, of Maine, and several others in various places, who simultaneously claimed to have it impressed upon them by the Holy Spirit, on 'the tenth day of the seventh month.' Oct. 22, 1844, Eld. T. proclaimed it at a camp-meeting, in Woodstock, Me., while some penitent ones were being prayed for, repeating, 'Every one to your tents, O Israel,' and declaring that Christ had left the mercy seat. He soon worked the idea into a theory, which he and others began to proclaim throughout the Advent societies. It was readily accepted by some and was soon confirmed to them and others by visions of one Ellen G. Harmon, who traveled from town to

town, where she was strangely exercised in body and mind, usually talking in assemblies until nature was exhausted and then falling to the floor, unless caught by someone sitting near (we remember catching her twice to save her from falling upon the floor)" (*History of the Second Advent Message*, p. 397). "In her testimony in meetings she would speak with great vehemence and rapidity until falling down, when, as she claimed, wonderful views of heaven and of what was being transacted there were shown her. She claimed to have seen that Christ had left the office of mediation and assumed that of Judge, had closed the door of mercy, and was blotting out the names, from the book of life, of those who had not been faithful up to the tenth day of the seventh month, and of those who had believed the Lord would come at that time and subsequently confessed they were in error, that their experience was not all of God in thus believing.... All who confessed it an error and published the gospel of salvation to sinners, during this time, were called... 'fallen priests' if preachers, and all who professed conversion were denominated 'strange children', 'children of a month', quoting Hosea 5:6, 7 as proof" (*ibid.*, pp. 402-3).

Mrs. White (then Miss Harmon) "claimed to see that 'the Lord led his people out on that time', had 'blessed them for believing and teaching it, that the prophetic periods had ended, and it was a great sin to deny their former faith and call it an error,' etc. We saw her at Poland, Portland, Topsham, and Brunswick during the beginning of this career, and often heard her speak, and several times saw her fall, and heard her relate wonders which she said her heavenly Father permitted her to see" (*ibid.*, p. 402).

An interesting footnote on the same page contains these three sentences relative to Mr. Canright who, thirteen years later, left Seventh-day Adventism, and wrote against Mrs. White's visions: "Since writing this article we have seen a statement, published in a scandalous sheet, over the name of one D. M. Canright, a teacher and defender of Mrs. White's visions, that 'Eld. Wellcome never saw Sister White have a vision,' also that he had 'read a letter from Eld. Wellcome acknowledging that he had never seen her in vision,' etc. Here is a grave statement. We will pay Mr. C. a large premium for a genuine letter of ours, in which such a statement is found written by us."

"Some had such confidence in her 'visions' that they were thrown into great distress, nearly to despair, when she related that their names were blotted out of the book of life.

"We are aware that it has been, and is yet, denied in the most positive terms that the above-named woman ever proclaimed such views, but there is a true record in heaven, we are ready to abide that, as many of us, in New England, know the facts *when* and *as* they transpired. Later visions which contradict those, do not prove them never to have been proclaimed, though it may militate against the reliability of either.

"Eld. Turner was an impressive speaker, and had acquired considerable influence among the people. He now assumed that Christ had

come spiritually as a Bridegroom, that the wise virgins had gone in with him into the marriage, and that the door was shut. He was a man of an active temperament, had rather a winning address, and a reputation for sanctity. He was also possessed of strong mesmeric power. He went forth on a mission to propagate his new views, and succeeded in deluding many into a partial, and others into a full, recognition of his fable. As early as January 23, 1845, he writes from South Paris, Maine: 'In every place I visited I found a goodly number, I think quite a majority, who were and are now believing that our work is all done for this world, and that the atonement was completed on the tenth day of the seventh month. Nearly all who heard me, gladly received the message.'

"Those who received these views immediately left the meetings of the Adventists [that is, the Millerites] who admitted that they had been in error in the time, calling them 'foolish virgins', and set up private ones, i.e., meetings for themselves only, calling themselves the 'wise virgins', shut in to the kingdom, as Noah and his family were shut in to the ark, having lost their sympathy for those who did not embrace the message, as Eld. T. says in the same letter: 'Such as receive this position have no sympathy with the indefinite movements of some of the brethren, who are trying to re-awaken a fallen church and a rejected world [observe the expression]. They love them for their past labors, but their hearts are sorely pained in view of the sad effects of their present teachings. Such a course is like one's preaching in the tombs.'

"In the same letter he [Elder Turner] alludes to his visits to Boston, and to Portsmouth on Sunday, Jan. 10th. He also went to Lowell, Hartford, Worcester, and other of the principal places in New England, New York, and elsewhere. In most places where he lectured a division followed. On Sunday, Feb. 10th, he presented his views to the Adventists worshipping in Franklin Hall with seemingly overpowering success. S. S. Snow, who was then the pastor, embraced them in full, being convinced by Turner that he (Snow) had not been mistaken in teaching that the Lord would come on the tenth day of the seventh month, only that the *event* was different from what he had expected. He had been deeply engaged, as had Turner, in giving the cry 'Come out of Babylon', applying the term to the Protestant churches. He immediately drew off a party and commenced meetings at the Medical College in Crosby Street.

"On the thirteenth of March Snow, in connection with B. Matthias, published the first number of the 'Jubilee Standard', in advocacy of this theory. In his second number Snow says: 'The house of Israel is in the sieve, and the sieve is tremendously shaken. The congregation at Franklin Hall, to whom we have till recently ministered, has divided, and the portion which sympathize with our views have withdrawn and, with some of our dear brethren of the other congregations, have opened a meeting in the lower lecture-room of the Medical College in Crosby Street.'

"Snow continued his separate meetings, went on from one gross error to another, proclaiming himself to be 'Elijah the prophet', 'the prophet like unto Moses', 'the Messenger of the Covenant', 'the poor wise man' who by his wisdom 'delivered the city, yet no man remembered that same poor man', and assumed various blasphemous titles, as his advertisements in New York papers will show, and which have been copied in Germany as an evidence of fanaticism in America. The most fiendish imprecations have been uttered by him against all who reject his views.

"About this time, several new papers were started, advocating divers strange and discordant views, among which was the 'Day Dawn', by O. R. L. Crosier. Some idea of these elements may be formed from what Mr. Miller related at the Albany Conference, that he had received seventeen different papers in one week, advocating opposite views, and all claiming to be Advent papers!

"The 'Voice' held a vibrating position on the 'Shut door' for a time, giving the largest liberty for all to present their notions through its columns, until, perceiving that the tide had thus turned, it finally went against it. The 'Western Midnight Cry', which was originated at Cincinnati by Elder Himes, and placed under the editorial control of E. Jacobs, had its name changed by the latter to the 'Day-Star', and committed to the promulgation of the 'shut-door' notion" (*ibid.*, pp. 397-9).

At this point, it is well to remind the reader of Mrs. White's unqualified endorsement of Crosier's article in support of the shut-door doctrine, which appeared in the "Day-Star" Extra of Feb. 7, 1846, and of her statement to Eli Curtis in 1847 that the Lord had shown her "in vision, that Jesus rose up, and shut the door, and entered the Holy of Holies, at the seventh month, 1844" (*A Word to the "Little Flock"*, p. 12). It is also well to call to mind Mrs. White's word in *Great Controversy* (p. 429) that the shutting of the door then denoted the close of probation.

Of James White, Wellcome says that he was "a young man of much zeal and ambition, who had commenced preaching while in his own denomination" (the Christian Church) and who early in the 1840's, "embraced the views of the Advent near.... He ran well for a season, though too positive on time arguments, but during the cry 'Come out of her, my people', and the excitement which prevailed in the autumn of 1844, together with the great disappointment experienced by many on the passing of the time designated for the Lord to come, he passed under the cloud of that tempest of fanaticism which raged among the class who had been the most sanguine in their views.... From the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, Eld. White's preaching, experience, and associations changed to another channel, entirely distinct from the Second Advent people.... We were in company with him for much of the time during the first four weeks of this mania, and during the first five days of it we were carried partially under the sympathetic influence [note the author's honesty]. While attending a meeting in Portland

with Eld. White, and hearing some singular experiences and strange messages, claiming to be direct from the Lord, our mind was brought under deep conviction that it was fanaticism; yet, as several were to be re-immersed that day, and we wished to be immersed also, we accepted that opportunity and were baptized by Eld. White, which we should not have consented to a few days later. But with a cautious, hesitating step and prayerful heart, we marked and criticized every movement and new statement made, and within a day or two we saw clearly that it was a fanatical movement under a wild spirit, and we withdrew our sympathy wholly from it. The spell was broken while searching the Scriptures, and we fully realized that these brethren were ensnared by the spirit of fanaticism, and were being led into strange paths of the enemy. We at once abandoned the position we were being insidiously led into, announcing that it was 'wrong'; that we had been believing an error; that the time calculation was of men. We then spent four weeks visiting societies and urging them to see and acknowledge it an error, and go to work for the Lord *and the salvation of men*.

"We earnestly besought Eld. White to take the same step, as the correct solution of our situation (though this confession subjected us and all who made it to these epithets, 'foolish virgins', 'false priests', etc.). He admitted to me one day, while walking a street in Brunswick, that he was 'often tempted to think the *time* message an error, and felt inclined to go home to his father's to rest, and to study more upon Christian experience', of which he felt himself 'deficient'. But he decided to do otherwise, and entered more fully upon relating, over and over again, the 10th day *experiences* of this class of believers and giving such expositions of certain scriptures as to sustain them in their views, while he travelled through the country 'to strengthen the little bands', as the companies were then called, confirming those who would listen, and convincing the wavering in the idea that it was all of God, the *time in particular*, and that the 2300 days ended in 1844, — the door of mercy closed — the church, i.e., those who continued in this confession, were 'shut in'. Miss Harmon travelled with him much of the time in New England and Middle States, and could witness to *all* with her 'visions', which were said to be frequent and impressive to some" (*ibid.*, pp. 401-4).

"We have seen it stated in a book by Eld. White [*Life Incidents*, 1868] 'that Adventists were agreed that the door was shut'. This is a specious statement. Some Adventists were agreed thus, but the great mass were *never* agreed to believe it. Again, he says, 'It is vain for any man to deny that it was the *universal belief of Adventists*, in the autumn of 1844, that their work for the world was forever done'. This is another specious statement. It can only be true by denying that the many who *did not* embrace the time calculation were Adventists; and it cannot be regarded as *true* of those who *did* fully believe in the time *only for a single day*, for as soon as that day passed without bringing the Lord, the mass of believers concluded it an error which they had believed for

truth. They at once began to plan and prosecute the work of the gospel, and to show those who had fallen into these strange views (as fast as they met them) that they were errors. But the great movement, the excitement, the experiences, the strange impressions which those had who had been too positive on time, and too unyielding to stubborn facts, when the time had passed, were overwhelmed and led by strange spirits, claiming that the Lord would 'yet vindicate them in their belief' (*ibid.*, p. 403).

"Many have joined them from other churches; they are quite numerous and have some able preachers and writers of their views, and many worthy Christian members, who would not believe the historical sketch we have given, 'though a man declare it unto them', as their older teachers have insidiously labored to keep it from them and constantly denied these facts which we have recorded. We should have gladly passed over it could we have done so in justice to the cause we are tracing in history. Many of those who observe the seventh-day Sabbath, however, have repudiated the visions, after some experience, as an imposition, instead of acknowledging them of divine origin and authority for church government, while others never accepted them. Each of these classes are repudiated by the society in return" (*ibid.*, pp. 406-7).

"*Life Incidents* contains much of the errors of the Adventists glorified as truths. A wonderful account of 'fanaticism', by one who was as deeply in it as any in Maine, and who, with his consort, became leaders in one of its chief phases! His statement on this matter reminds us of the inebriate who staggered through the street badly intoxicated and then entered the complaint that everyone in the street staggered; that the posts and trees ran against him. The book also contains many statements of 'incidents' which appear, to many of us who knew them in their native dress and simplicity, very strange and singularly stated. Some of them remind us of Don Quixote, which we read in our younger days, while others appear like a woman in a full dress of modern style, so changed that the natural is lost in the artificial.

"But we are reminded that in the course of singular events in history, a book [Uriah Smith's, in 1868] has been published to 'vindicate' James and Ellen in their remarkable career. In this book much talent is displayed, greatly to their advantage in the eyes of *strangers to the actors*. Here we find it stated of Eld. White thus: 'The fanaticism and strange delusions that arose during the confusion that followed 1844, he was disconnected from and opposed to. He is not, therefore, to be associated with, or held responsible for, anything of that nature'. If this were true, then the Christian people of Maine would need a new dictionary to inform them of the proper definition of fanaticism. As to the morals of Eld. W. and wife, their misstatements aside, we have nothing to say. The Lord knows; we make no pretensions. This would be changing the issue from fanaticism to morals.

"In another effort to vindicate Eld. White and wife from the charge

of fanaticism, statements are profusely made, and *regularly* certified by a long list of names, that they were 'not fanatics', and that they did much to avert and cure fanaticism in New England. [See the close of *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II.] The most of these signers were as deeply in fanaticism as themselves; some were leading ones. But signers who had *not been personally associated* in the fanaticism being scarce, to certify in these prepared papers, the names of two young ladies (perhaps more) are added, who, *at the time specified for the events*, were aged, respectively, nine and fourteen years. Prodigies in intellect and judgment, surely, or perhaps, endowed with the 'gift of discerning of spirits'. But it is no difficult task to procure the names of partisans, associates, accomplices, their children, cousins, and aunts, to certify to one's rectitude, sanity, or orthodoxy. It is more safe and important, however, to have a good 'record in heaven' (*ibid.*, pp. 407-8).

"Had the following wise admonition of Mr. Miller been heeded by these young aspiring zealots, the above unpleasant events would have never been furnished for this chapter of sad occurrences. He had said in an address to all, 'I beseech you, my dear brethren, be careful that Satan get no advantage over you by scattering coals of wild-fire among you, for, if he cannot drive you into unbelief and doubt, he will try his wild-fire of fanaticism and speculation to get us from the Word of God. Be watchful and sober, and hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ' (*ibid.*, p. 409).

Conclusion

What, then, should be our attitude toward Adventists and Adventism? As to the former, if they are persons who truly acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior, they should be recognized as children of God and taken to the heart of every Christian. It is a shame to ostracize and denounce such, however mistaken they may be.

As to our attitude toward Adventism itself, that is another matter. In this case, as in many others, it is necessary to distinguish between the system and those who are in it. The Adventists themselves, for example, distinguish between Roman Catholicism and Roman Catholics. It is true that the SDA movement is not to be classed with "Jehovah's Witnesses" which denies the deity of Christ and with "Christian Science," which denies His atoning sacrifice, but still it is characterized by features which disqualify it for classification as a Scriptural body. I will mention only two.

1. Adventism is characterized by delusion. It was born of it, reared in it and has been nourished by it. We have seen (in Chapter VIII) that it was born of the general delusion (based on the year-day fallacy) that Christ would return in the 1840's, and of the specific delusions of William Miller, Samuel S. Snow and Hiram Edson.

Mr. Edson's idea that Christ had passed, on Oct. 22, 1844, from one place in heaven to another, transferred the whole matter from the sphere of the visible, where anyone could check on it, into that of the invisible, where none could do so apart from the teachings of Scripture.¹⁵¹ (A similar announcement was

¹⁵¹Cf. L. E. Froom's stricture on "Futurism," which applies equally to Adventism's idea of invisibility (*Prophetic Faith*, Vol. II, p. 802.4).

William Miller not only rejected this vision of Mr. Edson; he further declared: "I have no confidence in any of the new theories that have grown out of that [Oct. 22, 1844] movement, viz., that Christ then came as a bridegroom, that the door of mercy was closed, that there is no salvation for sinners, that the seventh trumpet then sounded, or that it was a fulfillment of prophecy in any sense" (*Apology and Defence*, p. 28; quoted by

made by "Pastor" Russell about thirty years later, when he proclaimed an invisible advent of Christ to the earth in 1874, though he, too, did some later revising.) Edson's idea, first published in *Day-Dawn*, was, as we have also seen, heartily approved by Mrs. White, who declared shortly after, that the Lord had previously shown her in vision that it was correct. When G. I. Butler rightly observed, in recounting the history of the Marion defection,¹⁵² that "the inception and birth of every religious movement goes far to show its nature" (*Review and Herald Supplement*, Aug. 14, 1883), he unconsciously characterized Seventh-day Adventism itself.

The movement, thus born of delusion, was reared in it, for Mrs. White continued to have visions — scores of them — during the next quarter of a century or so, when the movement was growing up. It is true that there was, from time to time, rebellion against the authority of the visions, but while this weakened the work temporarily, it made it stronger in the end. Such is the usual effect of opposition of any kind.

When Adventism had attained its majority and was spreading to other lands, it was still nourished by delusion, for the doctrines already developed within its fold were supposed to be confirmed by additional revelation given through Mrs. White, apart from visions. For full seventy years she wielded a powerful influence over the movement, before she lay down to her rest; and since then she has continued to influence it through her voluminous writings.

Thus Seventh-day Adventism has been born and nourished in delusion. Some look upon its delusions as merely human aberrations, more or less harmless. Such was the attitude of Dr. Barnhouse, as expressed in the Sept. 1956 issue of *Eternity* magazine. No, he did not, could not, subscribe to various Adventist views, but still they presented no insuperable barrier to accept-

F. D. Nichol in *Ellen G. White and her Critics*, p. 168). Nor did Mr. Miller ever subscribe to the Adventists' views regarding the seventh-day Sabbath or the inspiration of Ellen Harmon White. Furthermore, he emphatically rejected the ideas of soul-sleep and the annihilation of the wicked, both of which he called "crimes" against God and man. He was, therefore, in no sense of the term, a Seventh-day Adventist. He was simply an earnest-hearted Christian layman who, mistakenly, felt called to warn saint and sinner that the Lord was about to come. Mrs. White's account of her vision of him as one who had later "raised his voice against the light of heaven," occurs in her *Early Writings* (pp. 257-8).

¹⁵²A split from Seventh-day Adventism which was named after the place where it was centered, Marion, Iowa.

ing the movement as evangelical. The same attitude appears in Mr. Martin's *The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*. Martin gives his personal evaluation of Mrs. White's visions, in the words of "a friendly critic," as being "only religious reveries in which her imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested" (p. 111). He goes on to say that "Ellen G. White was true to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith regarding the salvation of the soul and the believer's life in Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 113). True, he must disagree with her "interpretation of the sanctuary, the investigative judgment, and the scapegoat; . . . her stress on the Sabbath, health reform, the unconscious state of the dead and the final destruction of the wicked, etc. But no one," he adds, "can dispute the fact that her writings conform to the basic principles of the historic gospel, for they most certainly do" (*ibid.*) Martin considers that the peculiarities of Adventist teaching are "doctrinal aberrations of a comparatively minor nature" (*ibid.*, p. 229). His position seems to be like that of those who tell us that they derive much profit from the teachings of Jesus, though they cannot accept His high claims. Dr. E. Schuyler English set his seal to Martin's estimate in a brief editorial in *Our Hope* magazine in November, 1956.

Others find it difficult to account for the fervent acceptance of all Adventist doctrines on the part of people of considerable intelligence, without postulating the element of Satanic deception; while others have, like myself, passed beyond this stage of serious question to that of assured conviction — born of careful, dispassionate investigation — that the movement is, in reality, the product of such deception. Here, then, is one strong reason for declining to classify Adventism as a Scriptural body.¹⁵³

2. Adventism is characterized by heresy. *Webster's New International Dictionary* has three definitions of this word. I use it here in the second sense: "An opinion held in opposition to the established or commonly received doctrine, and tending to promote division or dissension." Adventism denies a body of doctrine which the church as a whole has always declared, and declares another body of doctrine which the church as a whole has always denied. To many minds this is not a serious matter, but let us look into it.

Christ promised His sorrowing disciples that, upon His going to the Father, He would send forth the Holy Spirit to be to them

¹⁵³See Ch. XII above and the Supplement following.

(and to all who should believe through their word), another Comforter, such as He Himself had been. In defining the gracious ministry of this new Paraclete, He said that it would include teaching: "He shall teach you all things" (John 14:26); "He will guide you into all truth" (ch. 16:13). The context shows that by "all things" and "all truth," He meant all spiritual reality, as centered in Himself, who is the Father's Word and Son.

Now the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry is exercised by two methods: the one direct and the other indirect. Directly, He instructs the obedient believer by the enlightening of his understanding, as he privately and prayerfully peruses the sacred Scriptures. Indirectly, He instructs through the agency of those whom He has already enlightened, that is, through spiritual teachers.¹⁵⁴ Neither of these methods can be safely ignored, either by the individual or by the group. The wider our acquaintance with godly instructors of the church, past and present, the greater the safety we enjoy.

Although spiritual teachers differ among themselves in regard to minor matters, there is a wonderful unanimity among them in regard to major ones. What the church as a whole concurs in is, therefore, without doubt, the teaching of the Spirit of God, and the norm by which to determine whether a doctrine is correct or false. It is deviation from this standard that we call heresy.

But does not an apostle say: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you" (I John 2:27)? Indeed, but it ought to be evident that John is not contradicting the rest of the N.T. which stresses the function of teachers. A little reflection will reveal that he is simply asserting the church's independence of worldly philosophers, not the believer's independence of spiritual instructors.

It is, therefore, in the fellowship of the whole body of Christ that we arrive at a knowledge of the truth. Only disaster lies ahead of those searchers after divine truth who, while owning their dependence on Christ, ignore His appointed teachers. Every heresy of the centuries is the product of this seemingly spiritual but actually fallacious individualism. Adventism is a striking example of it. Listen to Mrs. White, in a passage quoted before, but in another connection: "Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Edson,

¹⁵⁴E.g., Acts 13:1; Rom. 12:7; I Cor. 12:28; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:11; Col. 2:7; II Thess. 2:15; I Tim. 4:11; 6:2; II Tim. 2:2; Titus 2:3; Heb. 5:12.

and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that we might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, 'We can do nothing more,' the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me. I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave others the instruction that the Lord had given me."¹⁵⁵

This passage discloses the secret of Adventism's doctrinal eccentricity: it severed itself from the great body of the Spirit's teaching in the church during the preceding eighteen centuries. By so doing it violated a fundamental spiritual law, and all of its earnestness and prayers could not offset the evil effect, for no divine law — physical, mental, moral or spiritual — can be violated with impunity.

The authors of *Questions on Doctrine* and Mr. Martin call attention to the fact that some of Adventism's unusual views have been held by prominent Biblical scholars and by some religious groups. But this plea is invalid, for the simple reason that these scholars and groups were, in these points, out of harmony with church belief and, therefore, to this extent, heretical themselves. It is, therefore, useless to appeal to them.

Now let us gather together some of Adventism's departures from the general belief of the church of God, both by way of denial and of declaration. Its denials and declarations are of two kinds. Some are explicit, that is, they are expressed in plain terms; others are implicit, that is, they are necessarily, logically, properly involved in what is plainly said. Adventists are, therefore, as truly (though not as fully) responsible for their implicit

¹⁵⁵*Testimonies for the Church*, Series B, No. 2, pp. 56-7; cf. *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 24 f.; *Gospel Workers*, p. 302; *The Remnant Church*, pp. 15-16.

teaching as for their explicit, and it behooves them to consider whither some of their cherished doctrines inevitably lead, for it is certain that subscribing to them logically involves the acceptance of others which are positively pernicious.

Although it is not right to impute logical deductions to any writer or speaker, neither is it right to ignore them. Even as our duty to God and man forbids the former act, so also our duty to God forbids the latter. Therefore, if anything expressed necessarily implies something that is erroneous, the erroneous point, while not to be charged upon its author, must nevertheless be reckoned with. Though it constitutes no ground for the infliction of any evil, it does constitute ground for the withholding of some good. The penalty deserved is not positive, but only negative.

First, Adventism denies a body of doctrine which the church as a whole has always declared.

a. It explicitly denies some of these doctrines. It denies, for example — and I shall merely give samples in what now follows to the end of the present section of the chapter — the church's doctrine of man, for it denies that man is a two-fold being, partly material and partly immaterial, and conceives of him as only body and breath instead of body and personality. Again, Adventism denies the church's doctrine of death, for it denies that the person, upon leaving the body, continues his conscious existence in a state either of blessedness or of woe, and holds, instead, that he either ceases to be or loses consciousness until the resurrection. Once more, it denies the church's doctrine of the eternal state of the wicked, for it denies that, after resurrection, they will abide in conscious suffering forever.

b. Adventism implicitly denies other doctrines.

It implicitly denies the church's doctrine that the Bible is an all-sufficient guide in all matters of faith and conduct, for, in placing Mrs. White on a level with the non-literary prophets, whose inspiration was one and the same as that of the authors of Holy Writ, it attributes to her to this day an inspiration equal to the Bible's. Again Adventism implicitly denies that the Son of God assumed a rational soul when He became man, by teaching that He merely took "human flesh" into union with Himself. Once more, it implicitly denies the church's doctrine that the incarnation is a permanent fact, for, holding that man's punishment involves annihilation, it maintains that the Son of God suffered this punishment in His manhood; and if this were so, the Son's manhood must have been rendered

nonexistent. These are not doctrines held only in the past. This is Adventism in the 1960's.

Secondly, Adventism declares another body of doctrine which the church as a whole has always denied.

a. It explicitly declares some of these doctrines.

It declares that it was possible for Christ to sin, whereas the church has always held that inasmuch as a Divine Person is incapable of sin, the Second Person of the Godhead could not have sinned in His manhood. Again, Adventism teaches that when Christ died, whatever was human in Him sank into unconsciousness, at least, until His resurrection, whereas the church has believed from the first that between death and resurrection, Christ's soul enjoyed conscious conjunction with His divine Person. Once more, it asserts that the Christian's sacred day is the seventh in the week whereas the church, from N.T. times, has kept the first as its day of worship. A person's evaluation of Adventism will depend upon the importance he attaches to these doctrines.

b. Adventism implicitly declares other doctrines.

It implicitly declares that the sacrifice of Christ is not sufficient for salvation, when it says that only those who have perfected themselves will be sealed; but the church has always denied that anything other than Christ's sacrifice is necessary for our peace. Again, Adventism implicitly teaches that Satan shares with Christ in bearing our sins, but the church has ever denied that it owes its salvation to any but the Lamb of God who alone took away the sin of the world.

Now so long as Adventism denies, explicitly or implicitly, doctrines which the church of Christ as a whole has always declared; and declares, explicitly or implicitly, doctrines which the church of Christ as a whole has always denied, it cannot be esteemed a Scriptural church. Even Mr. Martin admits that "its theology must be viewed as more heterodox than orthodox" (*Christianity Today*, Dec. 19, 1960, p. 14).

Accordingly, they who would be loyal to God rather than be swayed by sentiment must avoid any alliance with the Adventist system. No other course is open to them. They must steadfastly refuse to join forces with it unless and until it renounces the delusions out of which it arose and repudiates the doctrines which place it, both by denial and declaration, in conflict with the church as a whole. Since this would involve the pulling down of the very framework of the whole system, there seems little hope of such a reformation. As long as Adventism remains

Adventism it must be repudiated. When it abandons its distinctive doctrines it will no longer be Adventism.

Meantime, it is our duty to manifest love and kindness toward those who are in Adventism. It may be that God will thus use us to disillusion some, and to recover them out of the snare in which they are taken. Let us bear in mind that we ourselves are not swift to change our views, especially if we have held them since childhood; therefore, let us be patient. A prayerful testimony to divine truth and a constant care about our own conduct may, by the blessing of God, eventually prove productive of the desired results.

Supplement

Adventism and Irvingism

Religious movements, belonging to the same time, culture and faith, are sometimes so diverse as to require classification in different categories, but it is not so with Adventism and Irvingism. These two movements, arising in almost the same decade, appearing among English-speaking peoples and making profession of Christianity — though relating to two distinct classes (the common people and the elite) and having no external connection — are yet so much alike in so many respects as to compel the student to place them in the same category.

It is necessary, first of all, to make clear what entities are meant when we speak of "Adventism" and "Irvingism." By "Adventism" is meant that company which originally formed a part of the Millerite movement, but which, later, came to be known as Seventh-day Adventists. Its history, therefore, possesses two distinct phases — one before, and one after, its separation from the main body of Millerites. Both phases have to be included in order to get a whole view of Adventism.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, Irvingism refers to that group which gathered around Edward Irving, and not that which developed later under the name of the Catholic Apostolic Church.¹⁵⁷ We will see that, thus defined, Adventism is very much like Irvingism.

Edward Irving (1792-1834), a close friend of Thomas Carlyle, became assistant to the great Scottish preacher, Thomas Chal-

¹⁵⁶According to J. N. Loughborough, Seventh-day Adventists who had been "connected more or less with the 1844 movement," included Mr. and Mrs. White, Joseph Bates, Stephen Pierce, Samuel W. Rhodes, J. N. Andrews, W. S. Ingraham, Albert Stone, Washington Morse, Hiram Edson, George W. Holt, C. O. Taylor, David Arnold, Frederick Wheeler, H. H. Wilcox, C. W. Sperry, Brother Phillips, Josiah Hart, Elon Everts, E. P. Butler and himself (See *R. and H.*, Dec. 29, 1938, p. 63).

¹⁵⁷See article "Catholic Apostolic Church" in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*: "This body repudiates the title 'Irvingites'" (Vol. II, p. 458).

mers of Glasgow in October, 1819.¹⁵⁸ Three years later, he was called to the Caledonian Chapel in London, "one of the newest but least notable" of the Scottish churches of the metropolis. Before long, according to a contemporary account, Irving's oratory was filling the place "with statesmen, philosophers, poets, painters and literary men; peers, merchants and fashionable ladies were mingled with shopkeepers and mechanics, while many hundreds were unable to obtain admission."

Irving, who was an ardent student of prophecy, proclaimed the nearness of the Lord's return and the restoration of the primitive gifts of the apostolic church. In 1831 the gifts of prophecy and of speaking in tongues began to be manifested among some members of his church. At first these phenomena were confined to private prayer meetings; later Irving allowed their exercise during the public services. Eventually his congregation repudiated its minister and the "gifted persons," who then formed another church. Irving was tried and condemned by the Presbytery of Annan, his home district, for heretical views on the Person of Christ, and died, a broken man, in 1834.

It is not necessary to dwell in detail on the story of Irving, a story so full of promise in its beginning and of tragedy in its ending. What concerns us here is the character of the movement which bears his name. This has been clearly delineated in the account given by the judicious Robert Baxter, one of the "gifted persons," which account he wrote immediately after his remarkable deliverance from the movement in 1832.¹⁵⁹ I shall, therefore, now proceed to list some of the striking similarities between Irvingism and its counterpart, Adventism, which appeared in the next decade on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. In each case, I shall first describe Irvingism and then Adventism, seeing that the former antedates the latter.

1. Both movements arose out of the conviction that the return of Christ was just at hand. This was the mainspring of the Irvingite movement. Dr. Froome devotes a chapter of nineteen pages to "Irving's contribution" to the prophetic upsurge in

¹⁵⁸A. L. Drummond, *Edward Irving and his Circle*, p. 33.

¹⁵⁹See his *Narrative of Facts*, published in 1833 by James Nisbet, of Berners St., London, England. Sir Robert Anderson, for many years head of the famous Scotland Yard, says of Baxter in after days: "I enjoyed his acquaintance for many years, and often met him in Christian work. . . . The man as I knew him, was a typical English parliamentary lawyer, reserved, slow of speech and noted for soundness of judgment!" (*Spirit Manifestations*, p. 9; italics, Sir Robert's).

the third decade of the last century (*The Prophetic Faith*, Vol. III, ch. 27). He calls the eloquent Scotsman the "most colorful figure in the British Advent Awakening" (*ibid.*, p. 514), and mentions that "on Christmas, 1825," he "had begun to preach regularly on the second advent" (*ibid.*, p. 518). He also quotes from Irving's dedication of his English translation of Lacunza's Spanish work on *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*: "My soul is greatly afflicted because of the present unawakened and even dead condition of all the churches, with respect to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which draweth nigh and which, I believe, is close at hand" (*ibid.*, p. 519).

Baxter, writing of this doctrine, says: "This was the leading theme of the utterances. The nearness of it, its suddenness, and the fearful judgments which would accompany it, were the continual arguments which were used to excite our minds, and stimulate our decision; as well as to support us under difficulties, and to induce us to lay all other things aside, to further the work" (*Narrative*, p. 142; cf. pp. 5, 6, 13, 18, 37, 56, 152). It was the subject of Baxter's own first prophetic utterance: "I was . . . made . . . to utter a prophecy that the messengers of the Lord should go forth, publishing to the ends of the earth in the mighty power of God, the testimony of the near coming of the Lord Jesus" (*ibid.*, p. 5).

It is equally true that Adventism arose out of the conviction that Christ's return was impending. This fact has already been set forth in the early part of Chapter VIII of this book, and, therefore, nothing more needs to be said here concerning it.

2. Both movements not only proclaimed the nearness of the Lord's return, but also claimed to be the specific fulfillment of the midnight cry: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh" (Matt. 25:6). One of the earliest "inspired" utterances of Irvingism was this very cry.¹⁶⁰ In a letter penned on Oct. 14, 1831, Baxter wrote: "I would also hint the inquiry as to the nature of the cry, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,' which must go forth through the slumbering church" (*Narrative*, Appendix, p. 153). Later, he spoke with certainty about it: "In the afternoon service . . . the power was with me in prayer and preaching, as in the morning. The subject preached on was the Parable of the Virgins. The midnight cry, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh' was said to be the declaration of the second coming of the Lord, begun by

¹⁶⁰T. Kolde, *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. III, p. 457.

preaching, and now confirmed by the utterance of the Spirit" (*ibid.*, p. 44).

Adventism also used this watchword. In the latter part of November, 1842, J. V. Himes began to publish in New York City a daily Advent paper which he called *The Midnight Cry* (James White, *Life Incidents*, p. 135). Dr. Froom tells us of the *Western Midnight Cry* printed in Cincinnati, and of the *Southern Midnight Cry* put out first in Washington, D. C., and then in Baltimore (*The Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, p. 623). "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh" was the constant burden of the Millerite message, especially from the summer of 1844 to Oct. 22. F. D. Nichol has published a fairly large volume on this subject, entitled *The Midnight Cry*.¹⁶¹

3. Both movements set definite dates for the great event anticipated. It is true that Mr. Irving in 1825 had foretold that Christ's return would occur in 1864; but this was prior to the movement with which we are concerned. Seven years later, through the prophets in his church, a much earlier date was set. Baxter says: "The words of the prophecy were most distinct, to count from that day (viz., 14th January, 1832) 1260 days, and three days and a half (Rev. 11:11); and on innumerable other occasions, by exposition and by prophecy, was the same thing again and again declared, and most largely opened" (*Narrative*, pp. 18-19). In the course of the sermon preached on the Parable of the Ten Virgins, mentioned above, there was "the reiterated declaration that within three years and a half, the believers in the Lord would be caught up to Him."

Adventism likewise set a definite date. We have seen that it first fixed on the Jewish year of 1843 (Mar. 21, 1843 to Mar. 21, 1844), and then on the Jewish day of atonement in 1844 (Oct. 22). James White, as we have already seen, declares that he, with many others, expected Christ to return on Oct. 22, 1845 (*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 22).

4. Both movements not only warned the world of impending judgment, but declared that God had rejected the Protestant churches, as He had previously repudiated Romanism. Baxter records how, when he was "under the power," he declared: "The Spirit of God is quenched in all the churches of the land." This was followed by a command "to come out of Babylon and be separate" (*Narrative*, pp. 27-28). "The Spirit of God, having withdrawn from the church, the church was thenceforth desolate.

¹⁶¹Referred to in Ch. VIII, p. 106n. See also G. C., Ch. XXII.

. . . It was explained, that the Spirit was not taken from faithful men in the church, but from the visible church as a body. . . . the whole visible church was now cast off as God's church. . . .

"The plan was adopted of assigning the present day as the time of fulfillment on the Gentile church of those Scriptures which speak of the setting up of the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24, Luke 21) and as the prelude to the days of vengeance. . . . The mystical man of sin (II Thess. 2) was also explained to be the spirit of Satan, the prince of this world, now bearing rule in the visible church. . . . When the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the visible church, the Spirit of Satan entered in and bore sway. . . . this was what was contained in II Thess. 2:6. . . . 'He who letteth' was declared to be the Spirit of God; and the taking of this let out of the way, to be the taking away of the Spirit of God from the visible church. The revelation of the man of sin mystically, was declared to be the manifestation of the spirit of Satan ruling in the church as the Spirit of God — Satan, by his spirit, receiving from the church that worship which belonged to God, and so showing himself that he was God. . . .

"The interpretation applying II Thess. 2 to the reformed churches was also declared not to invalidate its application to the papacy. . . . as God had taken away the Spirit from the papacy, because of her apostacy, and Satan's power ruled in her. . . . now God took away the Spirit from the reformed churches, because of her quenching of the Spirit" (*ibid.*, pp. 28-31). The subject of the trumpet judgments of the Revelation was thought to be "the Protestant part of Christendom" (*ibid.*, p. 58, cf. pp. 7, 24, 128).

Substantially the same view appeared in Adventism. It is true that William Miller did not subscribe to it,¹⁶² but those who became the founders of Seventh-day Adventism stoutly proclaimed it. Let us hear from all three of them.

¹⁶²Mr. Miller states: "In the fall of 1843, some of my brethren began to call the churches Babylon, and to urge that it was the duty of Adventists [as his adherents were called] to come out of them. With this I was much grieved, as not only the effect was very bad, but I regarded it as a perversion of the Word of God, a wresting of Scripture. But the practice spread extensively; and, from that time, the churches, as might have been expected, were closed to us" (*Apology and Defence*, 1845; quoted by James White in *Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller*, pp. 363-4). Mr. White tells us in a footnote that "a very few, including Mr. Miller, never accepted the view that the term [Babylon] applied to all corrupted Christianity, Protestant as well as Papal" (*ibid.*).

James White, in an article published in 1850, declared that the first angel's message (Rev. 14:6-7) "was to the churches; but soon their religious papers refused to publish it, and the doors of their houses of worship were closed against it. In this way they shut out the 'everlasting good news' of the coming kingdom; and when that was accomplished, Jesus and the Spirit of truth left them forever, and the churches or Babylon fell. . . . Then the way was fully prepared for the second message — 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen.' 'Come out of her, my people.'

"Some tell us that Babylon here, is the Roman Catholic Church; but God's people were not in that church. The first message was to the churches, from about 1840 to 1843; and the second angel 'followed,' therefore the message — 'Babylon is fallen' — 'Come out of her, my people' was in 1844. . . . the oppressed people of God burst the bands that bound them to the various sects, and made their escape from Babylon" (*The Present Truth*, p. 66). Immediately after this article, Mr. White quotes "the following excellent remarks": "Babylon, the nominal church is fallen. God's people have come out of her. She is now the synagogue of Satan, Rev. 3:9; 'the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and cage of every unclean and hateful bird,' Rev. 18:2" (*ibid.*, p. 69).¹⁶³

Joseph Bates, in the November, 1850, issue of *The Advent Review*, spoke of "The Fall of Babylon," and expressed doubt of the accuracy of William Miller's view that there can be "churches that love the Lord in sincerity," adding, "I wonder if there is such an organized church to be found. I think this globe will be searched in vain for it" (p. 65).¹⁶⁴ In the *Review and Herald* for December, 1850, Mr. Bates explained the Sardis state of Rev. 3 to represent "the present nominal church, the Babylon which God's people came out from, under the second

¹⁶³Cf. *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 11 (1847); *The Present Truth*, pp. 68-9 (Mar., 1850); *The Advent Review*, p. 22 (Aug., 1850); *R. and H.*, Vol. I, p. 15 (Dec., 1850); Vol. II, pp. 59, 63-4 (Dec., 1851); Vol. II, p. 76 (Jan., 1852); James White, *Life Incidents*, pp. 230-40 (1868).

¹⁶⁴Bates presently added: "Babylon . . . represented the existing organized churches, which had now fallen in consequence of rejecting the [Millerite] doctrine of the second advent of our Savior" (*ibid.*, p. 66). "The cry is made in the Protestant churches, 'Come out of her, my people.' . . . This way mark was now distinctly seen in our pathway . . . crying mightily with a strong voice, as was never heard before nor since Oct., 1844, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and is become,' not will be, 'the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird'" (*ibid.*, p. 67).

angel's message . . . 1844. They [the churches] were then 'about to die' and are now spiritually *dead*" (p. 8).¹⁶⁵

Mrs. White took the same view. In *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. I, published in 1858, she wrote: "The churches would not receive the light of the first angel's message,¹⁶⁶ and as they rejected the light from heaven, they fell from the favor of God . . . but the beloved of God, who were oppressed, answered to the [second] message, Babylon is fallen, and left the churches" (p. 140). "By rejecting the two former messages they [the churches] can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the Most Holy place. I saw that the nominal churches, as the Jews crucified Jesus, had crucified these messages, and therefore, they can have no knowledge of [Jesus'] move made in heaven or of the way into the Most Holy, and they cannot be benefited by the intercession of Jesus there. Like the Jews, who offered their useless sacrifices, they offer up their useless prayers to the apartment which Jesus has left; and Satan, pleased with the deception of the professed followers of Christ, fastens them in his snare, and assumes a religious character, and leads the minds of these professing Christians to himself. . . . He hopes to deceive the honest and lead them to think that God is still working for the churches. But the light will shine, and every one of the honest ones will leave the fallen churches, and take their stand with the remnant" (*ibid.*, pp. 171-3). "I saw the state of the different churches since the second angel proclaimed their fall. They have been growing more and more corrupt. . . . Satan has taken full possession of the churches as a body. . . .¹⁶⁷ I saw that since Jesus had left the Holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and had entered within the second veil [on Oct. 22, 1844] the churches were left as were the Jews; and they have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird" (*ibid.*, pp. 189-90).¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵On Aug. 19, 1851, Bates expressed the same idea in the same periodical: "The second angel's messages was the fall of Babylon, the Sardis state of the church, called by us the *nominal* church, in name only. When this annunciation was made, another was made from heaven, viz., 'Come out of her, my people.' The call was responded to, and thousands broke away from her communion forever. Thus they departed from the Protestant churches, called Babylon, because they had apostatized from the true faith" (p. 13). Cf. *The Early Life and Later Experiences and Labors of Elder Joseph Bates*, edited by James White, p. 305.

¹⁶⁶In 1843-4 (*G. C.*, pp. 379-80; *Early Writings*, pp. 232-7).

¹⁶⁷This is far from saying that all persons belonging to these churches are lost — a thing the Adventists have sometimes been unjustly charged with.

¹⁶⁸Elder G. I. Butler's contention that this last quotation is proleptical,

It is plain, then, that Irvingism and Adventism, as represented by its three founders, agree that Protestantism, like Romanism, has been rejected of God — both being denominated "Babylon."¹⁶⁹ The ministers who wrote *Questions on Doctrine* do not frankly represent the Adventist position to their readers. On page 201 they merely say that "wherever there are individuals, or groups of individuals, that hold to and advocate the unchristian doctrines, practices and procedures of the papal church, such may justifiably be denominated 'Babylon' — hence, part of the great apostacy." But Mrs. White, whose inspiration they uphold, stated clearly, in her *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* what some of these "unchristian" doctrines are: "The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God's holy and sanctified day. These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches¹⁷⁰ and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication'" (Rev. 18:3).¹⁷¹ Again, we call attention to the current *Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* which says that Sunday-observing churches are Babylon ("Senior Division, No. 264, Second Quarter, 1961").

5. Both movements, while depreciating the character of Protestant churches, have made high claims for themselves. Baxter relates this of the Irvingite group: "The whole visible church was now cast off as God's church, and God would bring forth his spiritual church with the fulness of the gifts of the Spirit, and extend it to the ends of the earth within the appointed time" (*Narrative*, p. 28). "It [Irvingism] casts off, under the name of Babylon, the great mass even of orthodox professors, and raises

because it occurs in the chapter lying between chapters on "The Shaking" and "The Loud Cry," is quite insupportable. Cf. *Early Writings*, pp. 54-6, 116. F. D. Nichol's treatment of this point is, I submit, not only weak, but definitely misleading (*Ellen G. White and her Critics*, ch. 19).

¹⁶⁹The leaders of Protestant churches were assailed as false shepherds of the flock (*Narrative*, p. 13; *The Present Truth*, p. 64).

¹⁷⁰"The Fundamentalists, the International Council of Christian Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals," commended on p. 201, subscribe to three of the four doctrines specified.

¹⁷¹*R. and H.*, Sept. 12, 1893; quoted in *The Remnant Church*, pp. 49-50. Cf. *Church Manual*, p. 25, last paragraph.

up the little church, which does receive the utterances, into the distinctive title 'The Church' (ibid., p. 128). This elect company was called to prepare a people for the coming Christ (ibid., pp. 37, 66).

Adventism, likewise, today in *Questions on Doctrine* claims to be "the remnant church" (p. 191), i.e., the church of the last days (p. 25), or the body of believers mentioned in Rev. 12:17; and therefore, the unique depository and exponent of divine truth (p. 195). It conceives of itself as called to perfect the work begun by the Reformers (pp. 189, 194), to prepare a people for Christ's return (p. 189), and to sound forth God's last message of salvation before judgment falls (pp. 189-90). It was to this church that Mrs. White referred when she spoke of "a people in whom all heaven is interested . . . the one object on earth dear to the heart of God" (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 41); the object of His "supreme regard" (*Remnant Church*, p. 7; *Church Manual*, p. 24); which speaks with the authority of "the voice of God" (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 164; *History and Teaching of Robert Brinsmead*, p. 6).

Accordingly, Adventism is no more willing to be classed with other churches than Christianity is willing to be classed with other religions. As Christianity claims to be the one and only true religion, so Adventism claims to be the one and only true church.¹⁷² Christianity freely grants that there are many excellent people in other religions and it longs to have them come to its saving light. So Adventism concedes that there are many good people in other churches and it seeks to bring them into its own fold.

6. Both movements have supported their high claims to being the one true corporate representative of God on the earth, by appealing to the same three supposed proofs.

a. One supposed proof has been that the movements, on the one hand, have exalted the Bible as the Word of God, Christ as the Savior of men, and holiness as the mark of His people; and, on the other hand, have denounced the world, the flesh and the devil.

Baxter tells of his favorable impressions of Irvingism, before he identified himself with it: "When I saw, as it seemed to me, proof that those who claimed the gifts were walking honestly

¹⁷²See Carlyle B. Haynes, *Marks of the True Church*; M. L. Andreasen, *God's Holy Day*, pp. 58-64; A. E. Lickey, *God speaks to Modern Man*, Ch. 60; G. A. Campbell, *How many ways to Heaven?* etc., etc.

and that the power manifested in them was evidently supernatural, and, moreover, bore testimony to Christ come in the flesh, I welcomed it at once as the work of God" (*Narrative*, pp. 3-4). Looking back, afterward, he reports that his experience in it included "an enlarged comprehension and clearness of view given . . . on points which were really the truth of God . . . great setting out of Christ — great joy and freedom in prayer — and, seemingly, great nearness of communion with God, in the midst of the workings of the power. . . . It was manifest to me that the power was supernatural; it was therefore a spirit. It seemed to me to bear testimony to Christ and to work the fruits of the Spirit of God. The conclusion was inevitable, that it was the Spirit of God; and if so, the deduction was immediate, that it ought in all things to be obeyed" (ibid., p. 22). Perfection of character in this life was strongly advocated by Edward Irving himself as well as by his leading followers. "There was so much of light and truth, such a setting forth of Jesus, so great an opening of the truth of Scripture, that our faith rested on these evidences" (ibid., p. 75); "beautiful and comforting expositions of Scriptures were given from the power" (ibid., p. 86).¹⁷³

As for Adventism, Uriah Smith published a vindication of Mrs. White's visions¹⁷⁴ wherein he employed the same supposedly unanswerable proofs of their divine origin. He said: "Their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil. 1. They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. [See *Selected Messages*, Bk. II, Sections 1 and 2.] They warn us against his snares. . . . They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master. 2. They lead us to Christ. . . . 3. They lead us to the Bible. . . . 4. They have brought comfort and consolation to

¹⁷³Space forbids citing passages from Baxter's account setting forth the emphasis on holiness (e.g., pp. 64-5, 91, 100, 102, 111-12); and spiritual blessings with ecstasy of soul (e.g., pp. 7-8, 10-12, 16, 22, 42-4, 75, 89, 96, 117, 150-3). It also forbids quoting those sections recording solemn warnings against Satanic delusions (e.g., pp. 13, 29-30, 62-3) and numerous instances of cutting rebukes administered to members of the movement (pp. 5, 15, 36-7, 47, 66, 68, 84, 86-7, 95, 128). All four items have their counterparts in Adventism.

¹⁷⁴See Ch. XII above.

many hearts" (*Review and Herald*, June 12, 1866; cf. issue of Jan. 13, 1863). This line of argument is reproduced over and over again in Adventist literature.¹⁷⁵

b. Another supposed proof of the special status of Adventism and Irvingism appears in the claim that all of the spiritual gifts, bestowed by the ascended Christ and distributed by the descended Spirit, have been in their possession. This was basic in Irvingism. J. H. Blunt says: "The distinctive characteristic of the sect is the belief that a new 'outpouring' of God the Holy Ghost has re-established the prophetic and apostolic offices, and also the power of speaking in unknown tongues and of working miracles" (*Dictionary of Sects, Heresies, etc.*, p. 227). Irving himself said: "There is no hint in Scripture of the withdrawal of the gifts. . . . we may not say the Apostolic office has ceased; and I believe the prophetic office to be in the church at this day".¹⁷⁶ The gift of healing was likewise emphasized (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, article on "Edward Irving").

Robert Baxter was a prominent instance of what Irvingism considered the prophetic gift; another was Mr. Taplin, a teacher. Mrs. W. R. Caird (the former Mary Campbell) and Miss Emily Cardale were instances of both the prophetic gift and glossolalia (speaking in tongues). Baxter tells of an "appalling utterance" to the effect that the Lord had called him to be an apostle and that He would confer on him the fulness of apostolic signs in the gifts of "signs, wonders and mighty deeds" (*Narrative*, p. 66, cf. p. 88). However, nothing came of this prediction.¹⁷⁷ But in 1832, J. B. Cardale, another eminent lawyer, was designated the first of twelve apostles, the last of which was not appointed until July 14, 1835.

Again, Adventism corresponds. James White declared that all of the original gifts "were designed to exist in the church as long as the saints in their mortal state needed the teaching

¹⁷⁵E.g., W. A. Spicer, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, p. 59; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, Ch. 46; *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, pp. 469-70; F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, pp. 34-6.

¹⁷⁶Yet he did not mean to place any by the side of the twelve Apostles. See his comments on the *Second Book of Discipline* (quoted by Drummond in *Edward Irving and His Circle*, p. 114).

¹⁷⁷Both systems have had difficulty with predictions made by their prophets which did not come to pass. Baxter reports a variety of such, which troubled the Irvingites from time to time. The solution adopted was that the predictions were conditional, though there was no way of knowing what the condition was. It has been the same with Adventism, as pointed out in Ch. XII above.

of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. . . . if a portion of the gifts were to remain in the church, why not all of them? . . . all the gifts run parallel with each other, none of them ending before the rest . . . they were to extend quite through the gospel age" (*Review and Herald*, April 21, 1851, p. 69). Mr. White enlarged on this view in *Life Sketches*, 1880 (ch. 10) and in his Preface to the third volume of *Spiritual Gifts*. It pervades Adventist literature.¹⁷⁸ It is clearly presented today in *Questions on Doctrine*: "God has placed in His church the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as enumerated in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4" (p. 16.19a). These Scriptures include extraordinary gifts (such as that of Apostles, Prophets, Miracles, Healing, Tongues and their interpretation), as well as ordinary ones (such as Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Helps and Governments).

In a letter of Hiram Edson's, written on Nov. 26, 1849, we have an instance in Adventism of what was considered "the gift of tongues": "That moment Bro. Ralph broke out in a new tongue, unknown to us all. Then came the interpretation" (*Present Truth*, Dec. 1849, p. 35). Farther on in the letter, we read: "Bro. Ralph spoke in a new tongue and gave the interpretation in power and in the demonstration of the Holy Ghost" (*ibid.*, p. 36). I have found no other case of this phenomenon in SDA publications, but there may be others. Nor have I read anywhere of Apostles among the Adventists. We have already seen (in Chapter I above) what emphasis they place on Mrs. White's possession of the prophetic gift. "They recognize that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White" (p. 16.19b). "The gift of healing" is also much emphasized, as a reference to the "Index to the writings of E. G. White" will demonstrate.

These unusual endowments, both in Irvingism and in Adventism, were, we are told, not under the control of their subjects. Baxter reports that he "never had any command over the power," and adds: "though I could refrain from speaking, yet I could not speak in power when I would, nor continue speaking when I had begun unless the power continued with me" (*Narrative*, p. 42). Referring to another, he says: "The power fell upon him, and he was carried out manifestly beyond

¹⁷⁸E.g., *Bible Readings for the Home*, pp. 150-52; W. H. Branson, *In Defense of the Faith*, p. 327; F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, Ch. 4; F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and her Critics*, Appendix B; L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith*, Vol. IV, p. 964.

himself" (*ibid.*, p. 63). Likewise, Mrs. White insisted that her visions were not subject to her own will. She consistently represents herself, not as acting, but as acted upon, in having them. We read such statements as these: "The power of God came upon me"; "I was taken off in vision"; "I was shown"; "I was instructed."

c. A third supposed proof of the high claims of these movements has been the singular phenomena that have attended them. Baxter tells the following experience when he went to see his brother. On the way, the power came upon him and showed him "that I should find my brother at home; and as I entered his paddock gate, he would come out of the house to meet me — that whilst I was there, he should receive the spirit and speak in the same power in which I spoke — that these should be signs to me of the truth of the things which were thus revealed" (*Narrative*, pp. 38-39). All of these things came to pass.

On another occasion, Baxter was shown that one of several strangers, present at the breakfast following the morning prayer-meeting, did not accept his prophesying. On hearing the voice of one of them, he says: "It was shown me he was the man. I said so to him and requested him to speak. He did speak out and showed very strikingly, how exactly his state of mind had been opened to me. . . . I know I had never seen the man, nor to my knowledge heard the sound of his voice, before I told out the state of his mind" (*ibid.*, p. 70).

Incidents such as these were constantly occurring in Irving's church. "The instances of such obvious discernment of thoughts are so numerous as to take away the possibility of their being accidental coincidences. In the case of one individual, when praying in silence in her own room, in three or four distinct instances, answers were given in the power, by a gifted person in the adjoining room. And in almost all the persons with whom I have conversed, who were brought into a belief of the power, instances of obvious discernment of their thoughts, or references to their particular state of mind, have been so striking, as to conduce to their recognition of the power" (*ibid.*, p. 135).

The same kind of thing appears in Adventism. D. T. Bourdeau, who served as Mrs. White's interpreter in Basel, Switzerland, in 1885, testified to her ability to delineate the conditions of mission fields or the characters of those she had never seen, so that he was compelled to exclaim: "It is enough. I want no further evidence of its genuineness" (*Review and Herald*, Nov.

10, 1885; quoted by W. A. Spicer in *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, p. 71).

Again we are told of an Adventist in Australia who persisted in retaining his high position in some secret order. When he went, at Mrs. White's invitation, to have an interview with her, she "went through motions and signs, unconsciously . . . signs of his order, which he knew she could not have understood; and in talking with him, she used certain passwords of the order. It helped him to understand that the message she had for him was of the Lord" (W. A. Spicer, *loc. cit.*, pp. 116-17). In this connection, we quote her own words: "When families and individuals were brought before me in vision, it was frequently the case that what was shown me in relation to them was of a private nature, reproving secret sins" (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 177). There was, for example, the case of "the deceitful woman" in the SDA church in Camden, N. Y., early in 1850. "As a result of this experience, our brethren and sisters in Camden, and their neighbours, were fully established in the belief that God had revealed to me the things which I had spoken" (*ibid.*, pp. 129-30).

On another occasion, Mrs. White had a vision of a council meeting which was held in Battle Creek four months later. When she gave her account of the meeting (less than two hours after its session in secret), those who had participated in it were compelled to acknowledge the parts they had played in it (*ibid.*, pp. 310-18). Those who have read extensively in Mrs. White's writings could cite other instances of like nature, such as the move to Washington, D.C., and the location of the Sanitarium at Loma Linda, Calif.¹⁷⁹ Also in this we see a striking similarity between Irvingism and Seventh-day Adventism.

7. Both movements have taught the sinfulness of Christ's human nature.¹⁸⁰ Irving's views on this subject are well-known. They are set forth in fulness in the last volume of his *Collected Writings*, edited by his nephew, the Rev. Gavin Carlyle. What appears there appears also in private letters addressed to Mr. Baxter; it was, indeed, the discovery of this heretical teaching in the movement that opened Baxter's eyes to its real character.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 393, 405, cf. pp. 155, 160, 282-3. Dreams are often mentioned in Adventist writings (e.g., *The Present Truth*, pp. 35, 36, 39, 40; *The Advent Review*, pp. 54, 55; *Life Incidents*, pp. 98-103; *R. and H.*, Vol. I, p. 70; Vol. II, p. 80). Bates, Edson, Rhodes and others, as well as Mrs. White, are mentioned as having significant dreams.

¹⁸⁰Both were unduly given to using the simple name "Jesus."

In a letter written from London, on Apr. 21, 1832, Irving reports that Miss Cardale, while under the power, declared that his view of Christ's humanity was correct. "I believe it to have been no better than other flesh, as to its passive qualities or properties, as a creature thing. But that the power of the Son of God, as son of man in it . . . did . . . receive such a measure of the Holy Ghost as sufficed to resist its own proclivity to the world and to Satan; and to make it obedient unto God in all things" (*Narrative*, pp. 103-7). In other words, Irving believed that though Christ's manhood had sin in it, the Holy Spirit enabled Him not to yield an inch to it. Sinful in nature, He was sinless in action, both inward and outward.

In a later communication (July 6, 1832), Irving stated the same doctrine: "My testimony to Jesus is, that in our flesh he was most holy. That his flesh was in itself no otherwise conditioned, nor is otherwise to be defined than ours, with all its laws, properties and propensities. But through his anointing of it, and upholding of it from first to last, it hath no other properties nor propensities than those which may be predicated of God — holy as he is — pure as he, yet temptible, mortal and corruptible as ours — until the resurrection changed its form and fashion altogether" (*ibid.*, p. 124). This simply means that, in Irving's view, though Christ's manhood was exactly like that of other men, and therefore sinful, yet *He Himself* was "most holy," and that the manhood which He, the Holy One, wore, was so upheld by the anointing Spirit as to be assimilated unto the very holiness of God.

This is also Adventism's doctrine of Christ's person, seeing that Mrs. White so taught. It is unnecessary to expand on the subject here, as I have dealt with it in Chapter IV above, and I refer the reader to what appears there.

Thus Adventism bears varied and unmistakable affinities to Irvingism. Although they had no external connection, yet their internal characteristics were the same. Both movements arose out of the conviction that the ascended Christ was just about to descend in the glory of His second advent. Both considered themselves to fulfill, specifically, the midnight cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." Both set definite dates for the momentous event. Both announced that God, who had rejected Romanism long before, had now rejected the Protestant churches also, and they warned the world of impending doom. Both made high claims for themselves as the sole, corporate representative of God in the earth, whose work it was to prepare a people for the returning Christ. Both have sought to substantiate these high

claims by calling attention to their spiritual message, their supernatural gifts and their singular phenomena. Finally, both have propagated the same doctrine of Christ's sinful manhood, maintaining that in itself it was just like that of Adam's fallen race. Thus these two movements, belonging to the same time, culture and faith, clearly belong in the same category.

But now, since there cannot be two "sole" representatives of God on earth at the end of the age, anymore than there can be two "supreme" Beings in heaven at any time, Adventism is compelled to reject Irvingism's high claims. However, seeing that Adventism is so much like Irvingism, in rejecting Irvingism, it inevitably passes sentence upon itself, for if the one is false, so is the other.

Not only is Adventism compelled to reject Irvingism's high claims; non-Adventists must also disallow them, and that on its own record. The Lord's return was not just about to occur in the 1830's; Irvingism's proclamation, "The Bridegroom cometh," was not the fulfillment of Matt. 25:6; and the precise date set for that coming was incorrect. Subsequent events have shown that God had not repudiated all the Protestant churches, and the high claims to being His sole corporate representative on earth has been disproved by simple facts. When its doctrinal message was carefully examined, it was shown to contain deadly error along with sublime truth; the supernatural gifts were found to have their source in Satan rather than in God, and the supposed divine phenomena proved to be only wiles of the enemy to delude the unwary.

But, seeing that Adventism is, so to speak, Irvingism's identical twin, we are further compelled to reject it as well. We do so on the basis of its plain record, too. Yet, as I conclude this damaging comparison of these two movements, I wish to say of Adventists what Baptist Noel said of Irvingites: "I am very far from the disposition to hold them up to scorn, feeling more sympathy with an honest though hurtful enthusiasm, than I can with a sour and supercilious orthodoxy."

An Appeal

I cannot let this review go forth without adding an appeal to my readers, whether they be Adventists or not. If they are Adventists, I appeal to them to ask the Lord to show them whatever of truth there may be in what I have written. No honest heart can decline to do this, for it involves no harm whatever, while it may result in everlasting good.

If my readers are not Adventists, I appeal to them to be perfectly fair in dealing with those who are. The cause of truth is not furthered by a careless reading of Adventist publications followed by an involuntary misrepresentation of their contents.

To all readers, both Adventists and others, I make this further appeal: to make very sure that their only ground of confidence, here and hereafter, is the Son of God made man who was crucified for our sins and raised again for our justification. Our very best will prove altogether inadequate in the Day of Judgment. Only the virtue of Christ's suffering will be able to shield us from the wrath which we deserve.

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