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Is literal rest on the seventh-day Sabbath a part of the "new covenant" experience to be enjoyed by Christians today? An answer to this question leads to the following interrelated sub-questions:

1. Is the seventh-day Sabbath a universal institution, or was it only for the literal Israelites?
2. Does the seventh-day Sabbath have an ongoing literal application, or was it a temporary type that lost its literal significance when it met its antitype?
3. Does the seventh-day Sabbath have theological significance for the present phase of the divine covenant, i.e., the "new covenant," or did it have theological significance only as part of the obsolete "old covenant"?

A Universal Sabbath

The seventh-day Sabbath is universal because it was instituted at Creation for the benefit of all human beings—before the nation of Israel existed. Genesis 2:2, 3 reads: "On the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (NKJV).¹

God rested. The Hebrew word translated "rested" here is from the verb that means "ceased," "desisted," or "rested" in the sense of desisting from labor. God ceased His work at the end of the Creation week because His work was complete, not because He was tired. On the seventh day He stopped to celebrate what could be regarded as the "birthday" of the world.

There is evidence that God intended not only to celebrate, but also to provide an example for human beings. Exodus 31:17 refers to God being "refreshed" as a result of His rest on the seventh day of Creation. The verb translated "refreshed" here is used only three times in the Hebrew Bible (Ex. 23:12; 31:17; 2 Sam. 16:14). In 2 Samuel 16:14, it describes David and his people recovering from fatigue from their flight from Absalom. Exodus 23:12 reiterates the Sabbath command given in the Ten Commandments (20:8-11).

In this context, rest on the seventh-day Sabbath clearly relieves the fatigue of human beings and animals and refreshes them. Now the question arises: If rest describes relief from fatigue in Exodus 23:12 and 2 Samuel 16:14, why does Exodus 31:17 use the same word with reference to God being "refreshed"? The answer lies in the purpose of Exodus 31:12-17, which is to have God's

people follow His example by resting on the seventh day of the week. Even though God did not need rest from fatigue, the Bible here speaks of Him anthropomorphically as receiving some kind of refreshing benefit to show people how to rest on the seventh day, as a result of which they would gain relief from fatigue.

Lest it should seem strange that God would do something as an example for human beings, consider two similar cases:

- In the Israelite ritual system, the blood of a sacrificial animal was drained out and applied to the outside or horns of the altar in the courtyard (Lev. 1:5; 4:25) or to the area of the outer sanctum and the horns of the incense altar (4:6, 7) with the remainder disposed of by pouring it out at the base of the outer altar (vs. 7). The blood did not go up to God in smoke along with the meat as a "pleasing aroma" (1:9). Why not? Because the meat constituted a "food gift" to God (Num. 28:2), and God had commanded the Israelites not to eat meat without draining out the blood because the blood represents the life (Lev. 17:10-12; Gen. 9:4). By not eating blood with their meat, the Israelites acknowledged that they did not have ultimate control over life. But God did have such control. So why didn't He show it by accepting blood with His meat? Apparently, because He wanted to be an example to His people, thereby practicing what He preached.

- Jesus asked John the Baptist to baptize Him, but John recognized that Jesus did not need baptism (Matt. 3:13, 14). Baptism symbolizes purification from sin (Rom. 6:1-5), but Jesus was sinless (Heb. 4:15). Nevertheless, He insisted that John baptize Him, saying: "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).

So Jesus went through the process of baptism because it is part of a righteous human life, even though the righteousness which He already possessed transcended the fallen state and did not require baptism.

God's rest also served as an example for human Sabbath observance. But did this example begin to operate thousands of years after Creation, or did God intend for human beings to follow His example from the beginning? Jesus succinctly answered the question by declaring that "the sabbath was made for humankind" (Mark 2:27, NRSV). He viewed the original purpose of the Sabbath as providing benefit to human beings. This means that when God rested on the seventh day of Creation, He did not simply intend to benefit Himself.

It is true there is nothing in the text of Genesis 2 explicitly stating the Sabbath was made for human beings, as Jesus later declared. Nor does Genesis state that the Sabbath is to be an ongoing, cyclical event, occurring on each seventh day. Genesis did not need to explicitly state these things, however, because the context makes them clear.

Consider the following contextual factors:

1. According to Genesis 2:3, God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. Thus, God must have endowed this day with a special relationship to Himself, who alone is intrinsically holy (1 Sam. 2:2). But how can a day be holy? A day is a unit of time, which is not a material substance, so it cannot be made holy by application of a holy substance, such as anointing oil. It must be consecrated

in relation to beings who are affected by it.

The only way for intelligent beings to make/treat time as holy is by altering their behavior. Thus, God altered His behavior on the seventh day of Creation, the archetype of the weekly Sabbath, and proclaimed the day holy. Skinner points out, regarding the Sabbath in Genesis 2:1-3: "It is not an institution which exists or ceases with its observance by man; the divine rest is a fact as much as the divine working, and so the sanctity of the day is a fact whether man secures the benefit or not."²

But what sense would it make to say that God blessed the day if He intended this unit of holy time to benefit only Himself? Elsewhere in the Creation story, God's blessings were outgoing, for the benefit of His creatures (Gen. 1:22, 28). So could we imagine that on the seventh day God rested and admired His handiwork while humankind toiled in the garden? The blessing must be for created beings living in the world where the seventh day operated. To receive the blessing, these beings would consecrate the day as God did, by altering their behavior. The blessing results from activity that acknowledges the consecration. As Skinner put it: "The Sabbath is a constant source of well-being to the man who recognises its true nature and purpose."³

2. God made human beings in His image (Gen. 1:26, 27) and commissioned them to continue the work of creation by being fruitful and multiplying (vs. 28). He also gave them the work of having dominion/responsibility over the earth (vss. 26-28; 2:15). If human beings are made in God's image and are to emulate God by working on their level as God worked on His, it would stand to reason that they should also emulate God by resting from their work as God rested from His.

3. On each of the first six days of creation, God did something that had ongoing results for our world. Thus, we expect that what He did on the seventh day would also have earthly ongoing results.

4. God set up cyclical time even before humankind was created (Gen. 1:3-5, 14-18). According to Genesis 1:14, God made heavenly bodies, chiefly the Sun and Moon (vs. 16), to mark earthly time as "signs," "seasons," i.e., appointed times, days, and years. So when Genesis 2:3 says that God blessed and hallowed the seventh day, this blessing and consecration could be ongoing in a cyclical sense, applying to each subsequent seventh day. In fact, the seventh-day Sabbath provides a plausible explanation for the origin of the week, which is not defined by the movement of heavenly bodies.

The Creation story does not contain a command for human beings to observe the Sabbath. But neither does it contain commands to honor one's parents or to abstain from idolatry, adultery, murder, or any other prohibitions in the Ten Commandments. In Genesis 1-2 God was concerned with setting up the ideal order of relationships rather than commanding protection of existing relationships. For human beings, He instituted the Sabbath, marriage, and work. These three institutions embody principles later expressed also in the Ten Commandments.

According to Genesis 3, when Adam and Eve showed disrespect for God's lordship by eating the fruit of a forbidden tree (Gen. 3:6), their marriage and work suffered as a result of the curse of sin (vss. 16-19). But there is an important omission in Genesis 3: The Sabbath is not affected by any curse resulting from the Fall. Unlike the other two Creation institutions, the Sabbath remains a little

piece of Paradise. As such, its value is enhanced by the deterioration around it. Now that work is exhausting, ceasing from labor on the Sabbath provides needed rest. More importantly, now that human beings are cut off from direct access to God, they need a reminder of His lordship even more than they did before the Fall.

Though the Fall made marriage and labor difficult and reduced their joy, it did not take away human responsibility with regard to any of the Creation institutions or the principles that they embody. When Cain murdered Abel, showing disrespect for the life that had been given by God through the marriage of Adam and Eve, God held him accountable (Gen. 4:9-15). Genesis does not say that the sixth commandment was formulated as such before Cain killed Abel, but Cain was a murderer anyway because he violated the order God had established. Just as we cannot say that the obligation to abstain from murder could not exist before the sixth of the Ten Commandments was given to Israel, so we cannot say that the Sabbath could not exist as a human responsibility before the fourth commandment was given.

It is true that the Pentateuchal narratives do not mention the seventh day as a day of ceasing from work between the time God rested on the seventh day of Creation (2:2, 3) and the time He commanded the Israelites to observe Sabbath in the wilderness on the way to Mt. Sinai (Ex. 16:23-30). But neither do the early Pentateuchal narratives record the specific obligation to refrain from taking God's name in vain. This is stated in the third of the Ten Commandments and illustrated in a later narrative (Lev. 24:11-16, 23). The early silence does not constitute evidence that God did not expect people to do these things, which were implied by the Creation order.

The context of Genesis 2:2, 3 indicates that when God ceased work ("sabbathed") on the seventh day of the Creation week, He did not abruptly stop setting up ongoing life for human beings on planet Earth and start doing something *ad hoc* exclusively for Himself. By His own example, He created the Sabbath as the capstone and delineator of the ongoing weekly cycle for human beings. He had created the world, vegetation, and nonhuman life by speaking. He had created human beings by forming dust, breathing His breath into nostrils, and using a rib. And then He created the blessed and holy Sabbath by "sabbathing" Himself.

It is clear that God instituted the Sabbath for all human beings on Earth because He instituted it in the beginning, long before Israel existed, along with basic elements of human life such as marriage and labor. The fact that the Sabbath shows up as one of the Ten Commandments that God gave to Israel at Sinai does not negate the universality of the Sabbath, but rather supports it because the other nine commandments are universal principles applicable beyond the boundaries of the literal Israelite nation.

O. Palmer Robertson, a Presbyterian scholar, wrote: "His blessing of this day had a significant effect on the world. Furthermore, the reference to God's blessing the day should not be interpreted as meaning that God blessed the day with respect to himself. It was with respect to his creation, and with respect to man in particular that God blessed the Sabbath day. As Jesus indicated pointedly, 'the Sabbath came into being . . . for the sake of man . . .'" (Mark 2:27). Because it was for the good of

man and the whole of creation, God instituted the Sabbath.

“Neither antinomianism nor dispensationalism may remove the obligation of the Christian today to observe the creation ordinance of the Sabbath. The absence of any explicit command concerning Sabbath-observance prior to Moses does not relegate the Sabbath principle to temporary legislation of the law-epoch. The creational character of God’s sabbath-blessing must be remembered. From the very beginning, God set a distinctive blessing on the Sabbath . . . God blessed man through the Sabbath by delivering him from slavery to work.”⁴

God invested the Sabbath with additional significance when He reaffirmed it for the Israelite nation. In addition to its function as a reminder of Creation (Ex. 20:11), the Sabbath became a reminder of God’s deliverance of His people from Egypt (Deut. 5:15). The latter event is thematically related to the former. God delivered His people from Egypt because they were His, by virtue of His creative power, which was displayed in the 10 plagues on Egypt and in His miraculous protection and provision for the Israelites in the wilderness. Thus, God’s deliverance was a manifestation of the ongoing divine creative power that Daniel proclaimed to King Belshazzar: “the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways” (Dan. 5:23).

Because of its importance, the Sabbath was honored in the worship system of the Israelites. This is to be expected. It would be surprising if the Sabbath were not honored in this way. Additional sacrifices were offered at the Israelite sanctuary/temple on the Sabbath (Num. 28:9, 10). The “bread of the presence” on the golden table inside the sacred tent was changed every Sabbath as “an everlasting covenant” (Lev. 24:8). This bread is the only offering at the sanctuary referred to in this way as an eternal covenant. It is no accident that it was renewed every Sabbath. The only other reference to an “everlasting covenant” between God and the Israelites as a whole during the wilderness period is in Exodus 31:16, 17, in which the Sabbath, the memorial of Creation, is called an eternal covenant. Thus, the “bread of the presence” offering, consisting of 12 loaves plus frankincense, was placed upon the golden table every Sabbath to acknowledge the dependence of the 12 tribes of Israel upon God as their resident Creator-Provider.

The fact that the Sabbath was an important part of Israelite worship does not mean that it was only for the Israelites. It is true that the earthly sanctuary/temple and its rituals have given way to Christ’s glorious heavenly ministry (Hebrews 7–10). It is also true that for most Christians, the Sabbath does not represent the redemption of their literal ancestors from Egypt. But the honored place of the Sabbath in the worship system of Israel at a particular phase of the divine covenant does not change its significance for people living at other times and places.

Ongoing Sabbath or Temporary Type?

The ongoing applicability of the Sabbath, which God instituted at Creation, has not ceased because the Sabbath has never functioned as a temporary type.

If God instituted the Sabbath for human beings before the Fall, the function/applicability of the Sabbath cannot be dependent upon its belonging to the system of temporary types that God set up

after the Fall to lead human beings back to belief in Him. The Sabbath cannot be a temporary type because it pre-existed the need for temporary types.

Even if the Sabbath had originated as a human institution when God gave it to the Israelites, it would not necessarily follow that the Sabbath functioned as a temporary type to be superseded by the Christian "rest" experience. It is true that in Hebrews 4, Sabbath rest is used to symbolize a life of peaceful rest, involving all days of the week, which results from believing in God.

Perhaps it could be said that as a microcosm of such a life, the Sabbath in a broad sense "typifies" such a life. This idea is simply an extension of the significance that the Sabbath has had since Creation. But this does not mean *a priori* that the Sabbath is a temporary, historical/horizontal kind of type like the Israelite sacrificial system. Nor does the fact that human beings imitate God by keeping the Sabbath indicate that the Sabbath is a temporary vertical type like the Israelite sanctuary. As such, the Sabbath is fundamentally different from the Israelite festivals, on which rituals functioning as types constituted the essence of observance.

Sabbath as a Historical/Horizontal Type?

A historical/horizontal type consists of something that prefigures something in the future that constitutes its antitype. When the antitype commences, the type becomes obsolete. Thus, for example, the levitical priesthood was superseded by the greater Melchizedek priesthood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 7:10). The levitical priesthood functioned as a type in one era and ceased to function when its antitype, Christ's priesthood, began to function in the next era. Another example is the ritual of Passover, which Christ fulfilled and therefore superseded when He died on the cross. Sacrificing literal sheep at the time of Passover can no longer point forward to Christ's death because that event is now in the past.

In the case of a historical/horizontal type, the type has significance, and then the antitype replaces it. The type and antitype do not function at the same time. A crucial test of whether the Sabbath functions as a historical type of a God-given life of "rest" is: Can the Sabbath function at the same time as the life of rest? The answer which arises from Hebrews 4 is Yes. In Hebrews 4, God's "rest" has not suddenly become available for Christians; it was available all along and was not fully appropriated in Old Testament times only because of unbelief. Because the life of rest was available in Old Testament times, at the same time when the Sabbath was in operation for the Israelites, the Sabbath cannot be a historical type of the life of rest.

Hebrews 4 appeals to Christians to succeed where people in Old Testament times failed. The condition for entering and remaining in God's rest is belief, and that is still true during the Christian era, or Hebrews 4 would not need to make its appeal to "make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs" (Heb. 4:11, NRSV). It is those who have believed who are entering God's rest (vs. 3). The Christian era does not change the basic dynamic of entering God's rest through belief.

There is in Hebrews 4 no discontinuity between the Old Testament and New Testament eras

that we find in connection with the Israelite levitical priesthood or the sacrifices officiated by that priesthood. Though the idea of divine rest belongs both to the seventh-day Sabbath and the "rest" experience given by God to those who believe, the Sabbath and the rest of believers can function in the same era. If the Israelites had believed, the rest experience and the Sabbath would have functioned at the same time. The fact that this was possible shows that the Sabbath did not function as a temporary type that could be fulfilled only when the Christian era commenced.

The Sabbath and God's "rest" are not mutually exclusive, but rather, they are complementary. Insofar as keeping the seventh-day Sabbath expresses and helps maintain belief in God, it contributes to the experience of entering God's rest. Therefore, when God offered His "rest" to the Israelites, He offered the Sabbath along with it. The Sabbath was supposed to be part of God's "rest," and there is no indication in the Bible that this has changed.

At first glance, Colossians 2:16, 17 could appear to contradict what has been concluded thus far: "Do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ" (NRSV). In verse 17, *shadow* means "temporary type." So does this mean that the "sabbaths" mentioned in verse 16 functioned as temporary types?

The issue here is ritual observance of special holy days. "Festivals," "new moons," or "sabbaths" inverts the order found in Numbers 28–29, where the calendar of ritual offerings on holy days includes offerings on Sabbaths (vss. 9, 10), new moons (vss. 11–15), and festivals (28:16–29:40). These offerings were part of the Israelite worship system. But it was the rituals performed on the days, not the days themselves, that functioned as the types. In Colossians 2:17, the pronoun *these* identifies the shadowy things as the list in verse 16: "food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths" in verse 16. Along with food and drink, which in this context must be religious in nature because they have typological significance, it is ritual observance of the festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths that constitutes the "shadow"/type; it is not the days themselves. There is no evidence that new moon days, for example, had typological significance of their own; it was the special sacrifices offered on new moon days (Num. 28:11–15) that served as a "shadow."

In Colossians 2:16, 17, Paul affirms the same basic message decided at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15): People do not need to practice the Jewish rituals in order to be Christians. The rituals were historical types pointing forward to the better, truly efficacious ministry of Jesus Christ, which has already begun and to which our focus should be directed.

So what about the prohibition of labor on the Sabbath, which is part of the Ten Commandments? Was this part of the ritual system that functioned as a shadow of things to come? No. It is true that the ritual system honored the Sabbath, but Sabbath rest itself is not a historical shadow/type, and abstaining from work on the Sabbath existed before any ritual system was needed. Moreover, even for the Israelites, keeping Sabbath rest was never dependent upon the operation of the sanctuary/temple or its services. It could be observed wherever God's people found themselves.

By recognizing the temporary nature of the Israelite ritual element that had been added by God to the Sabbath, Paul implies an affirmation of the underlying universality of the Sabbath, which can be kept by anyone apart from the Israelite ritual system. Paul did not touch the original function of the Sabbath itself. If he had, we can be sure there would have been a major uproar in the Christian Church, calling for a council like the one in Jerusalem that dealt with the controversy over circumcision (Acts 15).

Sabbath as a Vertical Type?

If the Sabbath does not function as a temporary historical/horizontal type, is it possible that it functioned as a temporary vertical type, like the Israelite sanctuary on earth that served as a copy of God's temple in heaven above? Could human, earthly rest on the seventh day be a copy of divine heavenly rest?

1. Just because human beings imitate God in some respect does not indicate the existence of a temporary vertical type. In Leviticus 19:2, for example, God commands the Israelites to be holy as He is holy. The fact that the rest of Leviticus 19 consists of laws governing divine-human and human-human relationships indicates that the aspect of holiness in view is that of character. This call to emulate God's character is repeated in 1 Peter 1:16, quoting Leviticus 19:2. It is clearly a timeless command.

2. In Genesis 2:2, 3, God rested on the seventh day in connection with His creation of this world. There is no indication that the Sabbath was originally a heavenly institution that was then copied on Earth in the same way that the earthly sanctuary was a copy of an original heavenly temple.

3. If the Sabbath were a temporary vertical type, we would expect some indication in the Bible regarding the end of its typical significance as we have in the case of the earthly sanctuary. The earthly temple lost its significance when the original heavenly temple took the place of the earthly as the location toward which worship should be directed (Hebrews 7-10). But there is no such indication that a similar dynamic applies to the Sabbath.

Sabbath and the Israelite Festivals

If literal observance of the seventh-day Sabbath does not function as a temporary type and therefore should be maintained, should we also be obliged to keep elements of the Jewish festivals that do not function as temporary types?

It is true that not every activity connected with the Israelite worship system functioned as a temporary type. For example, the priestly blessing (Num. 6:23-27) and prayers and music offered at the temple (1 Sam 1:10, 11) were simply part of the ongoing religious experience and did not function as types.

But the rituals, which constituted the essence of observance of the festivals, did function as historical temporary types. According to the Bible, all of the Israelite spring festivals met their

antitypes at the beginning of the Christian era. Christ died as the antitype of the Passover lamb (John 19:14). "Christ rose and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20), i.e., as the antitype of the festival wave sheaf (Lev. 23:11). The Feast of Weeks, known as Pentecost, when the first fruits of wheat were harvested, met its antitype in the early Christian harvest of souls through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).

If the spring festivals were temporary types, it stands to reason that the autumn festivals, when even more sacrifices were offered (Numbers 29), also functioned as temporary types. Unlike the Sabbath, the essence of festival observance is constituted by ritual, which functions as type.

Even if the Feast of Booths (so-called Feast of Tabernacles), which was the last of the autumn festivals (Lev. 23:33-43; Num. 29:12-38), has not yet met its antitype, this does not mean that Christians should be required to keep it today. According to the New Testament, Christian worship is directed toward Christ in the heavenly sanctuary (Hebrews 7-10) rather than toward the resident Shekinah in an earthly sanctuary having human priests and a yearly cycle of national festivals.

The Israelite festivals were part of and owed their existence to the Israelite worship system. This system was grounded in the experience of the Israelite nation within its historical and agricultural context and limited to that phase of the covenant in which election of literal Israel operated.

We cannot, of course, fully keep the biblical festivals even if we want to because that would require pilgrimages to a temple in Jerusalem, where sacrifices would be offered. Following the destruction of the second temple in A.D. 70, the Jews developed adapted versions of the festivals that do not require sacrifices or pilgrimage. In this way, the Jews can continue to keep the festivals. These observances are based on important elements of the biblical festivals, to which postbiblical traditional liturgical and didactic elements have been added.

If modern Christians wish to participate in a Jewish festival occasion such as the Passover Seder, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), or Sukkot (Booths), they may find personal enrichment and edification. But Jewish postbiblical adaptations should not be confused with the mandatory biblical forms of the ancient Israelite festivals, which no longer exist.

The Israelite festivals have been carried on by the Jews because these observances commemorate the historical events that formed their nation, thereby keeping their heritage alive. As Christians, we share their heritage in the sense that we recognize the way God used the Israelites to reveal Himself and His purposes to the world. However, biblical events such as the Exodus from Egypt, which is remembered in the Passover service, did not happen to our ancestors. Those events were limited to the experience of a particular people. But that limited exodus pointed forward to a universal exodus that belongs to all human beings equally: our exodus from sin and the control of Satan through the sacrificed body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb. To keep this universal exodus alive, Jesus gave all Christians the Communion service, a Christian Passover that replaces the biblical Israelite Passover. Since the Communion service utilizes only bread and wine and does not require a human priest officiating at a temple, it can continue to function following the

destruction of the second temple.

Jesus created the Last Supper on the occasion of the biblical Passover, while the second temple was still standing, well before the Jews adapted the festivals for their own purposes. If Christ meant for Christians to keep altered forms of the festivals other than Passover, we would expect Him to have taught us what to do, as He did at the Last Supper.

There is a fundamental difference between Israelite and Christian worship. The center and focus of the Israelite worship system was God dwelling among His people on earth, the resident Shekinah enthroned above the cherubim in the holiest apartment of the sanctuary/temple. The sacrifices, festivals, songs, and prayers of the Israelites were directed toward God in His earthly dwelling place. They knew, of course, that God also lives in heaven (Ps. 11:4) and that an earthly building cannot contain Him, but their worship reached heaven via the earthly sanctuary/temple.

Notice the wording in Solomon's dedicatory prayer: "Hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive" (1 Kings 8:30). So Israelites prayed horizontally toward the temple, and from there the prayers went vertically to heaven. Notice that Daniel prayed horizontally toward Jerusalem even when the temple lay in ruins (Dan. 6:10).

Unlike the Israelites under the Sinaitic covenant, Christians under the "New Covenant" are to orient their worship directly to the heavenly temple, where Christ ministers as their High Priest (Hebrews 7-10). Christians do not need an earthly temple or mediation by earthly priests. By faith in the mediation of Christ, we can send our prayers vertically from wherever we are directly to God's "throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).

There is a basic difference between the Sabbath and the Israelite festivals. The festivals were limited to the Sinaitic/Israelite phase of God's covenant by several factors:

- The essence of festival observance involved rituals functioning as temporary historical types.
- For their full observance, the festivals were dependent upon continuation of the Israelite ritual system.

- The festivals were rooted in the particular national religious experience of the Israelite people.

By contrast, observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is not subject to any of these limitations. It is not a temporary type, it is not dependent upon continuation of the Israelite ritual system, and it is universal in origin. There is no reason to believe that the Sabbath was restricted to the Sinaitic phase of God's covenant.

Sabbath as Part of the "New Covenant"?

As a sign of the ongoing dependence of human beings upon their Creator and His work, the seventh-day Sabbath continues to have significance for the "new covenant." The fact that the Sabbath functioned during the "old covenant" period does not mean that the Sabbath became obsolete with that covenant. Rather, there is a sense in which the significance of the Sabbath is restored under the "new covenant."

When God reaffirmed the Sabbath for Israel, the Sabbath was more than a commandment. According to Exodus 31:13, 17, the Sabbath functioned as a sign of the covenant relationship by which He sanctified the Israelites. This function applied to Israel a principle that had been inherent in the Sabbath since Creation.

On the seventh day of Creation, God sanctified the Sabbath (Gen. 2:2, 3), a unit of time. Why? In order to affect those who observe this special time. How would they be affected? They would emulate their holy Creator and acknowledge their ongoing connection with Him. Because they would belong to God, who is intrinsically holy, they would gain holiness from Him. In other words, the Sabbath would be a sign that God makes people holy, just as He explicitly said in Exodus 31:13 with particular reference to the Israelites. From the beginning, God's desire has been for all people to enjoy a holy relationship with Him.

The divine-human relationship signified by the Sabbath is one in which human beings are dependent upon God and His work. Thus, those who rest on the Sabbath acknowledge ""that I am the Lord who sanctifies you"" (Ex. 31:13) and that ""in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth"" (vs. 17). The Sabbath is not simply the immovable "birthday of the world"; it recognizes the dependence of the world, and more particularly the human beings who have dominion over the world, on God who created the world. Our dependence on God is based not only upon what He did for us thousands of years ago. According to the Bible, He continues to sustain His creatures (Dan. 5:23; Ps 114:14, 15).

God will always be our Creator and Sustainer. Therefore, the basic meaning of the Sabbath, which encapsulates this divine-human relationship, is timeless; it cannot become obsolete as long as human beings inhabit planet Earth.

It is true that God expressed the Sabbath to the Israelites in the form of a law. It is also true that the Israelite phase of the covenant, which emphasized law, was defective and had to be replaced by the "new covenant." But this does not mean that the Sabbath became obsolete along with the Israelite "old covenant." The "old covenant" was defective because Israel's response to God's covenant initiative was defective, not because God gave the "old covenant" to Israel as a faulty means of salvation by works.

There was nothing wrong with the covenant God offered to Israel. Like earlier phases of the covenant, it was based upon grace. This is shown by the fact that God first saved Israel by grace, and then He gave His commandments to them. In Exodus 20, obedience to the Ten Commandments (vss. 3-17) is a response to the prior grace of ""the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage"" (vs. 2).

Earlier Old Testament covenants were also based upon grace. God first saved Noah from the Flood (Gen. 7:1-8:19) and then formally inaugurated the covenant by giving Noah an ongoing covenant promise (8:21, 22), blessings and commandments (9:1-7), and a sign of the promise (9:8-17). God first gave Abraham a military victory, keeping him safe as He saved Lot from His captors (Genesis 14), and then God formally inaugurated the covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15,

17).

To Israel, as to Noah and Abraham, God offered salvation by grace through faith, as in the Christian era (Eph. 2:8). There has never been a different way of salvation. The divine covenants are unified and function as phases of cumulative development in God's overall plan.

It is true that Christ has eclipsed the Mosaic law in the sense that He is a more glorious revelation of God's character (2 Corinthians 3). But this means that Christ's revelation sheds greater light on the divine principles that constitute God's law. Christ magnified God's law; He did not replace law as a means of salvation because God has never offered salvation on that basis.

Though no amount of our own works can purchase our salvation, our works are a necessary part of the faith response that accepts the gift of salvation that God freely gives to us. Real, living faith works through love (Gal. 5:6). If faith does not have works, it is dead faith (James 2:26), not the kind of faith through which we can be saved by grace (Eph. 2:8). Living in harmony with God's principles results from forgiveness. As Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery: "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more" (John 8:11).

Doesn't the idea that obedience to God is necessary contradict the dynamic of salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8)? No, because obedience is a gift of grace. According to Romans 5:5, the Holy Spirit pours love into our hearts. Thus, God gives us love, the principle upon which law-keeping is based (Matt. 22:36-40), as a gift. The fact that the Holy Spirit was available to people in Old Testament times (Neh. 9:20) indicates that the gift of love by the Spirit is not restricted to the Christian era.

Deuteronomy 6 informs us that God wanted the Israelites to respond to His prior grace by having an internalized, heart relationship with him. He commanded them: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart" (Deut. 6:5, 6). Upon this principle of love for God and upon the principle of love for fellow human beings (Lev. 19:18) all of God's Old Testament commandments were based (Matt. 22:36-40). Only by accepting these principles and the more specific commandments that flowed from them would the Israelites accept God's lordship through which they would continue to be saved. This explains why God said: "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord" (Lev. 18:5).

So God offered to the Israelites a covenant of grace and internalized love. But it takes two parties to make a covenant. The good covenant became a defective "old covenant" because the divine-human relationship became dysfunctional due to human failure to have a heart relationship with God.

This is clear from Jeremiah 31:31-34, which first mentions the "new covenant": "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts;

and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

From this passage we can see that the difference between the "old covenant" and the "new covenant" is not the difference between "law" and "grace." Rather, it is the difference between failure to internalize God's law, resulting in disobedience, and successful internalization of God's law, resulting in obedience. It is harder to break the law when it is internalized; sin against law in the heart would be a "myocardial infraction."

When the Israelites were disobedient and failed to receive sanctification from the Lord, any Sabbath-keeping they did would have been a hypocritical outward form (Isaiah 58). But by accepting God's grace and internalizing His law, including the Sabbath, the people could become holy as God is holy (Lev. 19:2). Thus the Sabbath could be a true sign of a real sanctification experience (Ex. 31:13; Isaiah 58).

Jacques Doukhan points out: "In obeying the fourth commandment, the believer does not negate the value of grace. On the contrary, the awareness of grace is implied. Through obedience to God's law, the believer expresses faith in God's grace. This principle is particularly valid when it applies to the Sabbath, because in it not only the divine law but also divine grace are magnified."⁵

By restoring sanctification, the "new covenant" restores the Sabbath to its true significance. Instead of being a hypocritical "tour de *farce*," the Sabbath points to a living reality: People who are allowing God to sanctify them keep the sanctified day.

During His ministry, Jesus showed Christians how to live under the "new covenant." He didn't wait to begin teaching Christians how to live until He had officially inaugurated the "new covenant" era with His broken body and spilled blood. So Jesus' example regarding the seventh-day Sabbath has prime relevance for Christians today. Luke 4:16 says: "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue."

If Jesus had simply participated in Jewish worship on the Sabbath, the significance of His example would be limited. But the fact that He took so much trouble to restore the Sabbath to its rightful place shows that it was of great importance for Him and therefore should be important for Christians. Jesus risked controversy and danger by healing people on the Sabbath, thereby stripping away hypocritical human tradition and showing by example the purpose of the Sabbath as it was originally created by God's own example (Mark 2:27).

It is no accident that Jesus made a point of healing people on the Sabbath, thereby lifting their burdens and giving them rest from their suffering. His healing was a manifestation of His ongoing divine creative power. When Jesus was persecuted for healing on the Sabbath, He responded: "My Father is still working, and I also am working" (John 5:17, NRSV). Because of the divine creative work, human beings can have rest.

Moreover, according to Philip Yancey, Jesus' miracles provided "snapshots" of God's ideal for

the world as He created it and to which He will restore it: "Some see miracles as an implausible suspension of the laws of the physical universe. As signs, though, they serve just the opposite function. Death, decay, entropy, and destruction are the true suspensions of God's laws; miracles are the early glimpses of restoration. In the words of Jurgen Moltmann, 'Jesus' healings are not supernatural miracles in a natural world. They are the only truly "natural" things in a world that is unnatural, demonized and wounded.'"⁶

Under the "new covenant" phase of the divine covenant, God restores the world and human beings to the sinless ideal He had for them in the beginning (Revelation 21–22). Since the Sabbath was part of the "covenant of Creation," before human sin arose, it is appropriate that the Sabbath continue into the sinless "new earth."

Evidence that the Sabbath will continue as a day of worship into the eschatological era is found in Isaiah 66:22, 23: "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the Lord."

The context of these verses shows that Isaiah envisioned the Eschaton through the lens of God's plan to use literal Israel to gather all nations to Himself at Jerusalem. As shown by comparison with the Book of Revelation, God will still gather all nations to Himself (Rev. 7:9, 10). Since the Sabbath was universal from the beginning, there is no reason that it should be regarded as an obsolete element in Isaiah's eschatological description.

Isaiah 66:23 mentions ongoing eschatological worship on new moon days along with worship on sabbaths. Like sabbaths, new moons were honored by extra sacrifices in the Israelite ritual system (Num. 28:11-15). But this does not mean that new moon days cannot be worship days apart from the ritual system. (See the same point above regarding the Sabbath). According to Genesis 1:14, before sin or the ritual system existed, God created and appointed the Sun and the Moon "to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years." The term translated "seasons" refers to "appointed times." In passages such as Leviticus 23:2, 4, 37, 44, this word refers to regular, cyclical times of worship. In Genesis 1:14, the term could not include the Sabbath because the weekly cycle is not marked by movements of the Sun or Moon in relation to the Earth as are days, months, and years. But new moons would fit well into the category of "seasons" in Genesis 1:14. Thus, eschatological observance of regular worship at new moons could revive a potential that was recognized at Creation.

Two qualifications must be made here:

1. Isaiah 66:23 mentions sabbaths and new moons as days of worship. But whereas sabbaths by definition are days of rest, new moons are not. Sabbaths are consecrated as sabbaths by cessation of ordinary weekly activity. New moons are constituted as such by the position of the Moon in relation to the Earth (Gen. 1:14). So Isaiah 66:23 does not indicate that new moons will be observed as days of rest in the New Earth.

2. Since God sanctified the seventh-day Sabbath and instituted cessation of labor on this day by His example, which He subsequently reinforced by His command, the Sabbath is naturally a day of worship. But the Bible does not indicate that we should observe new moons as days of worship in the Christian era. It is true that new moons were honored by additional sacrifices at the Israelite sanctuary (Num. 28:11-15), but that appears to be all the attention they received. In fact, though the cultic calendar of Numbers 28 includes new moons because it lists the sacrifices, the list of cyclical appointed worship times in Leviticus 23 passes directly from seventh-day Sabbaths (vs. 3) to yearly festivals (vss. 4ff), without mention of new moons at all. The implication seems to be that the new moons did not function as special days of worship except for the addition of some sacrifices.

The "old covenant," as opposed to the "new covenant," was not a different means of salvation established by God during Old Testament times, but rather, it was a relationship with Israel that was defective due to failure of the human party. So the "new covenant" does not supersede the "old covenant" by abolishing all aspects of what God offered to the Israelites, including His reaffirmation of the Sabbath. Rather, the "new covenant" fulfills the only ideal God has ever had for His people: a heart relationship with Him. As an important sign of the divine-human relationship, the Sabbath is restored to its full significance under the "new covenant."

The seventh-day Sabbath as a day of rest was given to the human race at Creation, before there was a nation of Israel and before humanity needed redemption from sin. Therefore, the applicability of the Sabbath is not limited to the Israelite worship system or to the period of salvation history during which ritual observances functioned as temporary types. The Sabbath is for all human beings, whether or not they are sinners and whether or not they are Israelites. The Sabbath did not become obsolete along with the elective covenant with Israel, which became dysfunctional due to human failure. To the contrary, the Christian "new covenant" restores the significance of the Sabbath when God's people have the experience of which the Sabbath has always been a sign: sanctification by God, the Creator who sanctified the Sabbath in the first place.

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Perspective Digest - a publication of the Adventist Theological Society

Apocalyptic and Free Will

How can we reconcile freedom of choice with apocalyptic prophecy?

Robert M. Johnston

Adventism, historically speaking, is firmly grounded in apocalypticism, as indeed also was early Christianity. Adventism, as an heir of Millerism, was born of the study of the books of Daniel and Revelation, supplemented by the "Little Apocalypse of the Olivet Discourse" (Mark 13; Matthew 24–25; Luke 21), and even, during the beginnings of the movement, some attention to 2 Esdras.

It has become commonplace to distinguish between two types of Hebrew literary prophecy: classical and apocalyptic. Classical prophecy had its roots in the warnings and promises of Deuteronomy 27–30. The summation is 30:15-18: "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess."¹

As Isaiah puts it succinctly, "If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (1:19, 20).

All the classical prophecies are warnings or promises that are explicitly or implicitly conditional upon the response and behavior of the people of Israel. It assumes that they have within their power the ability to choose the path that they will take, and the fulfillment is in this age. The predictions of disaster will be fulfilled only if the people do not respond to them by repentance and obedience. In other words, classical prophecy is predicated on the assumption of free will.

Apocalyptic prophecy is different. It assumes that the future is completely out of human control. Divine intervention comes from without and brings history to an end, and the history is predetermined from the beginning. The present world is hopeless, but in the end, God will be victorious, and He has total control of events. As Gowan says, "The basis for this hope is strongly *deterministic* theology which appears most prominently in two places: where the existence of evil is explained . . . and where the future is predicted. Obviously the seer can know what the future will be only if it has already been determined by someone with the power to assure that things will come out that way, and they firmly believe that to be true about the God of Israel."²

Examination of a book like Daniel seems to confirm the accuracy of this description. Not only is there a scripted scenario, but there are also timetables that will be followed. The train is on a track, and it will not be derailed, diverted, or detained. There is nothing that any human can do to change the destiny that is predicted.

In the first century of our era, the three principal Jewish denominations were differentiated partly by the ways in which they responded to the apocalyptic vision. The Sadducees, who accepted as canonical only the five books of Moses, believed totally in free will.

The Essenes, who cherished every apocalypse they could get their hands on, were strongly deterministic in their outlook. They believed that God had revealed His unalterable plan to them. In their view, all prophecies were for the time of the end, which was their time. They could be understood by inspired interpretations, called *pesharim*, supplied by their leader, the Teacher of Righteousness. By putting the time prophecies of Daniel together with certain other prophecies, they were able to calculate when the end of the age would come. After one disappointment, their final calculation was that the end would come in A.D. 70.

The Pharisees, like many after them, sought to have it both ways. As the influential Rabbi Aqiba b. Joseph said, "All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given."³

Apocalyptic prophecy is predicated on the proposition that God has a script, a plan, the outworking of which is inevitable. The detailed scenarios and timetables hardly make sense otherwise. Later extensions and interpretations only intensify this picture by elaborating details. Adventism has latter-day *pesharim*, which spell out the future history of such entities as the Catholic Church, Protestantism, and the United States of America. The possibility is not entertained that any of these entities can change course and proceed in a different direction from the one that is marked out.

What happens when apocalypticism, with its strong determinism and insistence upon God's irresistible sovereignty and complete control over history and the destiny of human beings, becomes laminated to Arminianism with its vigorous resistance to determinism? Among the propositions set forth in the Arminian Remonstrance of 1610 are that God's saving grace is not irresistible, and that it is possible for Christians to fall from grace. It follows that no one is predestined, apart from his or her own choice, to damnation or salvation. These views were taken up by English and American Methodism, and by the anti-Calvinist Christian Connexion, and from these they passed into Adventism. In this view, the human will is not only free but also potent, at least to the extent that it can choose to serve God. Typical statements are these: "God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton."⁴

"What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him."⁵

"Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do."⁶

In the officially affirmed doctrinal statement of the Adventist Church, known as the "Fundamental Beliefs," article 7, entitled "The Nature of Man," is found: "Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else."⁷

It would seem, then, that Adventism was originally deterministic in its eschatology and antideterministic in its anthropology. Its soteriology is delicately poised between the two. Over time, the theology has been gradually moving to the side of indeterminism. The second coming of Christ has been made postponable and conditional upon human action of various kinds. The translation of 2 Peter 3:12 is favored that reads, "waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God." The Lord delays his coming out of mercy: "The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish" (vs. 9). The development of genuine godliness becomes almost a prerequisite for the Day of the Lord, as is also the completion of the missionary task (Matt. 24:14). A common expression of Adventist piety is "Let's finish the work so the Lord can come." It is difficult to imagine a sentiment more out of tune with the emphasis on divine sovereignty than is characteristic of apocalypticism. It looks like classical prophecy in an apocalyptic disguise.

Nevertheless the paradox is sometimes felt, and indeed it is one that has been felt ever since the first century. How serious is it, and how can it be resolved?

One answer to the problem is to say that the destiny of the aggregate is determined, but not that of the individual. Thus Gowan notes that apocalypticists remain faithful to the Old Testament in that their determinism does not extend to the destiny of the individual. Although repentance is seldom spoken of, apostasy is seen as a definite possibility and, although there is nothing one can do to alter the course of history, it is necessary to exhort believers to remain faithful so that they may come out on the right side when the end comes.⁸

This turns on its head the teaching of the staunchly deterministic Augustine of Hippo. Needing to explain 1 Timothy 2:4 (God "who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth") he says that "everyone" means every sort of person, "the human race in all its varieties of rank and circumstance" (with the word *all* having the same force as in Luke 11:42), but it does not mean every individual.⁹ In any case, the will of God cannot be overcome by the will of man.

Thus, in complete contrast to Augustine's view, the fate of individuals is not sealed ahead of time, but that of the nations or groups to which they belong is predestined. A possible objection to this distinction between the individual and the aggregate is the Bible concept of corporate personality. To a certain extent, every individual shares the fate of his or her nation or group. But there are exceptions, like Noah and his family, like Abraham, and like Rahab. They chose to be different.

Another option is to ignore the paradox by distinguishing between destiny and foreknowledge,

and to say, like R. Aqiba: "All is foreseen, but free will is given."¹⁰ This entails accepting that God does not control the choices that people make, but He has foreknowledge of what they will choose; and on the basis of that foreknowledge He decrees their fate. Thus Justin Martyr was at pains to explain why prophecy does not defeat human responsibility:

"So that none may infer from what we have said that the events we speak of, because they were foreknown and predicted, took place according to inevitable destiny—I can explain this too. We have learned from the prophets, and declare as the truth, that penalties and punishments and good rewards are given according to the quality of each man's actions. If this were not so, nothing would be left up to us. For if it is destined that one man should be good and another wicked, then neither is the one acceptable nor the other blameworthy. . . . But we do say that deserved rewards are irrevocably destined for those who have chosen to do good, and likewise their just deserts for those [who have chosen] the opposite. But God did not make man like other [beings], such as trees and animals, which have no power of choice. For he would not be worthy of rewards or praise if he did not choose the good of himself, but was so made."¹¹

Finally, after quoting Deuteronomy 30:15, Isaiah 1:16-20, and Plato's *Republic* 617E, Justin concludes: "So when we say that things yet to happen have been prophesied, we do not say that they take place by inevitable destiny, but since God foreknows what all men will do, and it is his decree that each will be rewarded according to the quality of his actions, he foretells by the prophetic Spirit what he will do in accordance with the quality of what they do."¹²

Justin was fighting Valentinian Gnosticism, which taught that people are hylics, psychics, or pneumatics by destiny. But that was not Augustine's problem, and he had no patience for such a line of argument as Justin's. Commenting on Romans 9:10-18 (the case of Jacob and Esau), he remarks: "Now if the apostle had wished us to understand that there were future good works of the one, and evil works of the other, which of course God foreknew, he would never have said, 'not of works,' but 'of future works,' and in that way would have solved the difficulty, or rather there would have been no difficulty to solve. . . . But he will have mercy on whom he will."¹³

Perhaps it is a question of whether a choice is a work. If we are saved by our own choice, are we still saved by God's grace?

But the question that must be addressed is: Are the scenarios and timetables of apocalyptic prophecy an expression of God's foreknowledge or a declaration of God's plan? More practically, can anyone—whether individual, nation, or church—do anything different from that which has been foretold? If not, foreknowledge looks very much like predestination, and we have a verbal distinction without a practical difference.

A third way to resolve the paradox is to remove or reduce the difference between apocalyptic and classical prophecy. Gowan's observation, already quoted, posits that in apocalyptic "Although repentance is seldom spoken of, apostasy is seen as a definite possibility and, although there is nothing one can do to alter the course of history it is necessary to exhort believers to remain faithful so that they may come out on the right side when the end comes."¹⁴

But even beyond that, the difference between the two kinds of prophecy may not be absolute. After all, the classic example of conditionality in prophecy is Jonah, whose prophecy of doom included an unambiguous timetable: "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).

On the apocalyptic side, Daniel concludes the *pesher* of Nebuchadnezzar's dream by suggesting that his prophesied destiny might be averted or at least modified somewhat by repentance: "Break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity" (Daniel 4:27, NKJV). The Book of Revelation is replete with warnings and promises that imply the need to make right decisions, and with appeals for repentance.

If the distinctiveness of apocalyptic prophecy is diminished, there are losses and gains. On the one hand, certainty about future events is reduced. On the other hand, fatalism and the futility of human effort are reduced. The kind of hope that is dependent upon God's sovereign power is replaced with hope that is placed on the potency of human decisions and effort. God is still in the picture as the Rewarder and Punisher, but the outcome depends on what we do. The attractiveness of apocalypticism, and whether one wants to drink it without mixture or drink it diluted probably depends on the degree of pessimism or optimism of the times.

We have reviewed three ways of dissolving the paradox that is produced when apocalypticism is laminated to Arminianism: (1) distinguish between aggregate destiny and individual destiny; (2) distinguish between foreknowledge and predestinating decree; (3) dissolve the distinction between classical prophecy and apocalyptic prophecy, resolving the tension between them in favor of free will.

There remains only a fourth way to deal with the problem: Simply accept the paradox as paradox and live with it. It would not be the only antinomy in Christian theology.

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Looking at the End From the Beginning

The Pentateuch provides significant comment on the Second Coming.

Gerald A. Klingbeil

Eschatology, the study of last things, has been approached mostly from two distinct viewpoints. Some provide a systematic study of the question—as can be seen in systematic theologies of all colors, which predominantly focus upon New Testament texts. Others concentrate on specific books relevant to eschatological teachings—chiefly the apocalyptic literature of the Old Testament (including the Book of Daniel) and the New Testament (as found in the Book of Revelation).

The Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible—is a corpus of literature that has not been studied extensively with this objective. Yet it contains vocabulary of a distinctly eschatological nature.

History, Eschatology, and the Macro-structure of the Pentateuch

Looking at the nature of the Pentateuch—being primarily a body of narratives about the beginning, the first steps and missteps of humanity, the call and creation of a special nation, its liberation from slavery, and finally its experiences and wanderings in the desert prior to the conquest—the books actually contain some hint of eschatology in them.

William Shea¹ has pointed to the importance of the link between history and eschatology. Eschatology is not just a cold, systematic, and somehow mechanical focus upon the last things, but rather is always connected with real (future) history, real people, and a real God. Clearly this indicates a special understanding of history and one refreshingly different from the rationalistic, materialist version of history depicted by modern mass media, science, and certain quarters of religious studies. The biblical view of history depicts a clear linear (not cyclical, as in ancient religion) view of time that moves from the beginning (Creation) to the final restoration of this world. It is evidently a theocentric (as opposed to human-centered) view of history and depicts God's intervention in favor of His world and—more specifically—of His people.

Closely related to the history-oriented nature of the Pentateuch is its focus upon creation. The creation theme of the Pentateuch involves eschatology, since creation in the Old Testament “has a beginning, a history, and an end . . . [and] is part of a history characterized by figures and dates.”²

Thus it appears that the specific “history nature” of the Pentateuch in itself provides a clear indication of its “end-orientation,” an important concept in eschatological thought. Furthermore, the narrative and poetic seams of the Pentateuch are principally connected to the important phrase for

"end," which is usually connected to a temporal marker (like "days" or "time"). Three major poetic sections in the Pentateuch (Genesis 49; Numbers 24; Deuteronomy 31) are connected to the main narrative (or "story") sections, thus displaying a clearly visible and coherent macro-structure.³

"A close look," J. H. Sailmamer writes, "at the material lying between and connecting the narrative and poetic sections reveals the presence of a homogeneous compositional stratum. It is most noticeably marked by the recurrence of the same terminology and narrative motifs. In each of the three segments, the central narrative figure (Jacob, Balaam, Moses) calls an audience together . . . and proclaims . . . what will happen . . . in the 'end of days.'"⁴

It appears that the author wants ancient and also modern readers to receive a cue to read the passage "eschatologically," that is, with a view toward the end.

In more generic terms, a sequence of narrative-poetry-epilogue is part of the literary technique used by Moses to unify the work. A good example can be found in the Creation account in Genesis 1–2, in which a short poetic discourse of Adam ("This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (2:23)⁵ concludes the narrative of the Creation and is followed by the epilogue: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (vs. 24).

Both the narrative and historical form (and content) of the Pentateuch and its macro (and micro) structure point the reader toward a time beyond the present and thus invites a study of its eschatology.

The Lexicon of Eschatology in the Pentateuch

Gerhard Pfandl has provided a helpful discussion of two important eschatological phrases in the Book of Daniel, one translated "end," "outcome," "after-part" and another translated "end." Other terms connected to eschatological concepts include a verb for "to come to an end," "cease," which does not occur in the Pentateuch.⁶

In the Book of Psalms the verb for "end," "come to an end," "complete" does seem to carry some eschatological overtones, as it can refer to God's act of judging—in itself an eschatological concept (Ps. 7:9)—or to His intervention in favor of His people "to make complete," "to perfect" (57:3; 138:8). The root, however, appears only in poetic contexts in the Book of Psalms, not in the Pentateuch.

The following table provides an overview of the occurrences the word translated "end" in the context of the Pentateuch.

REFERENCE	CO-TEXT	CONTEXT
Genesis 49:1	Found together with the noun (plus article), "the days," which appears as well in Daniel 2:28, 29.	Blessings or testament of Jacob in terms of a prophecy of future events related to the tribes of Israel.
Numbers 23:10	Together with the preposition and suffix "like his," which occurs only in poetic contexts.	The first oracle of Balaam, in which he blesses the descendants of Jacob instead of cursing them. The context does not appear to be eschatological, but limited to the descendants of Israel.
Numbers 24:14	Utilized together with the noun (plus article) "the days," see above.	Functions as an introduction to the fourth (and unpaid) oracle of Balaam, explaining what will happen in the "latter days," "end of days."
Numbers 24:20	No direct connection. The form contains a suffix ("his") that refers to Amalek.	Part of the final miscellaneous oracles of Balaam, referring to the future of Amalek. Does not appear to include eschatological overtones.
Deuteronomy 4:30	Utilized together with the noun (plus article), "the days," see above.	Moses' address in Transjordan, before the beginning of the conquest (Deut. 1:1).
Deuteronomy 8:16	No specific direct time marker. Stands alone in this context.	Refers to the end of the desert wandering.
Deuteronomy 11:12	Used in connection with the noun year.	Refers to the year cycle, from its beginning to its end.
Deuteronomy 31:29	Utilized with the noun (plus article), "the days," see above.	Forms part of the seam to the poetic section known as the "song of Moses" (Deuteronomy 32), and as with the earlier seams, it projects the future events toward the "end of the days" or "latter days."
Deuteronomy 32:20	Includes the suffix "their end." No additional time marker included.	Possible reference to the earlier golden calf episode (Exodus 32) or future experience of idolatry.
Deuteronomy 32:29	Includes the suffix "their end." No additional time marker included. Same as in Deuteronomy 32:20.	See above.

Genesis 49:1 utilizes the exact same phrase as Daniel 2:28, 29; 10:14, which the New Jerusalem Bible translates as "in the final days." The NKJV translates it: "in the latter days." As has been observed above, the macro-structure of the narrative-poetry-epilogue sequence can also be seen in this context.

The reference to a future point in time prepares the reader for the surprising turn of history as described in Exodus 1, in which the Israelites (or the sons of Jacob), living in Egypt but without the protection of the governor Joseph, are facing slavery and oppression. The main tenor of the "in the last days" perspective is God's future deliverance of His chosen people.

There is hope and a future—even beyond the distress and oppression that the sons of Jacob are

yet to experience. At the end of the discourse, there is the threefold use of the root translated “to bless,” which the NKJV translates as “He blessed each one according to his own blessing” (Gen. 49:28). It seems that by connecting one of the major themes of Genesis to its penultimate chapter, the author consciously seeks to relate this section to the first blessing found in Genesis 1:28, in which God blesses Adam and Eve on the sixth day of creation. Thus the beginning and a future point in time are connected in the text. Though the exact nature of this point in time is not clear, the possibility of a messianic fulfillment should not be dismissed.

In Numbers 23:10, the phrase translated “my end like his [i.e., Jacob’s descendants],” is part of the first oracle, which the seer from Aram produced for Balak, the king of Moab. Balak is unhappy with the outcome because instead of the promised curse, Balaam blesses the descendants of Jacob—and is being paid for this disservice! The final reference to “my end” appears to be a personal reflection of Balaam, in which he concludes “his vision of Israel by wishing that, at the end his own life, he could be as blessed as Israel was.”⁷ In view of his end at the swords of an Israelite army unit (Num. 31:8), the “end” came rather suddenly upon Balaam and does not contain any eschatological connotations.

Numbers 24:14 contains the introduction to the final fourth oracle of Balaam. King Barak is furious, but Balaam defends himself by pointing out that he can speak only what he has been shown. It appears that the connection with “the star out of Jacob,” indicates a distant future fulfillment. This phrase has been interpreted in terms of a reference to David or to the Messiah Himself (connecting Revelation 22:16, the “Morning Star,” to Numbers 24:17).

The evidence of the Aramaic translations suggests that Judaism interpreted the reference to the star as an indication of the Messiah. The Jews living in Qumran from the second century B.C. to the first century A.D. interpreted this reference in terms of their messianic expectations in the context of the final universal war between the sons of light and the sons of darkness as found in the famous war scroll.⁸ Looking at the history of interpretation of this verse and at its wider prophetic context, it seems appropriate to suggest an eschatological perspective focusing possibly first upon David and then—in a more inclusive perspective—upon the Messiah.

In Numbers 24:20, the term refers to the end of the Amalekites—a tribe often mentioned during the early history of Israel in connection with the Edomites. The context does not indicate any eschatological connection and includes references to other tribes connected to the history of Israel.

Deuteronomy 4:30 contains the complete formula translated as “in the latter days” (KJV), which also appears “at the end of days” in Daniel 2:28; 10:14 (NRSV). Moses admonishes his people to stay clear of idolatry and describes the inevitable results of their actions—if they allow idolatry to take control of their hearts. In the form of a typical ancient Near Eastern vassal treaty, Moses depicts not only the results of idolatry—namely exile, destruction, and more idolatry—but also points toward the future redemption of Israel. “When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the Lord your God and obey His voice” (Deut. 4:30). Thus the future (and not specified) redemptive event will occur after the suffering and the change of heart

necessary for a new beginning.

Christopher Wright comments here very poignantly: "Moses turns the dynamic of the covenant into a theology of history. No place would be too far and no time too distant for Israel to come back to God. Beyond sin and judgment there was always hope—as their recent past history had already proved."⁹

The precise historical context of this future repentance cannot be inferred from the context of the passage and has been connected with the exile of the northern tribes and the final destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians. The temporal marker "at the end of days," however, has also been interpreted as stretching all the way from Old Testament times to the end of the Age—especially in view of the fact that the sequence fall-judgment-repentance is part of a specific pattern, which will be operative until the final judgment.

In Deuteronomy 8:16 the "end" appears without any explicit temporal marker and refers in this specific context to the end of the wandering in the desert, emphasizing God's goodness toward His people. Goodness, in this context, includes testing by hardship for the sake of a better future. The text does not seem to indicate eschatological connotations.

This also appears to be the case with Deuteronomy 11:12, in which the focus is upon the land. Moses distinguishes in his sermon between the land of Egypt with its fertility and the promised land, whose primary caregiver is YHWH. Year in and year out, God will be the one responsible for rain, growth, harvest, and well-being—a theme that is later perverted by the typical Canaanite fertility cults, in which Baal (or any other god, for that matter) usurps YHWH's life-sustaining power. The reference to the term *end* is clearly connected to the year and cannot be understood eschatologically.

Deuteronomy 31:29 again is part of the introduction or seam to a major poetic section in the Pentateuch, namely the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, including the leader's farewell address. The immediate context suggests a period of apostasy after the death of Moses and does not include direct eschatological connotations. It appears that "the latter days" would indicate a time in the relatively near future; for example, during the time of the judges, when the prophetic description of Moses became a sad reality (Judges 2:11-16).

The final two references in Deuteronomy 32:20 and 32:39 to "their end," refer most probably to the golden calf episode in Exodus 32 or future events involving idolatry and connect *end* with the people. Deuteronomy 32:21 reads: ""They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; they have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation."" *End* should be interpreted in terms of destiny or future and does not connote eschatological overtones, but connects directly to a past and possibly future experience of Israel.

"End" in the Pentateuch

REFERENCE	CO-TEXT	CONTEXT
Genesis 4:3	"At the end of days," occurs together with preposition "from."	Describes the passing of time and the end of a specific encompassing the time after the fall, birth of the first sons of Adam and Eve, and their growing up. No eschatological connotations.
Genesis 6:13	No specific additional time marker is included. The noun appears without a preposition.	The introduction of the Flood story. God communicates with Noah that the "end of all the flesh" is imminent. The unusual nature of the event provides a typological equivalent for time events, but does not indicate specifically eschatological future realities.
Genesis 8:6	"At the end of forty days."	Indicates the time period before which the ark had settled on Mount Ararat and where Noah opened the window and released a raven. No eschatological connotations.
Genesis 16:3	"At the end of ten years."	After ten years in Canaan without any children, Sarai proposes the solution of giving her slave maid Hagar to Abram. No eschatological connotations.
Genesis 41:1	"At the end of two years."	Two-year period that Joseph spent in prison before he interpreted Pharaoh's dream. No eschatological connotations.
Exodus 12:41	"At the end of four hundred and thirty years."	Period of sojourn of Israel in Egypt. The time marker in an important event in salvation history, namely the beginning of the Exodus. No eschatological connotations.
Numbers 13:25	"At the end of forty days."	Period that the spies spent in Canaan. No eschatological connotations.
Deuteronomy 9:11	"At the end of forty days and forty nights."	Period that Moses spent upon Mount Sinai after having received the two stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments. No eschatological connotations.
Deuteronomy 15:1	"At the end of every seven years."	Laws concerning the Sabbatical year, in which remission is granted. No clear eschatological connotations.
Deuteronomy 31:10, 11	"At the end of every seven years."	As part of Moses' final discourse, Israel is challenged by the reading of the law of God every seven years. No eschatological connotations.

Several observations can be made while considering the data of the usage of "end" in the Pentateuch.

First, with the exception of only one reference (Gen. 6:13), all references connect the preposition *from*, *at* to the noun *end*. This usage seems to go hand in hand with possible eschatological (or at least typological) connotations of the term. With the exception of Genesis 6:13, all references utilizing the preposition indicate a specific and limited time period.

Second, it appears that *end* is often utilized in crucial moments in salvation history. In Genesis 4:3, the description of the first homicide on the planet and the repercussions of the Fall are described. The time marker in Genesis 8:6 indicates a period prior to the opening of the ark, and, with that, the new beginning of humanity. Genesis 16:3 describes the crucial manmade solution to the problem of Sarai's barrenness, following the customs of its day. The point of reference in the mind of the author is clearly Genesis 12:1-3 and God's promise of a future, descendants, and a name. Exodus 12:31 marks the end of an era (i.e., the time in Egypt of the people of Israel) and the beginning of a new one, because now Israel is a people (and not just a bigger clan) on its way to the Promised Land. Deuteronomy 9:11 refers back to the time Moses spent on Mount Sinai, receiving the law of God—clearly an important event in salvation history. Taking into account all the mentioned references, it appears that the allusion to the "end" of a specific period/era always supposes the beginning of something new—a principle also often found in eschatological literature, although it is not explicitly eschatological in itself.

Third, a closer look at Genesis 6:13 indicates a distinct usage of the term—without the preposition *from* or *at*. God speaks to Noah and provides a rationale for the destruction, or, better, "the end of all flesh," which is an indication of all living beings (including both humankind and animals). Gordon Wenham has correctly recognized a similar terminology in the description of the destruction of Jerusalem as found in Ezekiel 7, including key words such as "end," "violence," "coming," "is full"¹⁰—an event with similar repercussions in salvation history. Inasmuch as judgment is always part and parcel of "final things," Genesis 6:13 definitely carries eschatological overtones—even more so in view of the fact that it utilizes a distinct grammatical construction compared to the other occurrences of *end* in the Pentateuch (i.e., without the preposition *from* or *at*). However, it is clear that the eschatological overtones concern typology and have no distinct eschatological program or route.

Eschatology in the Pentateuch

Eschatological thinking is not a late development in Old Testament theology, but an integral part of theological thought that can be traced from the first to the last book of the Old Testament canon. This stands in clear contrast to modern evolutionary concepts of theology and religion—especially regarding its eschatology.

Although eschatology does not have "banner quality" in the Pentateuch, but rather "footnote quality," it nevertheless is present. The eschatological lexicon provides specific terms and contexts that indicate eschatological thought.

As has been suggested by John Sailhamer, the Pentateuch as a whole (and not as the result of four or more distinct sources, as interpreted by traditional historical criticism) is a work built on prophetic hope and eschatological perspective, a fact that can be seen in the literary macro-structure of the Pentateuch, which is always introduced by verses including the phrase "at the end of the days." Though it is often difficult to pinpoint the exact nature and time of this "end of the days," it is

nevertheless a clear indication of the inclusion of this important theological concept in early books.

In a world of confusing voices about the things to come, God's sure Word provides assurance. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has studied eschatological concepts for 150 years, but still there is much more to discover in the riches of God's Word. Future studies should focus not only on the eschatological lexicon, but also develop a sound methodology to understand eschatological concepts and eschatological typology. The interpretive road stretches ahead, lined with precious truths and surrounded by refreshing vistas. It is well worthwhile to walk in that way.

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Early Adventist Views on Calvin and Calvinism

A look at four influential writers shows a mixed appreciation for the Reformer and his followers.

Julius Nam

Over the course of their history, Seventh-day Adventists have repeatedly acknowledged their debt to the Protestant Reformation. Nowhere else is this acknowledgment more clearly made than in Ellen G. White's *The Great Controversy*. In that work, White weaves together a narrative centering on how God's truth had been preserved and passed down throughout the history of Western Christianity. Prominent in that narrative are the stories of the precursors and major leaders of the Protestant Reformation. And nowhere is the close connection that Adventists feel with the Reformers more clearly expressed than in the 1957 book, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*, which portrays Adventism as a continuation of "the noble line of witnesses such as Wycliffe, Luther, Tyndale, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, and other great leaders of the past."¹

Although Adventists have seen their roots in the Reformation, not all of the Reformers have received equal attention. As a case in point, out of the 10 chapters allotted to the Reformation period in *The Great Controversy*, Luther's story is told in four chapters, while one chapter each is devoted to Wycliffe and Ulrich Zwingli. John Huss, Jerome of Prague, and Calvin receive only half-chapter-length treatments, while others such as Philip Melancthon, Jacques Lefevre, William Farel, Menno Simons, and John Knox receive only passing notices. Clearly, there were greater and lesser lights among the Protestant Reformers, but if one were to determine the relative stature of the Reformers merely by the attention given in *The Great Controversy*, most students of Christian history would rightly argue that the significance of Calvin was the most understated.

The reality is that Calvin has never enjoyed the kind of favor Adventists have shown toward Luther or Wesley. Although Adventists have traditionally shared many of the core teachings of Calvin such as the infallibility of the Bible as a whole, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, regeneration and sanctification of the believer, and the perpetuity of the moral law, they have always held suspicion toward Calvin and the Calvinist movement. Even in recent studies on the relationship between the Reformation and Adventism, one finds very few references to Calvin and his work in Geneva, while some who call themselves "historic Adventists" have warned against the heretical "Calvinist connection" that has formed in the church.

As yet, the historical relationship between Adventism and Calvin and Calvinism has received neither proper attention nor extended analysis. It may be informative, then, to describe and analyze the place and value of direct references to Calvin and Calvinism in the major writings of four major

Seventh-day Adventist pioneers: John N. Andrews, Alonzo T. Jones, Uriah Smith, and Ellen G. White.

John N. Andrews

John Nevins Andrews was the leading thinker and scholar among the earliest Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. His intellect and balanced judgment commanded wide respect in the church. He was also the church's first official missionary outside of North America. At his departure to Switzerland, Ellen White remarked that he was "the ablest man in all our ranks."²

Among the numerous books that he wrote for the advancement of the Adventist cause, Andrews referred to Calvin and Calvinism in three of his books: *History of the Sabbath and First Day of the Week*, *The Judgment: Its Events and Their Order*, and *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6–12*. As Andrews referred to Calvin only once in passing in the latter two works, *History of the Sabbath* is of primary concern here.

In the passages where Andrews makes references to Calvin, it is difficult to establish his appraisal of the Reformer. In the discussion of Calvin's position on the issue of the Sabbath and Sunday, Andrews's analysis is detached and objective. In general, his opinion of Calvin seems to be of cool disagreement. In Calvin, Andrews finds support for his thesis that Sunday replaced the seventh-day Sabbath on extra-biblical—thus illegitimate—grounds. Andrews finds ammunition against the Sunday-keepers of his time in Calvin's statements from the *Institutes* that the Christian Sunday is not a simple continuation of the Jewish Sabbath changed into the first day of the week, but a distinctively Christian institution that has no inherent sanctity but a functional one.³ Andrews adroitly utilizes Calvin's own admission that the "ancients" changed the day of worship and that clinging to the seventh day of the week has no special meaning.⁴ Thus, Andrews uses Calvin's writings as a polemic tool against the arguments set forth by Sunday-keeping Christians of the mid-19th century that change in the day of worship occurred in the New Testament era.

Elsewhere in the same book, Andrews refers to Calvin as a theological authority on points other than the doctrine of the Sabbath. In one of these instances, he quotes another author who has called Calvin "great" and as possessing "sagacity."⁵ Calvin's greatness is further recognized in Andrews's *The Judgment*. In his discussion of the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 6:2, Andrews makes use of a quote of another writer who lists "modern divines" such as "Luther, Calvin, Erasmus, Beza"⁶

Such a deferential reference to Calvin is counterbalanced in *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6–12*, where Andrews criticizes Calvin's persecution of Michael Servetus, an anti-Trinitarian agitator of the 16th century. He uses this episode in Calvin's work as an example of how easily the power of the church, if absolute, becomes corrupt.

He writes: "When the papal church possessed power, it destroyed a vast multitude of the saints of God. Nor has the Protestant Church, since its rise, been free from acts of persecution whenever it has possessed the power to perform them. The Protestants of Geneva, with John Calvin at their head, burned Michael Servetus, a man who had barely escaped the same fate at the hands of the popish inquisition. They did this for the same reason that the papists do the like; that is, they did it

for a difference of opinion, and because they had the power to do it."⁷

The criticism is even more damning in that Andrews draws a direct parallel between Calvin and the papacy, which Calvin opposed vehemently.

Andrews' view of Calvin is at best mixed. Without a doubt, he viewed Calvin as a figure to be reckoned with in church history and recognized his theological contributions, though through the words of others. When it comes to the issue of the Sabbath, however, Andrews uses Calvin's writings against Calvin himself and against those Sunday-keeping Christians who claim that there are scriptural grounds for change in the day of worship. Calvin then becomes the object of a scathing attack by Andrews over the execution of Servetus—an act that Andrews likens to "the popish inquisition."⁸ Such an assessment of Calvin—as a theological force and an ecclesiastical despot—is a recurring picture painted by Adventists of the 19th century.

Alonzo T. Jones

Alonzo Trevier Jones was among Adventism's first historians. As "the denomination's most prominent speaker for religious freedom,"⁹ he tended to view history from the perspective of the continuing controversy between the oppressive civil-ecclesiastical majority and the persecuted religious minority. All his historical works fall in line with such a perspective, and it is in this context that Calvin and Calvinism are viewed. Two of Jones's works include meaningful references to Calvin and Calvinism. They are *Civil Government and Religion* and *The Two Republics*.

In his 1889 book, *Civil Government and Religion*, Jones makes only one reference to Calvin. This reference comes in the context of his repudiation of David McAllister, a spokesperson for the National Reform Association, which was pushing for a national Sunday law. McAllister had stated that the movement would not result in persecution against those who believe differently from the majority and declared: "True religion never persecutes," even if it was united with the civil government.¹⁰ In reaction to this assertion, Jones points out that "the Roman Catholic religion is not the only persecuting religion that has been in the world. Presbyterianism persecuted while John Calvin ruled in Geneva; it persecuted while the Covenanters ruled in Scotland; it persecuted while it held the power in England Every religion that has been allied with the civil power, or that has controlled the civil power, has been a persecuting religion; and such will always be the case."¹¹

Presaging Andrews's analysis, Jones here makes a sharp criticism of Calvin's role in exercising civil authority for a religious end. Clearly, the Servetus affair is on his mind as he portrays Calvin as a persecuting power who acted just like the Roman Catholics. Furthermore, Jones seems to be reacting to two things: (1) the "popish" dogmatism of Calvin; and (2) Calvinism as a domineering force not only during the Reformation but also in the ensuing times.

Though the denominational affiliations of Jones's opponents are not clearly identified, his citation of Presbyterian persecution throughout history seems to be a not-so-subtle reference to the Calvinist background of many behind the Sunday law movement. In Jones's mind, not only the historical papacy, but also Calvinism of his time are potential persecutors of God's true religion.

Jones continues this line of argument in his 1891 work, *The Two Republics*. In this book, he includes a section entitled "Calvinism in Geneva." He begins by stating that "the views of Calvin on the subject of Church and State, were as thoroughly theocratic as the papal system itself."¹² Pointing out Calvin's efforts to secure the oath of each citizen of Geneva to profess and swear to the confession drawn up by Calvin himself, Jones observes that "this was at once to make the Church and the State one and the same thing with the Church above the State. Yea, more than this, it was wholly to swallow up the civil in the ecclesiastical power."¹³

Clearly, Jones's criticism of Calvin's theocracy is based on the distinctly American understanding of the separation of church and state. But when it comes to his treatment of Luther in the same chapter, Jones turns much more generous—and wrong about history: "It is not without cause that Luther stands at the head of all men in the great Reformation and in the history of Protestantism: for he alone of all the leaders in the history of Reformation times held himself and his cause aloof from the powers of this world, and declined all connection of the State with the work of the gospel, even to support it."¹⁴ Given Luther's nationalism in his "Appeal to the German Nobility," his association with the German princes, the Wartburg period, and his position vis-à-vis the Peasants' Revolt, Jones's statement that Luther did not even have any "connection of the State" appears hardly tenable.

Historically, both Luther and Calvin were active supporters of the idea of cooperation and even collusion between the church and the state. Yet it is only Calvin who receives Jones's condemnation in this chapter, probably because Calvin went much beyond Luther in taking an active part in governing Geneva and wielded a great amount of power. Apparently, for Jones, this made all the difference, as he called Calvin the Protestant counterpart to the pope and Calvinism "so close a counterpart" to "the papacy itself."¹⁵ Commenting on the efforts of the National Reform Association, Jones wrote, "It is a revival of the original scheme of John Calvin, and is the very image of the papal scheme of the fourth century."¹⁶

Jones consistently treated Calvin as a "popish" tyrant and his movement as a persecuting authority that fused religious and temporal powers to oppress minority religious groups. Seeing the rise of the National Reform Association in his time, Jones considered it as a continuation of the dangerously theocratic system as practiced two centuries earlier in Geneva. As to Calvin's positive contributions to the Protestant Reformation and its theology, Jones was completely silent, leaving his readers with a decidedly negative impression about the Reformer.

Uriah Smith

Uriah Smith made his contribution to the Adventist Church most prominently through his pen. *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* article on Smith begins with this summative introduction: "Editor and author, who gave 50 years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist cause."¹⁷ The *Encyclopedia* goes on to state that Smith's famous works on Daniel and Revelation were the first of the "doctrinal subscription books in the colporteur work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."¹⁸ Indeed, Smith was the first among the church's theologians, and his influence has been profound and

far-reaching.

Uriah Smith's writings betray the same negative view that Andrews and Jones held toward Calvin's persecution of certain minority groups of his day. Once again, the burning of Servetus is cited as an evidence of the spirit of oppression and intolerance that Smith saw in the Calvinism of his time. In Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation*, an updated and consolidated version of his earlier separate works on the two prophetic books of the Bible, the Servetus incident is brought out not only to show the potential for persecution in the 19th century, but also to point out that Protestantism has always held the spirit of Babylon, as seen in Revelation 14:8.¹⁹ Smith does not elaborate further; thus, readers are left with a clear connection between Calvin and the eschatological Babylon. Smith asserts that not only Calvinism, but also all the other churches of the Reformation were headed toward the apostasy of forming "the universal worldly church" that would oppress the people of God through the union of church and state.²⁰

In *Looking Unto Jesus*, published also in 1897, Smith goes beyond the Servetus incident to critique certain features of the theology of Calvin and Calvinism. While discussing the Adventist teaching on Christ's post-1844 ministry in the heavenly Most Holy Place, Smith stresses that Christ is working in heaven now to bring humanity to a literal "at-one-ment" with Him. In so doing, Smith found himself at odds with the dominant Calvinist thinking of his day, which taught that the atonement was completed at the Cross. There does not seem to have been any doubt in Smith's mind that Christ's death was salvific and all-sufficient. Yet it was by the virtue of His blood that the only conditions of the atonement were met, and not that the atonement was completed. He would agree that Christ's life and death are redemptive but never atoning: "The death of Christ and the atonement *are not* the same thing."²¹

For Smith, true atonement (i.e., antitypical "at-one-ment" with God) could begin only on the antitypical Day of Atonement that commenced in 1844. Once the Cross was recognized as the completion of the atonement, he reasoned, the only logical conclusion could be either "ultra Calvinism, fore-ordination and predestination in their most forbidding and unscriptural aspect"²² (that since completion can only mean the sealing of everyone's fate—in this case, for the salvation of the elect) or Universalism (that all humanity will ultimately be saved). Fiercely Arminian in his theology of salvation, he rejected the Calvinist understanding on the grounds that it robs free will from the individual and that it either limits salvation to the predestined elect or broadens it to all of humanity. Therefore, his uniquely Adventist understanding of the atonement led Smith to view the Calvinist teachings of the atonement as full of "errors"²³ and representing "an insurmountable problem."²⁴

Smith's criticism of Calvin and Calvinism were twofold. Like Andrews and Jones, he viewed Calvin's persecution of Servetus and other instances of persecution in the history of Calvinism as signs of the oppressive spirit of the end-time apostate religion. He also found the Calvinist theology of predestination clearly objectionable and totally incompatible with the Adventist teaching on the atonement. Since he, like many other Adventists, thought of the atonement as the heavenly work of Christ that commenced in 1844, Smith could not see the atonement as having occurred and

completed at the Cross as Calvinists had understood it to be.

Ellen G. White

Among the four early Adventist leaders whose writings are the subjects of this study, Ellen G. White provided the most detailed and surprisingly positive picture of the life, teachings, and work of Calvin. In fact, nowhere in her writings can explicit criticism of Calvin's actions or theology be found.

The first reference to Calvin by White is found in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, published in 1884. In a section where she addresses the line of biblical truth throughout Christian history, she writes:

"Across the gulf of a hundred years, men stretched their hands to grasp the hands of the Lollards of the time of Wycliffe. Under Luther began the Reformation in Germany; Calvin preached the gospel in France, Zwingli [sic] in Switzerland. The world was awakened from the slumber of ages, as from land to land were sounded the magic words, 'Religious Liberty.'"²⁵

This brief statement is the only reference to Calvin in the book. Whereas Luther receives an extensive treatment by White over four chapters and British reformers such as William Tyndale, John Knox, Nicholas Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer collectively receive a chapter, Calvin is not mentioned again. This is, nonetheless, a noteworthy "improvement" on *Spiritual Gifts*, the predecessor to the *The Spirit of Prophecy* series, in which only a single chapter is devoted to the Reformation and Luther is the sole Reformer mentioned.²⁶

White's uncommonly positive statement on Calvin stands in clear contrast to the way her Adventist contemporaries viewed the Genevan reformer. Whereas others saw Calvin as the prime example of religious oppression by Protestantism, White lifted him up as a torchbearer of God's truth and the champion of religious liberty.

When it comes to the historical followers of Calvin, however, White is not kind in her evaluation. She laments that the spirit of reform has declined in the Presbyterian churches. "It is a sad thing," she writes, "when a people claiming to be reformers cease to reform."²⁷ Such a bifurcated assessment—extolling Calvin but criticizing Calvinists—is fully fleshed out when White gives a fuller treatment in *The Great Controversy*, the fifth book in the Conflict of the Ages series.

When she updated volume 4 of *The Spirit of Prophecy* series and re-published it as *The Great Controversy* in 1888, White added a half-chapter-long account of the life and ministry of Calvin as part of the larger Reformation narrative. This was retained essentially in the same format in the 1911 re-publication of the book. Once again, White shows great preference for Luther by allotting four chapters to him. Nonetheless, her treatment of Calvin is quite significant in that it provides a depiction of Calvin that is not found elsewhere in early Adventist literature.

Midway into the chapter entitled "The French Reformation," White introduces young Calvin as "a thoughtful, quiet youth, already giving evidence of a powerful and penetrating mind, and no less marked for the blamelessness of his life than for intellectual ardor and religious devotion."²⁸ Over the course of the next 18 pages, White narrates some of the highlights of Calvin's life from Paris to Bourges, then back to Paris and finally to Geneva. Drawn heavily from the historical writings of J. H.

Merle d'Aubigné,²⁹ James A. Wylie,³⁰ and W. Carlos Martyn,³¹ White's account reflects the glowingly positive assessment of Calvin as pronounced by these authors. Throughout the chapter, Calvin is portrayed as being continuously led by God not only into safety from persecutors, but also toward greater light of divine truth.

White's description of Calvin is particularly moving. When Calvin's cousin Olivetan introduced him to the "religion which is revealed in the Bible," the would-be Reformer is described to have rejected it at first, but soon became engaged in "fruitless struggles" between his Catholic upbringing and the teachings of Protestantism for some time. This struggle continued until he witnessed the burning of a Protestant heretic. Impressed by the peacefulness of the martyr, Calvin became determined to study the Bible and discover the same peace. Relying on Wylie and Martyn in this portion, White seems to imply a longer process of conversion than Calvin's own expression, "sudden conversion," suggests. After this conversion, White writes, "his words were as the dew falling to refresh the earth."³²

After a narration of the trials of the Huguenots, White quickly brings Calvin to Geneva to that fateful meeting with William Farel, who urged Calvin to stay and work to reform the city. White then describes the situation in Geneva and the evangelical need of the city as following: "Though Geneva had accepted the reformed faith, yet a great work remained to be accomplished here. It is not as communities but as individuals that men are converted to God; the work of regeneration must be wrought in the heart and conscience by the power of the Holy Spirit, not by the decrees of councils."³³ White characterizes Calvin as the very man to lead that work of reform and regeneration in Geneva. As did Farel, she sees "the hand of God" and "Providence" in the arrival of Calvin to Geneva.³⁴

However, White makes the interesting decision to abbreviate Calvin's work in Geneva—the most significant features of his life from the perspective of the theme of *Great Controversy*—into one short, sweeping paragraph: "For nearly thirty years Calvin labored at Geneva, first to establish there a church adhering to the morality of the Bible, and then for the advancement of the Reformation throughout Europe. *His course as a public leader was not faultless, nor were his doctrines free from error.* But he was instrumental in promulgating truths that were of special importance in his time, in maintaining the principles of Protestantism against the fast-returning tide of popery, and in promoting in the reformed churches simplicity and purity of life, in place of the pride and corruption fostered under the Romish teaching."³⁵

In recognizing that Calvin "was not faultless" and that his theology was not "free from error," White clearly is acknowledging to her readers that she is aware of the sharp objections that her Adventist and other Protestant contemporaries were making to Calvin. But just as she does with Luther, White focuses on the positive contributions of Calvin and extols the virtues of his work in Geneva instead of criticizing him for his political and theological problems. This approach, of course, is in stark contrast to the assessments of Calvin by other Adventist writers of her time. Her treatment of the Reformer, in effect, goes against the sharply critical, one-sided portrayal of Calvin as a

politico-theological despot that others make and provides a much-needed balance in assessing the legacy of Calvin.

In the closing paragraph of her narrative on the enigmatic Reformer, she takes care to point out that Calvin's Geneva was primarily a "refuge for the hunted Reformers of all Western Europe," and that the "starving, wounded, bereft of home and kindred, . . . were warmly welcomed and tenderly cared for."³⁶ To the end, Ellen White seems to be intent on putting Calvin in the best light possible by showing that, in spite of his failings, he was a true reformer used by God.

When it comes to Calvin's theological heirs, however, White takes a considerably more critical stance, as she did in *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Several chapters later in *Great Controversy*, she provides assessment of the Protestant churches of her time by quoting from Daniel Neal's history of the Puritans: "'For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The . . . Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their time, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received.'"³⁷

In another section, White exposes what she perceives as yet another dangerous problem of the Reformed churches—their increasingly "conciliatory course" toward Catholicism. She warns that this move will ultimately cost them "the liberty of conscience which had been so dearly purchased."³⁸

These criticisms notwithstanding, it is important to note that White does not make a wholesale condemnation of the modern heirs of Calvin. Her criticisms are no sharper than some of the counsels that she gives to fellow Adventists. There is always an underlying concern and appeal for reform. In this way, White's attitude was markedly different from other Adventist writers who seemed to be occupied with polemics.

White was different from her contemporaries—Andrews, Jones, and Smith—in that she made an overall positive assessment of Calvin and represented his work in Geneva as a divinely led reform that occupied an important place in the continuing line of God's truth. She was eager to acknowledge Adventism's debt to Calvin and to recognize his rightful place in the noble line of Reformers—a far cry from Jones's charge that Calvin and his movement were part of the eschatological Babylon. Meanwhile, she was critical of the loss of the reform impulse among the modern followers of Calvin and the rapprochement between Protestantism and Catholicism. But her criticisms included hopeful appeals and warnings—calling for genuine, biblical reform among the heirs of Calvin.

For the most part, the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church held a negative view of John Calvin and Calvinist churches. Adventist pioneers came mostly from the Arminian-Methodist tradition and held strongly to the principle of separation of church and state. Having witnessed the exclusivist tendencies of the New England Puritan culture and having experienced harsh treatment by Calvinist-Puritans for their theological peculiarities, early Adventist leaders viewed Calvin's theocratic initiatives in Geneva and harsh discipline of dissidents as signs of moral failure and spiritual apostasy

and the root cause of their 19th-century contemporaries' persecutory tendencies. They held that no true reform has a place for the unity of civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Thus, they condemned Calvin to the point of accusing him of becoming "popish" figure and a part of the Babylon of Revelation 14. When they saw a movement to legislate religion in the Calvinist churches of their day, they were eager to point out that contemporary Calvinists were only following the tragic footsteps of their founder. Notable among those who held to these views were Andrews, Jones, and Smith.

Smith added a theological dimension to the Adventist criticism of Calvinism. In his discussion of the atonement, he argued that the Calvinist teaching that the atonement was completed at the Cross can be valid only if one accepted the Calvinist concept of predestination. Since Adventists and the rest of the Arminian world do not subscribe to the doctrine of predestination as taught in Calvinism, Smith asserted that it is wrong to say that the atonement was completed at the Cross. Then he connected the Arminian doctrine of free will and atonement with the Adventist teaching of the investigative judgment. He argued that the Cross was only a prerequisite of the post-1844, antitypical atonement taking place in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. Therefore, it would be erroneous to state, as the Calvinists do, that the atonement was completed at the Cross.

Ellen White was a notable exception among early Adventists in her portrayal of Calvin and Calvinism. In what must have been a startling revelation, she portrayed Calvin as a genuine and caring reformer. Her description of Calvin in *The Great Controversy* is filled with praise and admiration for the Reformer. By acknowledging the hand of God in the life and ministry of Calvin, White provided an important balance to the standard Adventist view of Calvin. Even when making criticisms of the Calvinists of her day, White never used disparaging words but only lamented their decline and appealed to them to take up the reform that Calvin began.

In spite of the balance that White has brought to the Adventist view of Calvin and Calvinism, it appears that some in contemporary Adventism still have reservations about approaching the French Swiss reformer appreciatively. Calvinism is still viewed with suspicion by many, and some even seem to believe that there is a Calvinist conspiracy to contaminate the historic Adventist faith.

Though Adventists should be ever vigilant in their protection of the integrity of their faith and beliefs, an overly negative attitude toward Calvin and Calvinism, or any other individual theologian or movement, does not seem fair, healthy, or necessary. White, in this regard, provides contemporary Adventism with an example of thoughtful appreciation of and qualified agreement with those of different theological persuasions and priorities.

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