Twenty-four Hundred Days?

When Jesus Almost Came

Lessons from the Sanctuary

When the Books Were Opened

The Preparation of God’s People

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary.

PSALM 150:1
Editorial

In the last few months as I have traveled and preached across the North American Continent, people have been asking me some very important questions. Some of them I cannot answer because they deal with time or speculation on prophecy. But some of these matters, about which I am frequently asked, deserve comment. Sunday laws, and the sealing of God’s faithful, loyal, and obedient people, and the question of how much time we have left are on many church members’ minds today.

First of all, we have only today; life is the most unsure thing we mortals possess. Just a few weeks ago a dear doctor friend, a very dedicated Christian and a student of God’s Word and the Spirit of Prophecy, was killed as he drove to an emergency at the hospital. I called him one morning only to hear the tragic words, “He was killed last night in a car crash.” As I talked with his sweet young wife, she told me how close he lived to God. “I was sure” she said, “that he would be among the 144,000.”

We can never fully understand such tragedies in this life. Only eternity will reveal the answers to our sorrowing hearts. Yes, today is our Day of Salvation.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?” Hebrews 2:3

The Sunday laws are in the making and are ominously appearing on the daily horizons of our television screens and morning papers. The evidence is overwhelming that the world is heading for chaos, which the Lord’s messenger tells us will come as an overwhelming surprise to both the world and the church. See Testimonies, vol. 8, 28, 37.

Are we preparing daily to meet this crisis? The sealing is a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually so that we will not be moved. (See Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, 1161) There will be persecution and martyrdom, for there will be many of God’s faithful people who will lose their lives in the little time of trouble. See Maranatha, 199, and Revelation 20:4.

Daily we are being sealed to eternal life or death. Character development is central to the Christian life. By surrendering our will to God daily our mind is then God’s, our thoughts are God’s; then our complete life is God’s, and all of God’s power is ours to do everything God has asked us to do. The character of Christ is then being perfectly reproduced in us, which will entitle us to a beautiful translation from this world to the eternal, or to a beautiful resurrection by the power of Christ. See Christ’s Object Lessons, 69, 312.

How long before the Sunday laws will be enacted God only knows. If He was not holding back the four winds of strife the world would be instantly engulfed in eternal ruin. See Early Writings, 38.

But God is waiting for you and me to perfect our characters that we may be His witnesses to the universe for the endless ages of eternity. He needs us to show to the unfallen worlds a billion years from now that His perfect law can be perfectly kept by a faithful and loyal people who desire with all their hearts to be like Jesus.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doeth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John 3:1-3.

The sealing process is going on in your life today. Is it possible that God has already told the sealing angel to begin his work in the church? See Ezekiel 9; Testimonies, vol. 5, 211; vol. 9, 97; 1 Peter 4:17.

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 216.

We stand now in the great antitypical day of atonement. Let us remember that today is our day of salvation. For us there may not be a tomorrow.

Ron Spear—Editor
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to give the straight testimony and to present Christ and Him crucified. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the truths that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—THE EDITORS

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**Invitation to Writers**

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THE PREPARATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

COLIN D. STANDISH
AND
RUSSELL R. STANDISH

The implications of the final judgment are so awesome that no one may ignore them without consequence. Just as ancient Israel prepared for the day of atonement, so there is a solemn preparation for the final judgment of God's people.

King Solomon has achieved renown for his wisdom and his wealth. His folly in deserting the Lord and following pagan practices, together with his possession of one thousand wives and concubines, has won him a distinction of another order. Yet, little acknowledged among his gifts has been the gift prophecy. Solomon, like his father King David before him, was used of God to elucidate the future. His most challenging prophecy was his description of God's latter-day church. Presenting this prophecy in the form of a question, King Solomon was inspired to write, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

Song of Solomon 6:10

Solomon had used similar symbolism concerning the purity of God's last church a little earlier in his song, "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners." 6:4

The imagery of Solomon's description—fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners—aptly portrays the type of church God will have on this earth. Only such a group of people will be empowered to take God's last message to fellow humans. They will be a shining light to the entire world. God's people will form a mighty army of faith which will not falter until every man, woman, and child on this planet has heard the impelling news that Jesus loves them.

WHO IS SHE THAT LOOKETH FORTH AS THE MORNING, FAIR AS THE MOON, CLEAR AS THE SUN, AND TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS?

Paul's description of God's church in the New Testament era is no less engaging. "That he [Christ] might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:27

Here is the standard which God has for His people. He is waiting their submission to Him in order that such a church as this can be ready. It will be recalled that upon the day of atonement God commanded: "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you. . . That ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." Leviticus 16:30

Surely, in the antitypical day of atonement, God asks no less of His people. Each must afflict his soul and confess every sin. . . "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." James 4:8

Jesus, the High Priest, stands in the most holy place before the throne of God, ready to cleanse us from all our sins. Peter sets forth the availability of this power. It will so transform our minds that continual victory will be the experience of God's people.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." 1 Peter 4:1, 2

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The Revelator prophesied of the characteristics of those who would be translated at the end of time. They will be those whose lives have become so patterned after their Master’s that God will be able to say of them, “And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:5

Such a standard seems beyond anything which mere mortals can ever imagine for themselves. And truly, if we look to ourselves or to other humans, we will be overwhelmed by discouragement. Thus we may yield to Satan’s all-pervading lie that such a standard of obedience is impossible, even when the individual is empowered by the Holy Ghost. Only those who look to Jesus Christ and accept His promises in humble faith will ever... “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:14

Powerful and certain are the promises of God’s Word, which assure us that God will have a people who will stand before the throne, so filled with His Spirit, that they will indeed be without spot or blemish. Jeremiah looked forward to the day when such assurances would accurately describe God’s people.

“In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” Jeremiah 50:20

Yet the solemn fact is that in every letter to the seven churches throughout the ages the same message was proclaimed—only overcomers will share eternity with their Saviour.

Ephesus—“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Revelation 2:7

Smyrna—“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” 2:11

Pergamos—“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone; and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” 2:17

Thyatira—“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.” 2:26

Sardis—“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” 3:5

Philadelphia—“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and I will write upon him my new name.” 3:12

Laodicea—“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” 3:21

It is not without significance that in presenting the message to the last church in history, Christ revealed to John the ultimate standard of victory. He not only requires victory but also empowers it. God’s standard of victory is exemplified in Christ’s life. Therefore we are exhorted to overcome even as I overcame. This standard should cause every God-fearing Christian to fall at the feet of the Master in supplication, pleading before Him for that infilling of His Spirit which will, by faith, give weak humans complete victory over sin. Paul claimed God’s promise of full victory in exhorting the believers of Corinth to reach God’s ideal for His people.

“Having therefore these prom-

HOW CAN A POOR, SIN-PRONE MORTAL WITH A FALLEN NATURE EVER MEET THE STANDARD SO DEFINITELY SET BEFORE US?

Further, in the Old Testament era, God set forth no less a requirement for His people. “For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.” Leviticus 11:44

God again reiterates this principle for those Christians who make up His remnant church. Indeed, He foretold that they would be obedient to His law. “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17

Lest anyone doubt the total victory over sin of those who will compose God’s remnant church,
we have been promised they will achieve it. “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.” Zephaniah 3:13

It is little wonder that Peter, when speaking of the preparation of God’s people for the last days, posed the sobering, rhetorical question, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” 2 Peter 3:11, 12

The prophet Isaiah, looking down to the last days of the history of this world, revealed the level of godliness God will empower His people to possess. “Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye failures and the failures of others, and from these criteria deduce that God will save people in their sins, rather than from them. Such a view contradicts the plain teaching of Scripture. Others cry out as did Paul in his lost condition, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24

Paul’s immediate answer was as succinct as it was comforting, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” 7:25

The question on the lips of every true believer is how can a poor, sin-prone mortal with a fallen nature ever meet the standard so definitely set before us as we study the grand theme of the sanctuary?

The Bible is replete with the answers to this question. But the complete secret is found in a short passage of the great psalm thus commit all to Him. Because they do not forsake the things of this world entirely, they present all their and theological excuses to continue to fall short of God’s standard promised to all who will allow Him to take all selfishness from their lives.

The second requirement is that we diligently seek to place the precepts of God in our hearts and affections. David’s well-known utterance on this matter should have particular meaning for God’s people in the judgment hour. “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psalm 119:11

Further, the true believer will search the Scriptures and pray sincerely in order to learn more of God’s will for him. He will ever seek to come closer in character to His example, ever sitting at the feet of the Master Teacher to learn more and more of His will. “Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.” 119:12

Finally, the born-again Christian will share his convictions with others, seeking to direct them in the path of righteousness. To witness to God’s incomparable love and power will be his greatest joy. “With my lips have I declared all the judgments of my mouth.” 119:13

A young Buddhist student nurse in the Bangkok Adventist Hospital was asked by a teacher, “What do you think of Jesus?” Her reply showed a depth of understanding far surpassing that of many Christians. “Jesus is the person who sacrificed so that man might have eternal life,” she wrote. “He teaches man to understand the commandments that he should follow. He gives man a firm foundation to depend on, so we should stop sinning.”

Perhaps this simple insight into the preparation of a people ready to meet their Lord has a depth of import that no amount of scholarly research could reveal.

THE FIRST STEP IS TO SEEK THE LORD WITH OUR WHOLE HEART. WE MUST SURRENDER ALL, OR WE SURRENDER NOTHING.

judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it: that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.” Isaiah 56:1, 2

This blessing is consistent with Peter’s promise to God’s people on the day of Pentecost. “Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.” Acts 3:26

There cannot be the least doubt as to God’s requirement for His people. All Christians do not have a proper concept of this standard. Many look to their own exploring God’s standard of obedience. The first step is to seek the Lord with our whole heart. Indeed, unless we surrender all, we surrender nothing. David expressed this essential quality this way: “With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.” Psalm119:10

The sad reality is that rare is the Christian who gives his entire heart to his Saviour. Many present-day Christians have become great rationalizers of their self-centered culture and interest, so that they cannot distinguish their own willful ways from God’s ways. The root reason that they despair of meeting the requirement God has promised is that they do not look to Jesus and
Food for Thought

Have you thought that your humble lot in life was of little import, seldom appreciated or noticed? Think again.

Such thoughts are common to humanity—but only to humanity, for only the inhabitants of this world suffer from the shortsightedness that produces such thinking. The Christian, however, and the Seventh-day Adventist in particular, has no reason to pine for a wider stage, a broader influence. To humanity—frail, sinful, foolish—is given the opportunity of addressing the citizenry of uncharted worlds.

"Our little world is the lesson book of the universe." (The Desire of Ages, 19) Such simple words, but have you given them any thought. We might well contemplate the implications of this fact into the language of our day, something we're used to. Let's see what we're really talking about in terms of numbers.

The 1985 edition of Encyclopedia Britannica offers an estimate of $10^{11}$ galaxies in the known universe. Of course, $10^{11}$ is the same as 100,000,000,000, and is written out as one hundred billion. The same source also mentions that the Milky Way galaxy, of which planet earth is a rather small part, contains approximately the same number of stars.

It is true that our home galaxy is perhaps a bit smaller than average, but for our calculations we will accept $10^{11}$ as a good working figure for stars per galaxy. Multiplication gives us a rough approximation of $10^{22}$ stars in the currently known universe. (Be assured that such estimates are regularly revised upward, and that the figures we are dealing with are most likely somewhat out of date already.) Be that as it may, the full figure would be $10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000$. In normal American English, that is written out as ten sextillion.

One more piece of raw information to help our figuring: in round numbers, the population of the world is now five billion (or $5,000,000,000$, or $5 \times 10^9$).

What does all this mean? Well, if the attention of the unfallsen universe is uniformly spread out over the five billion human beings on planet earth, you can count on being scrutinized by the inhabitants of about $2 \times 10^{40}$ (that's $20,000,000,000$, or twenty billion) galaxies. Unfallsen beings, represented by $2 \times 10^{42}$ (2 sextillion) stars are studying you, learning the lessons of your experience with sin and redemption.

Provided, that is, that the interest of the universe is divided evenly. I rather suspect that certain groups may receive more than their share of attention, but we really have no way to estimate that.

Do you still want to be an actor? Still think you need more attention? Still trying to hide your little pet sins? Think again.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses..."
When Jesus Almost Came

Lewis Walton

IT WAS autumn, 1856. Across the landscape of history the wind was rising—a storm wind, filled with hints of distant thunder. In young America no one seemed to be in clear control anymore; there was anger in the land, with muffled threats of oncoming civil war, and from time to time its onset glowed like heat lightning just over the horizon, crackling prophetically above places such as Charleston and Gettysburg. Soon they would become altars upon which Americans would offer 500,000 sons.

The economy, too, was headed for trouble. Just a few months hence would come the famed panic of 1857. "In the midst of all its plenty and pride," one historian wrote, "the nation woke one morning to find the glory was all a dream. While speculation was at a fever-heat and when men were wild with a mania for money-making, there came a financial crash unprecedented in the nation's history."1

Other problems nibbled at the fringes of history, some of them still hidden from view. American readers of the New York Tribune might have noticed regular articles by a European communist named Karl Marx. And in New York, Richard Gatling was busily inventing a six-barreled gun that could fire bullets as rapidly as a man could turn its crank. It was the forerunner of the machine gun, this engine of Gatling's creation, the first in a series of new devices designed to kill with grim efficiency. In the years to come it would keep gravediggers busy.

So the autumn of 1856 was a dynamic moment, filled with events that cast long shadows into the future, as if history might be on the brink of something. And indeed history was—something larger than most people imagined. In the autumn of this year an event occurred that would come tantalizingly close to ushering in the coming of Jesus.

It all began with an editorial in the Review and Herald.

On October 9, 1856, James White ran a brief article on the back page of the Review; it probably took most of his readers by complete surprise. Until now, Sabbath-keeping Adventists had contentedly assumed themselves to be represented by the church at Philadelphia (Revelation 3:8-11)—a congregation of brotherly
love, for whom the Lord had no rebuke. But White was challenging them with a series of questions suggesting that the Laodicean message might apply to them. How well were they really doing the work of God? Were they truly represented by the era of Philadelphia, as most of them supposed? Or was there a dreadful possibility that they might actually be Laodicean—pretentious, proud of their accomplishments, but lacking in true godliness? His questions could hardly have been more revolutionary. The roots of Adventism were still young and vital. Only twelve years had passed since the autumn of 1844, and the memories of that experience were still warm—memories of a golden moment, when thousands believed that the coming of Jesus was at hand, and revival swept the land. In the dozen years that had gone by, those who remained faithful following the Disappointment had studied intensively in the Word of God. In so doing, they had plowed squarely into one of the richest caches of truth one could imagine. The Sabbath. The judgment. The truth about death. Even an emerging understanding of health. Simultaneously they began discovering that in the Hebrew sanctuary service lay enormous insights, capable of answering some hitherto unsolved problems.

There was, in summary, much to be proud of. And as James White was about to point out, that just might be part of the problem.

As one looked at Adventism in the middle 1850s, there were multiplying signs that all was not well. A dozen years had passed, during which the believers had plumbed some of the deepest spiritual truths explored in centuries. Yet ironically, they were further from heaven than they had been in the autumn of 1844. “I was pointed back to the years 1843 and 1844. There was a spirit of consecration then that there is not now,” Ellen White exclaimed in 1856. “What has come over the professed peculiar people of God?”

A disturbing trend was developing in Adventism. After twelve years of great discoveries, God’s people were not progressing as they should spiritually. Something was wrong. One of the reasons was the editorial decision to omit references to the Spirit of Prophecy in the pages of the Review, to make the paper more acceptable as an evangelistic tool. As a result, fewer people listened for the prophetic voice, and fewer visions were given to Ellen White.

In late 1855 the General Conference took steps to rectify the situation, and in 1856 James White seemed to have decided to hit the crisis head-on. “As a people we profess to believe that Christ is soon coming. Yet professed believers rush on in their worldly pursuits, taxing their entire energies in pursuit of this world as if there was no coming Jesus, no wrath of God to fall upon the shelterless, and no flaming judgment bar, where all deeds will receive a recompense. We tremble, we shudder, as we contemplate the condition of the professed people of God.”

“Our positions on Bible truth are clearly defined in the Scriptures, and hardly defended. The present truth is so connected with the present fulfillment of prophecy that the people who read and hear our views both see and feel the force of truth. But where is a consecrated church on whom God can consistently pour out the Holy Ghost, and make them flaming instruments in giving light to the world? . . . It does not exist,” he said sadly. “It cannot be found.”

He described mournfully how workers had “toiled over the midnight lamp” to produce tracts for Adventist witnessing, and he told how such publications “remain piled up in the office,” almost entirely undistributed. It would appear that in the 1850s, believers were falling into a trap that would ensnare them repeatedly in the decades ahead. God’s people, immersed in the mightiest message that the imagination could conceive, were living as if the Second Coming were only a dream. They were failing to deliver the Advent message. “O ye Laodiceans,” James White cried out, revealing himself at his evangelistic best, “our mouth is open unto you. Be not deceived as to your real condition.”

It was strong medicine, but it worked. Something about the fervency of his appeal resonated in the young church. Mail poured into Battle Creek from people who seem to have been just waiting for someone to raise the warning. There was God’s church, trembling, on the brink of the most awesome developments in human history, professing to have a judgment-hour message, yet acting as though the judgment had not come—and suddenly reality dawned, like sunrise over a scene of danger, and people began to wake up. There was nothing to be proud of—not while earth’s last warning lay “piled up” in Battle Creek, undistributed by those who claimed to have God’s message for the world. The final time prophecy in the Bible had occurred; now, according to Adventism, humanity would face a terminal crisis. Just ahead lay a scene of trouble so severe that the most vivid imagination could not picture it beforehand. One’s only hope of survival was the coming of Jesus; nothing was as important as delivering that message.

Nearly 350 letters flooded the Review office, at a time when the total number of believers was only about two thousand. In other words, nearly 20 per cent of the church responded, and without dissent they agreed that the time

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Without dissent they agreed that the time had come for revival

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had come for revival. Considering the fact that each such letter no doubt represented a household, one can only conclude that a large proportion of the church was prepared to follow leadership into a new era of commitment. A revival unlike anything since 1844 began to sweep Adventism.

Then, tragically, it all collapsed. With the stage of history set, with a depressed economy to pry people's minds away from material distractions, with angels going everywhere to prepare the way, with the nation poised on the brink of a massive civil war, with everything ready except the church, Adventism's revival withered. The bittersweet irony of all was the fact that most believers had, for a time, fully expected their brief reformation to usher in the coming of Jesus.

"Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel," Ellen White wrote in 1859. Yet between the dream and the fulfillment something failed. They had been near enough to the coming of Jesus to sense its presence, yet the opportunity slipped through their fingers.

So near and yet so far. God's people stumbled, and from that distant era a question cries out, reaching into our own lives, begging to be answered. What went wrong? Could we make the same mistake?

On page 187 of volume 1 of the Testimonies, Ellen White explains quite clearly what went wrong. "Many moved from feeling, not from principle and faith, and this solemn message stirred them. It wrought upon their feelings, and excited their fears, but did not accomplish the work which God designed that it should. They had not, she said sadly, allowed God to purify them from "their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions," and she described in chilling terms what happens when people resist the sanctifying efforts of heaven: angels are told, "They are joined to their idols, let them alone."

For a time the Laodicean message had powerfully affected the church, healing differences, reconciling believers to each other, provoking heartfelt confession of sin. At its height the reformation was so intense that "nearly all" thought it would usher in the coming of Jesus. But the experience was superficial. They did not give the message "time to do its work"—to reach completely into their lives, producing in them the total surrender of heart that was necessary before people could stand the unimaginable challenges of the end of time. In other words, Adventists had failed in the one thing that could blunt their whole mission: they had failed to take Adventism to its ultimate.

It was a mistake they should not have made—not in 1857. For this very year they were putting the finishing touches on a system of theology that revealed, with great clarity, just why earth's last generation would have to meet such a high standard of faith and behavior. The clue was to be found in a truth they were just now beginning to understand in its fullness—the doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary.

For centuries theologians had been struggling with an apparent contradiction in Christian faith. On the one hand, a believer is supposed to have full assurance of salvation. "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12), John said, pulling the future into the present. Salvation is so powerful that in its presence even time is distorted. In a moment of faith, one can have the assurance that eternity begins now.

On the other hand, Jesus made it clear that not every believer would retain salvation. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). Therein lay the contradiction: how does one harmonize "full assurance" with continuing human free will, whereby one may actually have salvation but later decide to cast it aside? Over the centuries the best minds in Christendom had tried to solve the riddle. Calvin attempted to handle the problem at the source: Get rid of free will itself, he said, through the doctrine of predestination. Catholic theologians used another approach: give sinners full assurance with the second chance of purgatory. Still others tried to accomplish it by getting rid of human free will at the moment of conversion so that a person could not later lose salvation by changing his mind. Thus they produced the soothing doctrine of once saved, always saved. None of the solutions made biblical or intellectual sense.

In 1857 Adventism was formulating a system of theology that addressed that dilemma head-on, developing a model for full assurance while preserving human free will. The secret lay in the sanctuary service. The concept they offered is astonishingly similar to a common-sense mechanism used by earthly courts of law to grant someone full assurance of a legal right that cannot take place until a future time.

Let me illustrate. Suppose an aggrieved spouse comes to court and proves that she is legally entitled to a divorce. In most states the law requires that the judge delay granting her a final decree, in the hope that her marriage can be mended in the meantime. Now the judge faces a dilemma: he has before him a person with an absolute legal right, but he cannot grant that right—not yet. His solution? He enters a provisional decree called an "interlocutory judgment." He writes the person's name down in the records of the court. He declares that she is entitled to a decree that will occur in the future. At the end of that time, if she still wishes final judgment entered, she is entitled...
to return to court and ask for it. From that moment on she has a legal right that is secure, unless she herself changes her mind. She has been given the most absolute assurance it is possible to give without robbing her of free will. Thus her probationary period ends with a conscious expression of her own will.

I recognize the dangers of trying to illustrate heavenly truths with earthly realities, and biblical concepts with twentieth-century institutions, but here I think the analogy fits. I believe I have just described the mechanism of the plan of salvation. When a sinner comes to God in the name of Jesus, he has asserted a legal right to which even God subjects Himself—the right to live forever in His presence. It was paid for at Calvary; God willingly grants it. In the records of the heavenly court his name is entered among the redeemed—entered, in biblical terms, in a document called the book of life. But the sinner, however repentant, remains a free moral agent, capable in the future of turning his back on salvation. Only at the end of one's probation is it possible to enter a final decree. When probation does close, that person indicates whether he still desires salvation—and he does so with the best possible evidence, "upon the record of his deeds" (Revelation 20:13, NEB). Thus, every person who ever lived, saved or lost, is guaranteed a final trip to court.

Adventism was saying all this in 1857. They had even coined a term for the act: the "investigative judgment."1

For the first time in centuries, that doctrine put the plan of salvation on a rational legal footing. But lurking within it was a challenge of almost unimaginable proportions, and that challenge revolved around an event called the close of probation.

Throughout human history, one's probation had simply closed at death. When life ceased, one's final decision had been made regarding salvation; thereafter, nothing could affect one's destiny. Thus, hidden in mankind's greatest apparent tragedy could be found one of its greatest blessings. For death gave one a final chance at salvation. Even if people had failed repeatedly in the Christian life, God's mercy could seek them one last time as death approached. Even the weakest could, in the closing glimmer of consciousness, reach out like the dying thief and grasp the hand of God. Then, before Lucifer could brew up a new agony of temptation, they could slip away into the quiet peace of death, forever secure from his devices.

In other words, for many people death was a crutch, an escape route by which they could hide at last from the possibility of failure. Therein lies a hint of a profound truth. Everything that God allows to happen to His children, however painful, has undoubtedly accepted salvation. Yet in all history, we are told of only two people who didn't use the crutch of death, who transcended from this world to the next, lifted by translational faith. Their names were Enoch and Elijah.

Enoch and Elijah—the very persons whom Ellen White says typify the people who will be living when Jesus returns. See Patriarchs and Prophets, 89; Prophets and Kings, 425.

And that brings us back to Adventism. To ultimate Adventism. To the failure of 1857 and the challenge of the future. Somewhere, sometime, the crutch of death will not be available. A generation of God's people will have to face probation's close without it; and they will do so at the very end of the human genetic chain, when humanity is weakest and temptation strongest, when there is no place left to hide, and human weapons hazard the globe; when theological confusion darkens the earth, and our brightest lights go out; when former brethren become the most articulate foes of God's people. When to survive the ordeal, one will need to have the "faith of Jesus."

Probation will close while a generation of believers are still living. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly."

Quickly, but not yet. Jesus closes probation, but He has not yet returned. A generation of God's people is declared to be eternally redeemed while they are still in this world, still theoretically capable of turning their backs on God. Like Enoch and Elijah, they face the close of probation without having death to lean on. Here is the risk the Creator takes: He bestows salvation upon mortals who face the most dreadful conditions the world has ever seen. They must survive on faith alone.

But along with the risk comes an enormous benefit—an ultimate,
Twelve—four Hundred Days?

The twenty-three hundred days, 1844, the cleansing of the sanctuary. Vital topics for Christians, but sadly misunderstood, or not understood at all, by many Seventh-day Adventists today.

In trying to relate some of the importance of the sanctuary doctrine not long ago, I had barely begun when I was cut short with "I already know all about the 2400 days." Twenty-four hundred days? A slip of the tongue? Perhaps, but in any case a clear indication to me that the individual was not all that interested in going through the "2400 days" again.

A few months ago as I was teaching a Sabbath School class I had an opportunity to bring out some of the precious truths regarding the cleansing of the sanctuary referred to in Daniel 8:14. Since the class was for new Adventists, the Daniel and Revelation seminars they had attended were still fairly fresh in their minds. After the class several members expressed appreciation for what they had learned. One young man told me, "You know, I remember being taught something about 1844, I remember thinking, What's this all about? It wasn't making much sense to me; with the charts and all, it really was kind of confusing. I didn't see what all that had to do with my being a Christian, so I just passed it over and until you mentioned it again, had almost forgotten about it."

Isolated case? I doubt it. Seven years ago when I came back to the church (having left when I was a teenager), my friend's testimony was mine. What was 1844 all about? And who needed it anyway? Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church today, the validity of 1844 is being questioned and even attacked. It has been stated to this writer that "The church will never be able to reach the masses with the gospel, never gain the respect of the Protestants until we get rid of the extra baggage of 1844."

The question then must be asked, Why are so many of our people unimpressed with the importance of 1844? Haven't they been taught about the beginning of the 2300 days in 457 B.C. at the "going forth of the commandment"? Daniel 9:25; Ezra 7:12-26

Haven't they seen the Scriptures, and the charts? Surely they know that the "seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks," or 483 years extend to A.D. 27 when Christ was baptized and received the anointing of the Spirit. (Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18) Jesus Himself said, "The time is fulfilled." Mark 1:14, 15

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." (Daniel 9:27) From A.D. 27, seven years bring us to A.D. 34, during which time Christ—at first in person and afterward by His disciples—extended the gospel invitation to the Jews. Matthew 10:5, 6

In the "midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." (Daniel 9:27) Christ was crucified in the midst of the week of years when type met antitype and all the sacrifices and oblations came to their end. The seventy weeks (490 years) were a part of the 2300-
day/year prophecy. Starting at 457 B.C. 490 years reach to A.D. 34. Subtracting the 490 years from 2300, leaves 1810. Adding 1810 to A.D. 34 gives the date A.D. 1844.

Regardless of recent objections—all of which have been answered time and again—this is the inspired testimony of Scripture, with which I wholeheartedly agree. Haven't our people been provided this information? (And a great deal more not included here.) Of course they have!

It seems obvious that the problem is not establishing the date 1844, but once the minds of the people have been led to that date, what then?

I remember attending a Daniel Seminar in which the evangelist spent a good deal of time showing that the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 ended in 1844. His reasoning was sound, and every one was impressed with the thought that something of major importance took place on October 22, 1844.

The next evening when we gathered, the evangelist was to reveal what the “cleansing of the sanctuary” was. Obviously it was not the earth, as the early Adventists believed. He went on to give a brief history of the Millerite movement and the great disappointment, when Christ did not return as expected on October 22, 1844. This disappointment caused the great majority of Adventists to abandon the movement. But a few were led to study the Bible earnestly, and discovered that the Bible revealed a sanctuary in heaven. (See Hebrews 8:1, 2; 8:5; 9:9, 23; Exodus 25:9, 40) They began to see clearly that the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days was the heavenly sanctuary.

After giving a brief study on the earthly sanctuary, our evangelist concluded that in the year 1844 Christ began cleansing the heavenly sanctuary by going through the books of heaven, starting with all those who have professed belief in God from Adam down through the ages to present time. The purpose of His investigation is to determine who through repentance of sin and faith in Christ are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. When the name of the last person has been reached and the determination made for or against his acceptance to heaven, this investigative judgment is finished, and all the record of sin that has been recorded in the heavenly sanctuary will be blotted out, thus cleansing the heavenly sanctuary.

After the concluding remarks of the evangelist, there was a moment of silence during which a young man, a non-Adventist who had faithfully attended the meetings, stood up. There was nothing belligerent in his manner. After watching him come night after night, I was convinced that here was an honest seeker after truth. In a quiet voice he said, “Are you telling me that it has taken 136 years, and who knows how much longer, for God to determine who will be saved and who will be lost? And until this determination is finished, God cannot blot out our sins? Is that right?”

To these questions the evangelist replied, “What you must realize is that the earth is the theater of the universe and in this universe are many worlds and inhabitants of these worlds who have never sinned. Even though God is all-knowing they are not. So in order that the whole universe will see that God's judgments are correct, He gives them time to review the books also.”

A confused look spread across the young man's face. He shook his head and said, “I just don't see where any of this makes any difference for a Christian,” and sat down.

This young man did not return to the meetings. Of 300 people who began the meetings, only a very few were baptized—I believe about four—and to my knowledge none of those who were baptized are attending a Seventh-day Adventist Church today.

Brothers and sisters, I believe that there is an investigative judgment. But to say that the real cause of its delay has been the

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Satan has been seeking to rob this message of its power

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inability of unfallen beings to go through all the books is simply an error.

With this kind of explanation for the delay of the sanctuary’s cleansing, who can blame the young man for his confusion regarding the sanctuary doctrine? In fact, if all that the cleansing of the sanctuary involved was going over the books in heaven, I too would have a difficult time seeing what “difference” a knowledge of 1844 and the cleansing of the sanctuary would make to a Christian here on earth.

Would we not then have to agree with our critics that 1844 was a “non-event,” or at the very least “extra baggage” for a Christian? But, praise God, we haven't been in error for proclaiming the importance of 1844. The significance of the cleansing of the sanctuary, when rightly understood, is a message of great importance to the Christian. Listen to this inspired statement:

“We are in the great day of atonement, when our sins are, by confession and repentance, to go beforehand to judgment. God does not now accept a tame, spir-
The righteousness of Christ is made manifest in obedience

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” Testimonies to Ministers, 91, 92 (Emphasis supplied)

We see then that the “special work of purification of putting away of sin among God’s people” must be done in order that we might be found “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” This purification will enable us to “stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator.” This work of purification is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14, the three angels’ messages.

Why is the investigative judgment still in progress?

We have seen that the message of the third angel is this, “Justification through faith in the
Surety." This message invites the people to receive the "righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God." It is the "imparting of the priceless gift of His (Christ's) own righteousness to the helpless human agent."

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel." Testimonies, vol. 6, 19

What a tremendous message! What a tremendous responsibility for those who are to proclaim it! And yet Satan has been most successful in robbing this message of its power in order that the people may not be prepared to stand in the day of the Lord. See Selected Messages, Book 1, 124, 125

One hundred and forty-two years have gone by since 1844. Why has it taken so long to cleanse the heavenly sanctuary? Why is the investigative judgment still in progress? Why hasn't Jesus come to receive His people yet?

I believe the answer is painfully obvious: His people are not yet prepared to stand in the day of the Lord.

"Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for His fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us—the perfection of His character? When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare 'It is finished.'" Review and Herald, June 10, 1902

I believe we stand at the borders of the heavenly Canaan. In the past, we as a people have been led to the borders only to turn away. We must not turn away again. Let us allow Jesus to prepare us completely. Isn't it time for heaven to become a reality? Isn't it time to enter the Promised Land? I believe it is.

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The work of publishing has been inextricably bound up with the growth and history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its influence, both in the strengthening of church members and as an evangelistic tool to reach those not of our faith, can scarcely be estimated. As this work and influence continue, it is the purpose of Copyright Berea to direct our readers' attention to publications of merit and usefulness.


Has the sense of urgency and longing for the coming of your Lord somehow slipped away from you? Does the glamour of the world seem brighter, more attractive than it used to? If only someone would write a book, simple enough for the common man, telling how to revive a waning Christian experience.

It has been written, of course—not by Mr. Walton, but by "holy men of God" who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Nothing will ever supplant the Bible as a medium of instruction and encouragement from God. But sometimes it seems our eyes become blinded to the messages in the events around us.

Advent! helps put the world back into perspective. But beyond the world, it portrays the ideals of Adventism, stirring to life those too-often slumbering aspirations to nobility and holiness. This book is not a simplistic "Just wait, He's almost here," nor is it a creditability-stretching forecast of the future. Instead, much of the book is simple, well known, routinely ignored history.

We—as a people, as Seventh-day Adventists—cannot afford to remain blithely ignorant of the facts of history. The cost has been far too high for the church, and perhaps higher still for the world—all the nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples; the ones we were supposed to warn.

Advent! vividly portrays both history and current events. Yet this is not a volume of doomsaying self-recrimination. True, the Word of God and the records of the past both present the failures of the church, but learning well the lessons from former defeat is the difference between those who continue to fail and those who finally carry out the "ultimate Adventism" brought fleetingly to light in our church history.

Lewis Walton's earlier books, Omega and Decision at the Jordan, have exerted considerable influence in behalf of historic Adventism. In Advent! he sharpens his point further yet, dealing with current issues facing the church. Spurning the temptation to sidestep ticklish matters, he goes on to do more than just walk a neutral line. In a field encumbered with "artificial intelligence," he has managed to present the truths of the sanctuary service, character development, the use of the will, Christian effort, and closing events in a straightforward, understandable, and memorable manner.

You will find a sample of Mr. Walton's writing in the article "When Jesus Almost Came." After getting a taste, we urge you to purchase the book for yourself. Advent! is available from your regional Adventist Book Center.
How unfitted for sacred service! His view of himself might be expressed in the language of the apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" [Romans 7:24]

But relief was sent to Isaiah in his distress. He says: "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." [Isaiah 6:6, 7]

In the previous chapter Isaiah had pronounced a woe upon the people who had separated themselves from God: "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope." [5:18] Men may seek to strengthen their forces by confederating together, making, as they suppose, strong societies to carry out the plans they have formed. They may lift up their souls in pride and self-sufficiency; but the One mighty in counsel does not plan with them. Their unbelief in His purposes and work, and their confidence in man, will not permit them to receive the messages He sends. They say: "Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!" [5:19] But God says: "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." [5:21-23]

The class here represented, in order to exalt their own opinions, employ a reasoning which is not authorized by the Word of God. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling. By their specious reasoning, they confuse the distinction that God desires to have drawn between good and evil.
The sacred is brought down on a level with common things. Avarice and selfishness are called by false names; they are called prudence. Their rising up in independence and rebellion, their revenge and stubbornness, in their eyes are proofs of dignity, evidences of a noble mind. They act as though ignorance of divine things were not dangerous and even fatal to the soul: and they prefer their own reasoning to divine revelation, their own plans and human wisdom to the admonitions and commands of God. The piety and conscientiousness of others are called fanaticism, and those who practice truth and holiness are watched and criticized. They deride those who teach and believe the mystery of godliness, “Christ in you the hope of glory.” [Colossians 1:27] The principles underlying these things are not discerned by them; and they go on in wrong-doing, leaving the bars open for Satan to find ready access to the soul.

All self-exaltation and self-admiration are the result of ignorance of God and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. How quickly will self-esteem die, and pride be humbled in the dust, when we view the matchless charms of the character of Christ! The holiness of His character is reflected by all who serve Him in spirit and in truth. If our lips have need of cleansing, if we realize our destitution, and come to God in contrition of heart, the Lord will remove the uncleanliness. He will say to His angel, “Take away the filthy garments,” and clothe him with “change of raiment.” [Zechariah 3:4]

Let every soul who claims to be a son or daughter of God examine himself in the light of heaven; let him consider the polluted lips that make him “undone.” They are the medium of communication. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” [Matthew 12:34, 35] Then let them not be used in bringing from the treasure of the heart words that will dishonor God and discourage those around them, but use them for the praise and glory of God, who has formed them for this purpose. When the cleansing coal is applied from the glowing altar, the conscience will be purged from dead works to serve the living God; and when the love of Jesus is the theme of contemplation, the words coming from human lips will be full of praise and thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb.

How many words are spoken in lightness and foolishness, in jesting and joking! This would not be so did the followers of Christ realize the truth of the words, “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” [Matthew 12:36, 37]

Harsh and unkind words, words of censure and criticism of God’s work and His messengers, are indulged in by those who profess to be His children. When these careless souls discern the greatness of God’s character, they will not mingle their spirit and attributes with His service. When our eyes look by faith into the sanctuary and take in the reality, the importance and holiness, of the work there being done, everything of a selfish nature will be abhorred by us. Sin will appear as it is—the transgression of God’s holy law. The atonement will be better understood; and by living, active faith, we shall see that whatever of virtue humanity possesses, it exists only in Jesus Christ, the world’s Redeemer.

The seraphim before the throne are so filled with reverential awe in beholding the glory of God that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with self-complacency, or in admiration of themselves or one another. Their praise and glory are for the Lord of Hosts, who is high and lifted up, and the glory of whose train fills the temple. As they see the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song of praise is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.” They are fully satisfied to glorify God; and in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. In bearing His image, in doing His service and worshiping Him, their highest ambition is fully reached.

The vision given to Isaiah represents the condition of God’s people in the last days. They are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly sanctuary. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” [Revelation 11:19] As they look by faith into the holy of holies, and see the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips—a people whose lips have often spoken vanity, and whose talents have not been sanctified and employed to the glory of God. Well may they despair as they contrast their own weakness and unworthiness with the purity and loveliness of the glorious character of Christ. But if they, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs shall be made upon the heart, if they will humble their souls before God, there is hope for them. God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart.

The object of this great and solemn work of God is to gather together the sheaves for the heavenly garner; for the earth is to be filled with the glory of the Lord. Then let none be dismayed as they see the prevailing wickedness and hear the language coming from unclean lips. When the powers of darkness set themselves in array against the people of God; when Satan shall muster his forces for the last great conflict, and his power seems to be great and almost overwhelming, the clear view of the divine glory, the throne high and lifted up, arched with the bow of promise, will give comfort, assurance, and peace.

Review and Herald, December 22, 1896
Figures of the True

O.R.L. Crosier

One of the strongest influences on the early development of the sanctuary doctrine was a single article written by Owen R.L. Crosier. As a young man, Crosier was a close friend of Hiram Edson and F.B. Hahn. Of the three, Edson is best known to Adventists for his part in redefining the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14 following the disappointment of October 22, 1844. Although the initial realization of their error came to Edson the morning after the disappointment, it took several months of intensive study on the part of all three of these men before they were ready to present their findings in an organized manner.

As the most gifted penman of the trio, it was O.R.L. Crosier who wrote out that first exposition. Published in the Day-Dawn (a small Millerite publication) at their own expense, the article laid out their findings for the consideration of their brethren. Providentially, it caught the attention of one Enoch Jacobs, editor of the larger and better known Day-Star, of Cincinnati.

Again at their own expense, Edson and Hahn arranged with Jacobs for the publishing of an "Extra" devoted entirely to a fuller presentation of this biblical explanation of the disappointment. Of this publication Ellen White commented: "I believe the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, is the New Jerusalem Temple, of which Christ is a minister. The Lord shew me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light on the cleansing of the Sanctuary, &c; and that it was His will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the Day-Star Extra, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord to recommend that Extra to every saint." Word to the Little Flock, 12

We give here only a portion of that article. It has, admittedly, a rather heavy writing style by today's standards, but we trust that it will still be of interest to our readers -EDITORS

"For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." Hebrews 8:4, 5

The features of the substance always bear a resemblance to those of the shadow; hence the "heavenly things" referred to in this text must be priestly service "in the heavens" (10:1, 2) performed by our High Priest in His sanctuary; for if the shadow is service, the substance is service also.

As the priests of the law served unto the example and shadow of the heavenly service we can from their service learn something of the nature of the heavenly service. "Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See (saith he) that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." 8:5

None can deny that, in obedience to this admonition, Moses made or instituted the Levitical priesthood; it was then "according to the pattern" which the Lord showed him, and that pattern was of heavenly things.

(9:23) If there was not another text to prove that the Levitical priesthood was typical of the Divine, this verse would abundantly do it. Yet some are even denying this obvious import of the priesthood; but if this is not its import, I can see no meaning in it. It is an idle round of ceremonies without sense or use, as it did not perfect those for whom it was performed; but looked upon as typical of the heavenly, it is replete with the most important instruction. As this is the application made of it by the New Testament, so we must regard it, while we examine the atonement made under the Levitical priesthood.

"Now when these things [the worldly sanctuary with its two apartments and the furniture in each] were thus ordained, the priests went always [daily, see 7:27; 10:11] into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." 9:6, 7

Here Paul divides the services of the Levitical priesthood into
two classes—one daily in the Holy, and the other yearly in the Holy of Holies. Their stated daily services, performed in the Holy and at the brazen altar in the court before the tabernacle, consisted of a burnt offering of two lambs, one in the morning and the other at even, with a meat offering which was one tenth of an ephah of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil, and a drink offering which was one fourth of an hin of strong wine. The meat offering was burnt with the lamb, and the drink offering was poured in the Holy. (See Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:3-8) In connection with this they burned on the golden altar in the Holy sweet incense, which was a very rich perfume, when they dressed and lighted the lamps every evening and morning. (See Exodus 30:34-38; 31:11; 30:7-9) The same was afterwards done at the temple. See 1 Chronicles 16:37-40; 2 Chronicles 2:4; 13:4-12; Ezra 3:3

This did not atone for sins either individually or collectively. The daily service described was a sort of continual intercession; but the making of atonement was a special work for which special directions are given. Different words are used both in the Old Testament and the New, to express the same idea as At-one-ment.

Examples

The italicized words are, in the text, synonymous with atone or atonement. Exodus 29:36: "Thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made an atonement for it." Leviticus 12:8: "The priest shall make an atonement for her and she shall be clean." 14:2: "This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing." 14:20: "The priest shall make an atonement for him and he shall be clean." The atonement could not be made for him till after he was healed of the leprosy. (See 13:45, 46) Till he was healed, he had to dwell alone without the camp. Then, 14:3, 4: "The priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look and be

hold if the plague of the leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean." The law was the same in cleansing a house from the leprosy. See 14:33-57: The stones affected with the plague were removed and the house "scraped within round about" and then repaired with new material.

Physical uncleanness is now all removed and we would call it clean; but not so; it is only just prepared to be cleansed according to the law. 14:49: "And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds." 14:52, 53: "And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird . . . and make an atonement for the house, and it shall be clean." 16:18, 19: "And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an

hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." Ephesians 2:16: "And that he might reconcile both unto God." Hebrews 9:13, 14: "The blood of bulls sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; but the blood of Christ shall purge our conscience from dead works." He is the Mediator for the "redemption of the transgressions," and to "perfect forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14) Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins." Acts 3:19: "Be converted that your sins may be blotted out."

From these texts we learn that the words atone, cleanse, reconcile, purify, purge, pardon, sanctify, hallow, forgive, justify, redeem, blot out, and some others, are used to signify the same work, viz., bringing into favor with God; and in all cases blood

The atonement is the great idea of the Law, as well as of the Gospel

Atonement for it . . . And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." 8:15: "And Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it to make reconciliation upon it." 2 Chronicles 29:24: "And they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel." Jeremiah 33:8: "I will cleanse them from all their iniquities . . . and I will pardon all their iniquities." Romans 5:9-11: "Being now justified by His blood, . . . by whom we have now received the atonement." 2 Chronicles 5:17-19: "Who
middle a place unclean?

Who would think of calling such a


court (the enclosure of the
sanctuary), and that the atone-
ment thus made was only for the
forgiveness of sins. These points
are expressly taught in this chap-
ter and the following one on the
trespass offering. Here is an
atonement, to make which the
priests only entered the Holy, and
to make it they could enter that
apartment “always” or “daily.”

“But into the second (the Holy
of Holies) went the high priest
alone once every year, not without
blood, which he offered for him-
self, and for the errors of the
people,” (laos, nation). (Hebrews
9:7) This defines the yearly to be
the National Atonement, of which
the Lord “speaks particularly” in
Leviticus 16: “And the Lord said
unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron,
thy brother, that he come not at
therein that he may bear their
judgment, also in it the Urim and
Thummim (light and perfection),
and the plate of pure gold, the
holy crown (Leviticus 8:9; Exodus
28:36) with “HOLINESS TO THE
LORD” engraved upon it, placed
upon the forefront of his mitre
that he may bear the iniquities of
the holy things, enters the Holy
of Holies to make an atonement
to cleanse them, that they may be
clean from all their sins before
the Lord. Leviticus 16:30

The victims for the atonement
of this day were, for the priest
himself, a young bullock for a sin
offering (16:3), and for the peo-
ple, two goats; one for a sin of-
fering and the other for the scape
goat, and a ram for a burnt of-
fering. (16:5-8) He killed or
caused to be killed the bullock
for a sin offering for himself.
(16:11) “And he shall take a
censer full of burning coals of
fire from off the altar before the
Lord, and his hands full of sweet
incense beaten small, and bring
it within the veil: and he shall put
the incense upon the fire before
the Lord, that the cloud of the
incense may cover the mercy seat
that is upon the testimony that he
die not; and he shall take of the
blood of the bullock, and sprinkle
it with his finger upon the mercy
seat eastward; and before the
mercy seat shall he sprinkle of
the blood with his finger seven
times.” (16:12-14) So much in
preparation to make the atone-
ment for the people; a descrip-
tion of which follows:

“Then shall he kill the goat of
the sin offering, which is for the
people, and bring his blood with-
in the veil, and do with that
blood as he did with the blood
of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon
the mercy seat . . . And he shall
make an atonement for [cleanse,
see marginal references] the holy
place [within the veil, 16:2], be-
cause of the uncleanness of the
children of Israel, because of
their transgressions in all their
sins; and so shall he do for [i.e.
atone or cleanse], the tabernacle
of the congregation [the Holy]
that remaineth among them in
the midst of their uncleanness.”
(16:15, 16) “And he shall go out
[of the Holy of Holies] unto the
altar that is before the Lord [in
the Holy] and make an atonement
for it; and shall take of the blood
of the bullock [for himself], and
of the blood of the goat [for the
people], and put it upon the horns
of the altar round about. And he
shall sprinkle the blood upon
it with his finger seven times,
and cleanse it, and hallow it from
the uncleanness of the children
of Israel.” 16:18, 19

This altar was the golden altar
of incense in the Holy upon
which the blood of individual
atonements was sprinkled during
the daily ministration. Thus it
received the uncleanness from
which it is now cleansed. (Exodus
30:1-10) “Aaron shall make an
atonement upon the horns of it
once a year, with the blood of the

on the tenth day of the seventh
month. Hence the former may be
called the daily atonement and
the latter the yearly, or the
former the individual, and the
latter the national atonement.
The individual atonement for
the forgiveness of sins was made
for a single person, or for the
whole congregation in case they
were collectively guilty of some
sin. The first chapter of Leviticus
gives directions for the burnt of-
fering, the second for the mea-
offering, the third for the peace
offering, and the fourth for the
sin offering, which as its name
implies, was an offering for sins,
in which he who offered it at-
tained forgiveness of his sins . . .

It should be distinctly remem-
bered that the priest did not
begin his duties till he obtained
the blood of the victim, and that
they were all performed in the
all times into the holy place
within the veil before the mercy
seat, which is upon the ark; that
he die not: for I will appear in
the cloud upon the mercy seat.”
(16:2) For what purpose and when
could he enter it? “To make an
atonement for all Israel [the
whole nation] for all their sins
once a year” “on the tenth day of
the seventh month.” 16:34, 29

This was the most important
day of the year. The whole na-
ton having had their sins pre-
viously forgiven by the atone-
ment made in the Holy, now as-
ssemble about their sanctuary,
while the high priest, attired in
his holy garments for glory and
beauty (Exodus 28:2), having the
golden bells on the hem of his
robe that his sound may be heard
when he goeth in before the
Lord, the breastplate of judgment
on his heart with their names

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sin offering of atonement.” We see in Leviticus 16:20 that at this stage of the work “he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar,” i.e. the Holy of Holies, the Holy, and the altar in the latter.

We have before seen that atone, reconcile, cleanse, and other terms, signify the same, hence at this stage he has made an end of cleansing those places. As the blood of atonements for the forgiveness of sins was not sprinkled in the court, but in the tabernacle only, the entire work of cleansing the sanctuary was performed within the tabernacle. These were holy things, yet cleansed yearly. The holy place within the veil contained the ark of the covenant, covered with the mercy seat, overshadowed by the cherubims, between which the Lord dwelt in the cloud of divine glory. Who would think of calling such a place unclean? Yet the Lord provided at the time, yea, before it was built, that it should be annually cleansed. It was by blood, and not by fire, that this sanctuary, which was a type of the new covenant sanctuary was cleansed.

The high priest on this day “bore the iniquities of the holy things which the children of Israel hallowed in all their holy gifts.” (Exodus 28:38) These holy things composed the sanctuary. Numbers 18:1: “And the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou, and thy sons, and thy father’s house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary.” This “iniquity of the sanctuary” we have learned was not its own properly, but the children of Israel’s, God’s own people’s, which it had received from them. And this transfer of iniquity from the people to their sanctuary was not a mere casualty, incident on scenes of lawless rebellion, bloodshed or idolatry among themselves, nor the devastations of an enemy; but it was according to the original arrangement and regular operation of this typical system. For we must bear in mind that all the instructions were given to Moses and Aaron before the erection of the sanctuary. Provision was made to make atonement for sins committed in ignorance; but not till after they were known (Leviticus 4:14, 5:3-6), then of course they became sins of knowledge. Then the individual bore his iniquity (Leviticus 5:1-17; 7:1-8), till he presented his offering to the priest and slew it, the priest made an atonement with blood (Leviticus 17:11), and he was forgiven, then of course free from his iniquity.

The goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities

Now at what point did he cease to bear his iniquity? Evidently when he had presented his victim slain, he had then done his part. Through what medium was his iniquity conveyed to the sanctuary? Through his victim, or rather its blood when the priest took and sprinkled it before the veil and on the altar. Thus the iniquity was communicated to their sanctuary. The first thing done for the people on the tenth day of the seventh month was to cleanse it, thence by the same means, the application of blood. This done, the high priest bore the “iniquity of the sanctuary” for the people “to make atonement for them.” (Leviticus 10:17) “And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place [within the veil, 16:2] and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar [or when he had cleansed the sanctuary], he shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited [margin, of separation].” 16:20-22

This was the only office of the scape goat, to finally receive and bear away from Israel all their iniquities into an uninhabited wilderness and there retain them, leaving Israel at their sanctuary, and the priest to complete the atonement of the day by burning the fat of the sin offerings, and offering the two rams for burnt offerings on the brazen altar in the court. (16:24, 25) The burning without the camp of the carcasses of the sin offerings closed the services of this important day.

Our Apologies

The best laid plans still occasionally go awry. It probably is not a secret to our readers anymore, but the August, 1985, issue of Our Firm Foundation managed to come off the press with pages 12 and 28 occupying each other’s position in the magazine. To make matters worse, an undetermined number of sub-standard copies were mistakenly included in the subscription mailing. We apologize for these mistakes. Though they were not under our immediate control, we regret the inconvenience and confusion these matters may have caused. Thank you for bearing with us as we learn.

—The staff of Hope International
The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

A. T. Jones

The cleansing of the sanctuary and the finishing of the mystery of God are identical as to time; and are also so closely related as to be practically the same in character and event.

In the "figure of the true" in the sanctuary service made visible, the round of service was completed annually; and the cleansing of the sanctuary was the finishing of that figurative and annual service. And this cleansing of the sanctuary was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all "the uncleanness of the children of Israel" because of their transgressions in all their sins," which, by the ministry of the priesthood in the sanctuary had been brought into the sanctuary during the service of the year.

The finishing of this work of the sanctuary and for the sanctuary was, likewise, the finishing of the work for the people. For in that day of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was the day of atonement, whosoever of the people did not by searching of heart, confession, and putting away of sin, take part in the service of the cleansing of the sanctuary was cut off forever. Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary extended to the people, and included the people, as truly as it did the sanctuary itself. And whosoever of the people was not included in the cleansing of the sanctuary, and was not himself cleansed, equally with the sanctuary, from all iniquity and transgression and sin, was cut off forever. Leviticus 16:15-19, 29-34; 23:27-32

And this was all "a figure for the time then present." That sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry was a figure of the true, which is the sanctuary, sacrifice, priesthood, and ministry of Christ. And that cleansing of the sanctuary was a figure of the true, which is the cleansing of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, from all the uncleanness of the believers in Jesus because of all their transgressions in all their sins. And the time of this cleansing of the true is declared in the words of the Wonderful Numberer to be "unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed"; which is the sanctuary of Christ in A.D. 1844.

And, indeed, the sanctuary of which Christ is the High Priest is the only one that could possibly be cleansed in 1844; because it is the only one that there is. The sanctuary that was a figure for the time then present was destroyed by the army of the Romans who came and destroyed that city (Daniel 9:26) and that sanctuary; and even its place was to be desolate "even until the consummation." Therefore the only sanctuary that could possibly be cleansed at the time referred to by the Wonderful Numberer, at the end of the two thousand and three hundred days, was alone the sanctuary of Christ—the sanctuary of which Christ is High Priest and Minister; the
sanctuary and the true tabernacle of which Christ, at the right hand of God, is true Priest and Minister; the sanctuary and true tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man."

What this cleansing means is plainly declared in the very Scripture which we are now studying—Daniel 9:24-28. For the angel of God, in telling Daniel the truth concerning the two thousand and three hundred days, tells also the great object of the Lord in this time as it relates to both the Jews and the Gentiles. The seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, of the limitation upon the Jews and Jerusalem is definitely declared to be "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Daniel 9:24

That is the true purpose of God in the sanctuary and its service in all time: whether in the figure or in the true; whether for Jews or for Gentiles; whether on earth or in heaven. Seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, was the limitation set for the Jews to have this accomplished for and in themselves. To accomplish this, to that people, of all people, Christ Himself came in person to show to them the Way, and to lead them in this Way. But they would not have it. Instead of seeing in Him the gracious One who would finish transgression, and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, to every soul, they saw in Him only "Beelzebub the prince of the devils"; only one instead of whom they would readily choose a murderer; only one who as King they would openly repudiate, and choose a Roman Caesar as their only king; only one whom they counted as fit only to be crucified out of the world. For such a people as that, and in such a people as that, could He finish transgression,

and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness—Impossible: impossible by their own persistent rebellion. Instead of His being allowed by them to do such a gracious and wonderful work for them, from the depths of divine pity and sorrow He was compelled to say to them: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." "The kingdom of God shall be

The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel

taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matthew 23:37, 38; 21:43

The nation to whom the kingdom of God was given, upon its rejection by the Jews, was the Gentiles. And that which was to be done for the Jews, ..., but which they would not at all allow to be done for them—that is the identical thing to be done for the Gentiles, to whom the kingdom of God is given ... And that work is "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." This can be done alone in the finishing of the mystery of God in the cleansing of the true Christian sanctuary. And this is done in the cleansing of the true sanctuary, only in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the perfecting of the believers in Jesus, on the one hand; and on the other hand in the finishing of transgression and making an end of sins in the destruction of the wicked and the cleansing of the universe from all taint of sin that has ever been upon it.

The finishing of the mystery of God is the ending of the work of the gospel. And the ending of the work of the gospel is, first, the taking away of all vestige of sin and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness—Christ fully formed—within each believer, God alone manifest in the flesh of each believer in Jesus; and, secondly, on the other hand, the work of the gospel being finished means only the destruction of all who then shall not have received the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10): for it is not the way of the Lord to continue men in life when the only possible use they will make of life is to heap up more misery for themselves.

Again, in the service of the earthly sanctuary, we have seen that when the work of the gospel in the annual course was finished in behalf of those who had taken part in it, then all those who had taken no part in it were cut off. "Which was a figure for the time then present," and which plainly teaches that in the service of the true sanctuary when the work of the gospel shall have been finished for all those who have a part in it, then all those who do not have a part in it will be cut off. Thus, in both respects, the finishing of the mystery of God is the final ending of sin.

The service in the earthly sanctuary shows also that in order for the sanctuary to be cleansed and the course of the gospel service there to be finished, it must first be finished in the people who have a part in the service. That is to say: In the sanctuary itself, transgression could not be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity could not be made, and everlasting righteousness could not be

Continued on 31
CLEAR SKIES greeted them that morning as they awoke to watch the last dawn of earthly history. Quiet calm mingled with jubilant expectation as the sun rose first over morning mists, then high overhead, and at last slid serenely down to the western horizon. Darkness fell, but not their hopes. Faith that could endure the test of taunting ex-friends was not to be turned aside easily.

Emotions straining within, they listened at last to the long, slow, melancholy tolling of the midnight chimes. And then they knew. The day was past. And He had not come.

The story of October 22, 1844, is familiar to many of our readers. And well it should be. Together with the Millerite Movement, it forms the groundwork upon which the Lord saw fit to erect His church of the end time. More than that, it was clearly portrayed over 17 centuries in advance by the Apostle John when he penned what we know today as the tenth chapter of Revelation.

There is a danger, though, that we will overlook the significance of the events that followed. We do ourselves a disservice when we imagine that such a crushing blow of confusion and humiliation could be easily resolved. It was no small matter to find the reasons for their disappointment, to comprehend the new truths brought to light, and to discover how this broader understanding of the plan of salvation meshed with already recognized truth.

Such accomplishments carry high price tags, not in dollars, but in time, effort, pain, confusion, and—yes—even humiliation. These are the price of advance, soon after the disappointment the Lord began to break through the gloom that had settled upon His people. Within hours of that dismal midnight, Hiram Edson was to have his mind opened to a clearer understanding of Daniel 8:14. In his words, he then realized that “instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days, that He for the first time entered on that day, the second apartment of that sanctuary; and that He had a work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth.”

This seed thought, small as a grain of mustard, was destined to grow to dimensions unimagined by Hiram Edson that fall morning. In fact, though the revelation was right on time for the Advent group at Port Gibson, New York, it was much too large a jump for most of the disheartened believers to make at that time. Full explanations would have to wait. The people needed simple answers to basic questions on the currency of growth. As the days of God's shaking and sifting bear down harder and closer upon His end-time people, it would be well for us to learn from the past, to gain proficiency in the purchase of truth. Let us consider our history.
respected mainstream of society—God? or was it the devil? They had to know.

And so, while the Port Gibson group busied themselves with several months of diligent Bible study on the sanctuary service, a loving heavenly Father again took the initiative to comfort His confused children. In December of 1844, a 17-year-old girl had a simple vision of the Adventist people following—not Satan—but Christ as He led them higher and farther from the "wicked world below." And all the while their path was lighted by the "Midnight Cry" of two months before. It was not a learned exposition of Scripture, only a message of comfort and assurance. Understanding would come soon enough. For now, faith and trust in a Father's care were enough.

So the believers hung on to their hopes, but it wasn't easy. We would do well to ponder for a moment what our reaction might be should we find ourselves in a similar situation. Do we love truth enough to pursue it despite such obstacles? Do we love our brethren enough to listen to—and perhaps even learn from—their understandings of Scripture?

**The whole plan of salvation came into sharper focus than ever before**

Providentially, the small group at Port Gibson (Hiram Edson, Dr. F.B. Hahn, and Owen R.L. Crosier) had time to study in the relative peace of their secluded locality. By April of 1845 they were prepared to present a reasonably well developed line of biblical evidence indicating that the "sanctuary" to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days must of necessity be the great original in heaven. Further, the instructions for the cleansing of the typical sanctuary indicated a two-stage process in doing away with sin. Throughout the course of the year the sins of the people were transferred by the blood of sacrifices into the sanctuary. Only at the end of the sacred year, on the tenth day of the seventh civil month—the day of atonement—were the sins finally blotted out.

Such was the cleansing of the earthly tabernacle. That a similar process should occur in the heavenly original seemed obvious.

The publication of Crosier's article in the Day-Dawn that spring of 1845 resulted in an enlarged presentation through the pages of the Day-Star, a much more widely circulated journal, in February of 1846.

It was this article which eventually received divine endorsement through Ellen White (see introductory comments to The Figures of the True). But the work was not over yet. God had not given all His truth to the trio from New York, nor had He miraculously preserved them from all error. Though these dedicated students of the Word had been blessed with a profound revelation of truth, they and others had yet an experience to gain. God was guiding. His people could do no better than to follow on as He led, resisting the temptation to run ahead on their own.

It was this very problem, in fact, which proved the greatest snare to those who had once rejoiced in the expectation of their Lord's imminent return. Many of those who had been strong to lead out in the aggressive evangelism of the Millerite Movement failed the test of waiting in quietness of soul for the Lord to make plain the next step of the journey. Trying to regain momentum after the 1844 disappointment, they found themselves departing further and further from Miller's original teachings on prophetic interpretation. Unable to provide a workable alternative to October 22, 1844, as the termination of the 2300 days, they eventually denied the very core of Adventism—the connection of the seventy-week and 2300-day prophetic periods.

In what amounted to a last-ditch effort to restore some form of harmony, unity, and orthodoxy to the shattered movement, they held a conference for all "Second Advent lecturers and brethren who still adhere to the original Advent faith." What they then considered to be the "original" is not clear. This "Albany Conference," held in April of 1845 (the same month in which the Day-Dawn was to present the findings of Hiram Edson's study group) specifically denied the prophetic significance of October 22.2

With what were probably the best of intentions, these dear men who had led God's people so far in the track of truth, had failed to wait for His leading. At the very time that the explanation of their disappointment was being presented in an organized manner, they chose to close the door which their Father was opening before them.

But not all. The "little flock," the "scattered remnant," could not, would not, abandon God-given truth. And what a store of truth they found! For when the "temple of God was opened in heaven"3 not only the sanctuary, but also the Sabbath, the state of the dead, end-time events, the judgment—in short, the whole plan of salvation—came into sharper focus than ever before.

We should know, for we are the heirs of this theological gold mine. But do we appreciate what they did for us? Not in the sense of venerating the fathers of the church. The early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers would have precious little joy in garnished tombs. They would value far more the sense of appreciation which would lead us to do in our day as they did in theirs.

To love truth, and to love one's brethren. Will the twain meet in our lives today as they did in theirs so long ago? Will we allow God to teach us how to advance in even lines? Never a backwards step, but always a care and an effort to see that all move forward together.

The memories, and the ad-
monitions, of Ellen White deserve our careful thought:

"Those who sincerely desire truth will not be reluctant to lay open their positions for investigation and criticism, and will not be annoyed if their opinions and ideas are crossed. This was the spirit cherished among us forty years ago.

"We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnity characterized these councils of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth.

"After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one.

Many tears were shed. If one brother rebuked another for his dullness of comprehension in not understanding a passage as he understood it, the one rebuked would afterward take his brother by the hand, and say, 'Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus is with us; let us keep a humble and teachable spirit; and the brother addressed would say, 'Forgive me, brother, I have done you an injustice.' Then we would bow down in another season of prayer.

"We spent many hours in this way. We did not generally study together more than four hours at a time, yet sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one Spirit.

"We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinion. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one.

"Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation.

"At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another.

"In those days God wroth for us, and the truth was precious to our souls. It is necessary today that our unity be of a character that will bear the test of trial. We are in the school of the Master here, that we may be trained for the school above. We must learn to bear disappointment in a Christ-like manner, and the lesson taught by this will be of great importance to us."

It was hard work for the pioneers. Progress sometimes came only slowly. One lingering gray area was the direct import of the antitypical day of atonement. In 1851 James White would write, "There is no intimation of a space of time between the end of the [2300] days and the cleansing of the sanctuary. Whatever it may be, the work of cleansing it immediately follows the end of the days."

Not until 1855 did the missing piece of the puzzle—the fully developed concept of a pre-advent judgment—come to print. More than a year would pass before the coining of the now-familiar term "investigative judgment."

Some have endeavored to see in this a flaw, a weakness. In reality, the time and effort required to arrive at truth is no argument against it, but rather an eloquent testimony of the patience and perseverance given of God to those whose love for Him would admit no obstacle. Such an experience is of great value now as in bygone days. And just as possible for those who choose to pay the price.

Not only in our relationship with God and our understanding of truth may we look for His special working. His will for us includes as well that we may be bound by the cords of love, trust, and unity to our fellow Christians. Compromise? Never! But union in truth? Of course. This is, after all, the great antitypical day of at-one-ment.

1. Hiram Edson, MS "Life and Experience." Quoted in Emmet K. Vande Vere, Windows Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History, 26
3. Revelation 11:19
4. Review and Herald, July 26, 1892
The "Laodicean Message" has been with us as a people for 130 years. In what may have appeared to many within the church as a time of prosperity, Elder James White took the lead in pointing out the true state of spiritual poverty. Writing in the Review and Herald, of “Fifth-day, October 9, 1856,” he first posed a series of pointed questions. Were his questions too pointed? No more so than his Lord’s words which inspired them.

The inquiry is beginning to come up afresh. “Watchman, what of the night?” At present there is space for only a few questions, asked to call attention to the subject to which they relate. A full answer, we trust, will soon be given.

1. Do the seven churches, (Revelation 2:11) represent seven conditions of the true church, in seven periods of time?

2. If so, then is the view erroneous that the Philadelphia and the Laodicean states both exist at the same time?

3. Does the church in Sardis represent the nominal churches to whom the Advent message was first given?

4. And does the church in Philadelphia represent the church of God in her state of consecration and brotherly love, looking for the coming of Jesus in 1844?

5. If so, is not the present time the period for the Laodicean condition of the church?

6. Does not the state of the Laodiceans (lukewarm, neither cold nor hot) fitly illustrate the condition of the body of those who profess the Third Angel’s Message?

7. Are not the nominal churches, and the nominal Adventists, (as bodies,) to all intents and purposes, “cold”?

8. Then where is the “lukewarm” church, unless it be those who profess the Third Message?

9. And is not this our real condition as people?

10. Does not the prophecy answer perfectly to the facts?

11. If this be our condition as a people, have we any real grounds to hope for the favor of God unless we heed the “counsel” of the True Witness?

The next week’s Review contained Elder White’s elaboration of the subject under the title “The Seven Churches.” Here he set forth his reasons for believing that the churches of Revelation represent “seven conditions of the Christian church, in seven periods of time, covering the ground of the entire Christian age.” Not content with theory alone, Elder White presented an impassioned plea that his brethren might see and avert the danger before them.

Laodicea signifies “the judging of the people,” or, according to Cruden, “a just people,” and fitly represents the present state of the church, in the great day of atonement, or judgment of the “house of God” while the just and holy law of God is taken as a rule of life.

It has been supposed that the Philadelphia church reached to the end. This we must regard as a mistake, as the seven churches in Asia represent seven distinct periods of the true church, and the Philadelphia is the sixth, and not the last state. The true church cannot be in two conditions at the same time; hence we are shut up to the faith that the Laodicean church represents the church of God at the present time.

The conditional promises to the Philadelphia church are yet to be fulfilled to that portion of that church who comply with the conditions, pass down through the Laodicean state and overcome.

But dear brethren, how humbling to us as a people is the sad description of this church. And is not this dreadful description a most perfect picture of our present condition? It is; and it will be of no use to try to evade the force of this searching testimony to the Laodicean church. The Lord help us to receive it, and to profit by it. . .

“Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” How careless many of you have been of the reproofs and warnings which the dear Saviour has given for your benefit. He has been slighted and shut out by you till His locks are wet with the dew of night. Oh, open your hearts to Him. Let your hard hearts break before Him. Oh, let Him in. A deep work of consecrating yourselves and all you have to Him, will be necessary to prepare the way for Him to come in and sup with you and you with Him. We dwell with pleasure upon this affectionate, this touching figure. What an illustration of communion with Christ! Who would not joyfully spread the table, and open the door for the dear Saviour to partake with them of the last meal of the day, were He now a pilgrim on earth as at the first advent? This we cannot do; but we can do those things required of us, and prepare the way of the Lord in our own hearts. . . Oh, ye Laodiceans, our mouth is open unto you. Be not deceived as to your real condition.
Our Sin—Pardoning Saviour

Ellen G. White

NOTHING ELSE in this world is so dear to God as His church. Nothing else is watched over by Him with such jealous care. Nothing else so grieves His heart of love as the injuries inflicted in His church by those who are opposed to His government.

Human might and human wisdom did not establish the church of God, and neither can they destroy it. The members of the church will have to meet the seducing arts of the enemy. They will be assailed by the representatives of Satan. Let them not get into controversy with those who are adepts at warfare of this kind. If they will answer their assailants in the words of the Scripture, Satan's arguments will prove to be nothingness. The Word of God in the hearts of His people is a power unto life and salvation. Fighting under the divine Commander, they will obtain the victory. The Life-giver will strengthen them to overcome.

There is comfort and encouragement for us in the scene described in the third chapter of Zechariah. We read: "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.

Joshua represents those whose religious life has been faulty

"And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." [Zechariah 3:1-7]

Joshua, standing before the angel of the Lord with defiled garments, represents those whose religious life has been faulty, who have been overcome by Satan's temptations, and are unworthy of God's favor. Today human beings stand before God with defiled garments. All their righteousness is "as filthy rags." Satan uses against them his masterly accusing power, pointing to their imperfections as evidence of their weakness. He points scornfully at the mistakes of those who claim to be doing God's service. They have been deceived by him, and he asks permission to destroy them.

But they trust in Christ and He will not forsake them. He came to this world to take away their sins, and to impute to them His righteousness. He declares that through faith in His name they may receive forgiveness and may perfect Christian characters. They have confessed their sins, and have asked for pardon, and the Saviour declares that because they trust in Him, He will give them power to become the sons of God.

Their characters are defective, but because they have not trusted in their own merits or excused their sins, because they have humbled themselves and confessed their sins, seeking forgiveness, the Lord receives them, and rebukes Satan. He refuses to listen to the enemy's accusations. He has abundantly pardoned the penitent ones, and will carry forward in them His work of re-
deeming love if they will continue to believe in Him and to trust Him. He will perfect their redemption defeating the enemy, and glorifying His name in their salvation.

And let not those who have been forgiven forget that they have a part to act. Those who by divine grace have gained the mastery over their faults, are to help others to overcome, pointing them to the Source of strength. To every converted soul is given the privilege of helping those around him who do not rejoice in the light in which he is standing. They also may know the joy that has come to them. They may take their place in the world as God’s light-bearers.

How helpful we may be to one another by receiving from Christ the divine blessing, and then sharing it with those in need. The true Christian will leave nothing undone that he can do to raise to newness of life those who are dead in trespasses and sins. He will work as Christ worked.

Especially are those whom God has set over His church to watch for souls as they that must give an account. They may accomplish great good if they will walk humbly with God, hiding self in Christ. Those who have a living connection with Christ become partakers of the divine nature. Those who give to others the light they have received are representatives of the heavenly Worker.

Pacific Union Recorder, December 8, 1904

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**Religious Liberty Update**

**Revelation Rumbling:** The underlying concept which forms the foundation of the far-right fundamentalists’ thrust into American politics is “America is too free.” And a small, well-organized minority, eager and sincere in its beliefs, is trying to do something about it—in the name of religion, in the name of salvation, in the name of saving our individual and collective souls. We are presently witnessing their charge against the traditional American concept of democracy, and what is most pernicious about this attack is that it is under the banner of God. When they speak of making America a Christian nation, they draw their definition of Christianity so narrowly that it excludes many mainstream Christian churches. _Southern Baptist Convention TODAY_, May, 1986

**SDAs Included:** The Vatican exhorted Roman Catholic priests worldwide to work against the proliferation of religious sects. The document said sects with Christian roots “could be those groups which, apart from the Bible, have other ‘revealed’ books or ‘prophetic messages.’” _Salt Lake Deseret News_, May 3, 1986

**New Revisionists:** In recent years another revisionist project has gotten underway. Advanced by some fundamentalists and evangelicals, they contend that the shapers of the American Revolution and Constitution were in fact born again Bible-believing Christians who were motivated by the high aspiration to establish biblical righteousness in a “Christian America.” The motivations are understandable, but the project itself is grievously flawed. It is divisive and unpersuasive. Most important, it is flawed because it is not true. _The Religion & Society Report_, May, 1986 (Protestant)

**World Government:** The American Catholic bishops, in _The Challenge of Peace_, recommended disarmament and world government as the long-term moral solution to the nuclear threat. To establish a sovereign state system with central authority, virtually all states would have to agree, simultaneously, to concede control of their forces to the central authority. Only three preconditions could lead to the new order: (1) international trust and cooperation, (2) a central authority willing and able to enforce compliance with international agreements, and (3) a common external threat to survival that would compel common action. _Catholicism in Crisis_, April, 1986

**The Great Divide:** Scalia is expected to agree with Rehnquist’s view that there is no “wall” between church and state. The choices made by Reagan will be immensely important to the country. The Rehnquist court appears poised at the sort of historic divide that occurs only once every few decades. _Time_, June 3, 1986

**Road to Union:** In 1988, all 4 bishops of the Anglican communion will gather in London for the Lambeth Conference, which meets every 10 years. Although the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission is confined to Catholics and Anglicans, the World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission’s Lima agreement—Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM)—represents an even more remarkable convergence because it includes nearly all Christian churches. _National Catholic Reporter_, March 28, 1986 (Roman Catholic)
clear demonstration of the power of the cross. If, through faith in Jesus, His people can come through this, then Calvary is more than a convenient mechanism for dealing with feelings of guilt. It is powerful enough to keep God's people faithful, whatever the challenge. And the universe is secure; sin will not arise again, and the war is over. Forever.

Such was the challenge of the old Advent message. Out of the sanctuary had come a new ideal for Christian living, and it was expressed in some of the most powerful language Ellen White ever used.

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigatory judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people on earth...."

"When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing."10

So that was it. In 1857 God's people had simply not finished the work of preparation necessary to meet Him. They had had revival and reformation. There had been public confession and repentance. But they had not allowed God to finish the work necessary to prepare them for the coming of Jesus. Ellen White spoke sadly of "pride,....fashions,...empty conversation,...selfishness." Something more was needed. They were to persevere in a "special work," a "putting away of sin." They were to be "conquerors in the battle with evil."11 They had simply given up too soon!

"Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel," Ellen White wrote in 1859. "But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. Indeed not. It was a program that would transform their whole lives, fitting them for "the loud cry of the third angel." That would take a little time, more than a "few short months."12

But it could have happened much faster than most of them dreamed. In 1857, as church members began to grow weary of revival, they were—ironically—at least a third of the way into a process that could have led directly to the coming of Jesus. In fact, everything necessary to prepare them for that event could have been done if they had persevered about two more years.

It was a program that would transform their whole lives

On July 15, 1859, only thirty-four months after James White first published the Laodicean challenge, Mrs. White wrote that "God has given the message time to do its work."13 It could not have been completed in a few short months, but within three years it had had "time to do its work." Time to awaken the church with a call for reformation. Time for confession of sin and unity among the believers. Time to get ready for the "loud cry of the third angel." The whole process could have been completed in a total of less than three years.

Which brings us to the present. If the lessons of history are correct, everything necessary to prepare Adventism for the com-
Cleansing, cont. from 23

brought in, until all this had been accomplished in each person who had a part in the service of the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed until each of the worshippers had been cleansed. The sanctuary itself could not be cleansed so long as, by the confessions of the people and the intercessions of the priests, there was pouring into the sanctuary a stream of iniquities, transgressions, and sins. The cleansing of the sanctuary, as to the sanctuary itself, was the taking out of and away from the sanctuary all the transgressions of the people which had been taken into the sanctuary during the service of the year. And this stream must be stopped at its fountain in the hearts and lives of the worshippers, before the sanctuary itself could possibly be cleansed.

Therefore the very first work in the cleansing of the sanctuary was the cleansing of the people. That which was preliminary and essential to the cleansing of the sanctuary itself, to the finishing of transgression and bringing in everlasting righteousness, there, was the finishing of transgression, and the making an end of sins, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness in the heart and life of each one of the people themselves. When the stream that flowed into the sanctuary was thus stopped at its source, then, and then alone, could the sanctuary itself be cleansed from the sins and transgressions which, from the people, by the intercession of the priests, had flowed into the sanctuary.

And all that "was a figure for the time then present"—a "figure of the true." Therefore by this we are plainly taught that the service of our great High Priest in the cleansing of the true sanctuary must be preceded by the cleansing of each one of the believers, the cleansing of each one who has a part in that service of the true High Priest in the true sanctuary. It is plain that transgression must be finished, an end of sins and reconciliation for all iniquity must be made, and everlasting righteousness must be brought in, in the heart's experience of every believer in Jesus, before the cleansing of the true sanctuary can be accomplished.

And this is the very object of the true priesthood in the true sanctuary. The sacrifices, the priesthood, and the ministry in the sanctuary which was but a figure for the time then present, could not really take away sin, could not make the comers thereunto perfect. Whereas the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary does take away sins forever, does make the comers thereunto perfect. does perfect "forever them that are sanctified."

The Consecrated Way, 113-119

Mélange

Bob Vun Kannon

Subject: The Great Nebula

In the March 29, 1986, issue of Science News, on page 207, it was reported that a very swiftly varying nebula has appeared in M42, the Great Nebula in Orion. This new object, known as Object 50, was definitely not there as recently as 1955, and was first noticed in 1979 by the Copenhagen University Observatory. Another picture of the object was taken three years later revealing that it had changed substantially. During an observation in 1985 a completely new phenomenon was noticed, a shaft of infrared light. By September this jetlike burst of light had disappeared.

Such activities are not entirely unknown, and scientists believe that the object may be emitting periodic bursts of light.

What intrigues me about this activity is that Ellen White foresaw the holy city of the New Jerusalem descending from an open space in Orion. Early Writings, 41

Subject: Nuclear Power

The original estimate for the construction cost of the Palo Verde nuclear reactor was less than $1 billion.

The final cost of construction of the Palo Verde nuclear reactor was about $3.8 billion.

All nuclear reactors produce highly toxic, long-lived waste materials for which there is no satisfactory storage solution. (It is highly unsatisfactory to store dangerous material in any form of container which is guaranteed to break down in far less time than the waste material will take to decay.)

Nuclear power does now and has always cost more per kilowatt hour than energy from conventional fuels, such as coal.

The cost of shutting down a nuclear facility is estimated to be about 40 per cent of the original construction cost (Science News, April 12, 1986, page 230). This would be about $1.3 billion just to get rid of Palo Verde.

Nuclear reactors are not foolproof (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Chernobyl, April 1986).

Draw your own conclusions.

October, 1986 Our Firm Foundation 31
The Adventist Roundtable? Who is it for?

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