Apostasy Through the Ages
Special Issue
TODAY, this very hour, is the most serious moment of the great controversy. Probation is about to close, suddenly unexpectedly. See The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 989. God raised up the remnant church to prepare the world for the soon coming of Jesus. Ellen White records the reason for the delay in the coming of the Lord.

“The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God’s unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay. But the coming of the morning to the faithful, and of the night to the unfaithful, is right upon us. By waiting and watching, God’s people are to manifest their peculiar character, their separation from the world.” Testimonies, vol. 2, 194.

Israel’s infatuation with the worldlings around them and their denial of a “Thus saith the Lord” led them into an apostasy as deep as midnight. They slew the prophets and ultimately crucified their Messiah.

Nineteen times Ellen White tells us in Testimonies, vol. 5, that we are following in the footsteps of ancient Israel. Consider the following:

“I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leaving the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God’s peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord’s displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 75–76.

“The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. The Testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His Word and from the Testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded.” Ibid., 217.

The Saviour gives words of admonition especially applicable to us:

“Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.” Luke 21:34. 

Like Israel, our present apostasy is caused by worldliness that in turn produces a disregard of the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible. How do we define apostasy?

Abandonment of what one has voluntarily professed; total desertion of principles or faith.

Apostasy is disobedience to God’s orders and plans. As Israel, we have chosen worldly plans and policies above the plans of God. Divergence from following the Lord’s direction to following one’s own wisdom may be almost imperceptible in the beginning.

“It is not safe to place men in the position God should occupy, for men cannot be trusted. If they do not constantly live as in the presence of God, if they do not walk humbly before God and their brethren, they will diverge almost imperceptibly, and by slight degrees, from the straight line of God’s work. Trusting to their own wisdom, they will deceive themselves and their fellowmen.” Manuscript Releures, vol. 11, 873.

“The multitude of deceptions that will prevail in these last days will encircle you, and you will change leaders, and not know that you have done so.”

Review and Herald, December 16, 1890.

Many times within church history we find leadership responsible for opening the door to apostasy.

“For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.” Isaiah 9:16.

Our desire for the ways of the world prepared the way for the leadership to resist the most precious message of 1888, which in turn set the stage for the Alpha of apostasy to unfold in the early 1900s.

The Alpha of apostasy almost overwhelmed us. There would not have been an Alpha apostasy if the church had entered into the experience of the 1888 message. Yet the Alpha of apostasy was defeated because the leaders of the church stood with the living prophet.

If now, in this great hour, we do not accept the warnings and counsel as recorded by Ellen White our end may be like that of the ancient church. See Testimonies, vol. 8, 67–68. The deadly Omega will sweep everyone out of the church who is not firmly grounded in the truth.

The Omega is what Jesus warned us of when He said if possible the very elect would be deceived.

The Omega is the last apostasy just before Jesus comes. The signs of the times tell us we are at the end.

In Special Testimonies, Series B, 57, we find:

“One thing it is certain is soon to be realized—the great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout.”

This special edition of Our Firm Foundation is presented to our leaders and people in this final hour, with prayer and hope that the revival and reformation so greatly needed and so long overdue will soon be a reality, climaxing in the return of our Lord.

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

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### Invitation to Writers

We are accepting article-length (2300-3600 words) manuscripts for possible publication in Our Firm Foundation. We cannot give consideration to longer submissions. Whenever possible, we ask that manuscripts be submitted either on 3½- or 5½-inch floppy disk in IBM ASCII format or neatly typed, using double-spacing. If you desire notice of a decision in regard to your article, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all correspondence to Editors, *Our Firm Foundation*, P.O. Box 940, Eatonville, WA 98328.
About This Issue

"Can We Stay Together in the Days Ahead?" Is That the Question?

In the May 5, 1994, issue of the Adventist Review, editor William Johnsson courageously attempts to address what he perceives to be the "Seven Factors Fragmenting the Church." In his thought-provoking article Johnsson attempts to answer a question that many in the Seventh-day Adventist Church are afraid even to ask: "Can we stay together in the days ahead?"

This question voices the single greatest concern troubling the minds of many thinking people in the church today, both of leaders and laity alike. While space in this special edition of Our Firm Foundation is not sufficient to allow an address of the myriad considerations encompassed by this question, we have thought it appropriate to at least consider what is probably perceived to be one of the greatest threats to church unity, and that is the charge of "apostasy within Adventism."

Does apostasy really exist in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? If so, does it have anything to do with the pluralistic condition that seems to be threatening Adventism's very existence? Has apostasy contributed at all to the absence of the latter rain in our midst? Does apostasy have anything to do with the delayed return of Christ? To those referred to by Johnsson as the "radical dissidents among us" these questions are inextricably linked with one another. The answers to them are encompassed within the answer to another question:

"What must I do to be saved?" That is the major question on which Adventists differ," continues Johnsson.

"One stream tends to emphasize the divine side in salvation without negating the human side; the other, the human side without negating the divine. For one the key word is grace; for the other it is victory.

"Some of those in the "victory" stream see the issue in terms of a theological scheme that links Jesus' human nature with end-time perfection and the 'delay' in the Second Coming. Christ had to be exactly like us, they argue, in order that we might overcome sin as He overcame, thus attaining sinless perfection; and until we reach that state, Jesus cannot come back."

"You can find several theological variants on the above scheme, but the radical dissidents among us—those who are becoming offshoots—all share it. They charge the official church with apostasy because it does not endorse the scheme."—Adventist Review, May 5, 1994, 14; all emphasis supplied.

To charge the remnant church of Bible prophecy with apostasy is a serious matter indeed. In the next issue of Our Firm Foundation Dr. Colin Standish will examine in more detail the "Two Theological Streams" to which Johnsson refers. The Adventists moving in these two streams differ over this most basic question confronting humanity, "What must I do to be saved?"

In this issue of Our Firm Foundation we wish to study the subject of apostasy in order to

1. See how apostasy has affected the church in past ages so that we may avoid repeating the mistakes of our forebears.
2. Review from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy whether the word apostasy is applicable to the present condition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
3. Consider what the consequences of apostasy are as they pertain to such issues as victorious Christian living, the latter rain, and the second coming of Christ.
4. Call the Seventh-day Adventist Church to individually and corporately reflect on whether we have chosen, in God's power, to bring our institutions and lives into harmony with all the truths which He has graciously given us.

We recognize that it is impossible to avoid being misunderstood when we address the sensitive subject of apostasy. The only reason the ministry of Hope International has chosen to address this seemingly negative subject is that it hopes to help us recognize one fact: since history began it has always been humanity's disobedience to God's express will which has prevented mankind from receiving God's promised blessings.

If therefore the problem of apostasy truly exists in Adventism; if it is not merely a trumped up charge put forth by a few "radical dissidents" among us; and if there are indeed some very real consequences to be experienced from apostasy where it does exist, consequences affecting the conditions of God's promises for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to His subsequent return, then surely the risk of being misunderstood is worth the taking.

Yet how painful it is for those of us who love this church and the most precious message with which it has been entrusted, to be thought of as a threat to the church's unity and prosperity!

Please understand that by addressing the subject of whether or not our church is in a state of apostasy, it is not our purpose to

1. Charge the Seventh-day Adventist Church with being in apostasy because it has accused us of being a problem.
2. Create an "us" versus "them" mentality in the church, thereby creating additional division and discontent among the laity.
3. Undermine confidence in church leaders.
4. Create financial support for our organization.
5. Increase our subscription list or our influence.

We might also add that there is but one yardstick by which we can measure ourselves individually or corporately in order to determine if we are in apostasy. That yardstick is, of course, God's inspired writings. It is not therefore the belief of the editors of Our Firm Foundation that we should limit a discussion of apostasy exclusively to what the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church taught, for certainly they were not infallible men and women and they never arrived at an understanding of all truth. Neither do we think that if Seventh-day Adventists today could just

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Echoes of Stephen
Apostasy in the Old Testament

FROM the disobedience of our first parents, to Malachi’s denouncing of the Jews for robbing God, the Old Testament story is one of unfolding tragedy. It is an account of God’s mighty acts and man’s paltry responses, of ignored divine commands and spurned divine grace.

Many of the first Bible stories we teach our children come from the Old Testament. We teach them not only because they occur first in the biblical sequence, but also because they are full of the kind of excitement and drama which appeal to children. In my home there was no television before my brother and I reached our teen-age years. As a result, much of our entertainment during childhood consisted of reading Old Testament narratives or listening to their enactment on Bible records. To this day I find nothing competes with the suspense, the intrigue, and the forceful evidence of God’s interest in man found in the Old Testament Scriptures. Without this foundation, the New Testament truths fail to exert their full impact on the human heart.

After the Garden of Eden, it became impossible for God to commune with man face to face. Henceforth it was necessary for God to speak through human instruments, prophets who received visions and dreams. See Numbers 12:6. Yet the Old Testament is depressingly clear regarding the response of God’s professed people to these entreaties:

“...sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy.” 2 Chronicles 36:15–16.

“This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.” Isaiah 30:9–11.

Many of the sins described as existing among God’s people in Old Testament times are difficult for sophisticated Westerners to understand. Why mothers and fathers would be tempted to forsake the simple worship of the true God in favor of sacrificing their helpless children on the fiery arms of hideous idols is beyond our comprehension. (This Western response to Eastern religious practices can be seen in the reaction of the Romans who destroyed Carthage, partly because it was a city which in times of crisis was known to sacrifice as many as two hundred aristocratic infants to their gods.) But a careful reading of the Old Testament, as well as relevant Spirit of Prophecy statements, makes clear that many aspects of apostate worship in ancient times were much more subtle. For example, Ellen White does not say that the foremost rejecters of Noah’s message were rank pagans who perpetrated violence and stole their neighbors’ wives. Rather, she states:

“The men of that generation were not all, in the fullest acceptance of the term, idolaters. Many professed to be worshipers of God. They claimed that their idols were representations of the Deity, and that...

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Apostasy From the Time of the Apostles to the Reformation

W HILE we perceive the first decades of the Christian era as being a time of purity, of truth and righteousness, such an evaluation must be qualified. Even during apostolic times, Satan was making desperate efforts to destroy the incipient Christian church. Paul wrote to the Galatians,

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:6–8.

Also John could warn:

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." Revelation 2:15.

Jude expressed his concerns:

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 1:4.

After the disciples had passed to their rest, some of the seeds of apostasy that had been sown in the days of the apostles very quickly developed into mature heresies. The intrusion of paganistic error can be seen at a remarkably early stage of Christian history. The simplicity of the apostolic church soon vanished as the churches became more sophisticated and thus more open to the intrusion of error.

A major Christian community was early established in Alexandria, Egypt. This community became the center of a rapid development of apostasy. It is easy to trace and contrast the philosophical apostasy in Alexandria with the loyal orthodoxy and commitment to apostolic truth in the church in Antioch, Syria. Alexandria and Antioch were to play vital roles in the history of the Christian church from the second century. Alexandria became the symbol of Christian apostasy, and just as surely Antioch became the symbol of truth and righteousness.

It is not surprising that Antioch became a center for apostolic teachings. Antioch was the capital of the Roman province of Syria, and when Jerusalem, the original headquarters of Christianity, was destroyed, the Christian leadership moved from there to Antioch where it remained strong until the Muslim takeover of that part of the world.

Another Assyrian city, Edessa, was also a strong fortress for apostolic teachings. Syria became the greatest missionary nation of the world during the pre-Muslim era. From there missionaries were sent as far afield as Persia, India, and China.

While Antioch became known for vigorous missionary outreach and for the strong preaching of the Word, Alexandria became known for philosophizing and intellectualism, which quickly led to the incorporation of the paganism of Greece and Rome. Eventually Alexandria and Antioch became archrivals for Christian leadership. Never was there to be a closing of the very rapidly increasing chasm between the true principles of Antioch and the apostasy of Alexandria. By the fourth century the controversies between Alexandria and Antioch were very great. Alexandria espoused a metaphysical, an allegorical interpretation of Scripture, while Antioch stressed that the Scriptures must be taken as they read. As faithful Seventh-day Adventists, we have everything in common with the Antioch
orthodoxy and nothing in common with the traditions of Alexandria.

Shortly after the death of the apostles, the New Testament was translated into Syriac. Eventually the standard Syriac text, known as the Peshitta, was available. English translations of the Peshitta are available today and read remarkably close to the King James Version. This similarity should be no surprise, for the King James Version of the New Testament, like all Reformation versions, was translated from the Eastern Syriac Greek Text.

On the other hand, the Alexandrian school of theology was significantly influenced by the Gnostics. Gnosticism arose early in the Christian era. It represented an amalgamation of Christian belief with Hellenistic philosophy. The Gnostics accepted the dichotomy of soul and matter, riveted in Greek philosophy. By the third century, Manichaeanism had also emerged. This philosophy too was a mixture of Christianity and paganism, especially related to the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism. Unfortunately, it was the mystical theological stream, coming from Alexandria, that most influenced the theology of Rome. Thus developed the rift between the Western Roman Church and the Eastern Syriac Church. However, there were other influences at work which need to be considered.

Fighting against the rapid paganizing of the Western church were the Christians of the East, as well as the Christians in the far West. It will be remembered that both Paul and Peter preached in Galatia. Galatia was a province of the area which is now Turkey. The Galatians were an altogether different race from the Syrians, the Greeks and the Romans. This area of Asia Minor had been inhabited by the Celts. They spoke the same language as the Irish, the Scots, the Britons, the Welsh, and the inhabitants of certain areas of France. Evidence is overwhelming that Christianity in France and the British Isles was first transmitted there by the Celts of Galatia. At this time there was active communication between France, the British Isles, and Galatia. The Celts had strong, aggressive characteristics that made them feared on the field of battle, but as many accepted Christianity, that same dauntlessness was directed towards their missionary endeavors. There was a close affinity between the Galatian believers and the Syrian believers, and as the years went by, the similarity between the two became very great indeed. Together the Syriac/Celtic influence was to be a bastion against Roman apostasy for many years.

Below are some of the direct differences between the faithful Syrian and Celtic Christians on the one hand, and the heretical Alexandrian Christians on the other hand.

1. The Authority of the Word of God

The Celtic Christians, whether they were in the East or West, held strongly to the Scriptures as their only authority. The Syriac Christians likewise proclaimed the primacy of authority of the Word of God. This made the preservation of the Word of primary importance. Therefore the Syriac thought in Christendom, as B.J. Wilkinson puts it, “one loose in doctrine and affiliating itself with heathenism, the other based on the deep foundations of the Christian faith.” Truth Triumphant, 46.

By this time Alexandria and Rome were in a deep alliance. Already Justin Martyr, Clement, and Origen had greatly influenced the teachings of Rome. Clement had boasted that he would not teach Christianity unless it was mixed with pagan philosophy. Lucian opposed these dreaded pagan encroachments.

His resolute stand for truth and righteousness provided a firm basis that would eventually develop into full-scale warfare between Rome on the one hand, and the Eastern churches on the other. His loyalty to the Word also influenced the battle between the church of Rome and the faithful groups of believers in Europe, including the Celts, the Waldensians, the Huguenots, and the Albigenses.

2. The Scriptures

The Syriac school of Christianity took as its sacred trust the preservation of the New Testament texts according to the way they were written by the apostles. By the third century, the leading figure in the church in Syria was Lucian (A.D. 250–312). This devout scholar, born in the then capital city of Antioch, had a wonderful spirit of discernment. Lucian soon perceived that there were two strands of Greek manuscripts prove to be of a remarkably high level of consistency. For this reason they are today often referred to as the Majority Texts because of their high level of translational accuracy and consistency.

The Northern African areas and Rome itself were strongly influenced by paganistic philosophy, and thus very quickly the Word of God there became looked upon as a lesser light. The Syrians and the Celts were convinced that the Bible had to be taken as it read, whereas it was increasingly popular in the Roman and the Alexandrian schools of theology to philosophize and theorize upon the Scriptures. Naturally this practice led to a reduction in the surety of the Word of God, resulting in many deletions and changes being made to the original autographs written by the New Testament writers.

3. Tradition as Authority

The diminution in belief in the veracity of the Bible in the Western Roman Church, opened the way for the introduction of the role of tradition as an authoritative part of church dogma.

By the early part of the third century Tertullian had written: “If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none. Tradition will be held forth to you as the originator of them, custom as the strength thereof, and faith as their observer.” Tertullian, The Chaplet or Decorona, chapter 4.

In making this statement, Tertullian was defending nothing less than the offering of oblations for the dead, the sign of the cross on the forehead, and the dipping of candidates in the water three times for baptism. What is so surprising is how quickly these customs of Roman Catholicism found their way into the general Christian church.

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THE Millerite movement of the 1830s and early 1840s confronted many souls with the belief that the return of Jesus Christ was imminent, forcing home the need to prepare for this event. This movement and its message were the fulfillment of the message of the first angel of Revelation 14.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:6-7.

William Miller arrived at his conclusions following intense Bible study. He substantiated and upheld his concepts by the types, figures, and symbols found within biblical prophecies. As the movement built momentum and spread across the United States and the world, it met staunch resistance from mainstream Protestant churches.

This resistance to the idea of the soon return of Jesus led, by 1843, into the message of the second angel of Revelation 14.

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8.

In 1843, as opposition to the Millerite movement was growing, the Lord revealed that by opposing the message of Miller the organized churches had fallen from grace and had become part of Babylon. It was time for the faithful to leave those churches and to stand free in the Lord. This new revelation was arrived at from studying the Word of God, particularly the parable of the ten virgins.

The second message, like the first, was accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit and had its designed "loud cry" effect. Years later those who had taken part in the 1843 movement, in looking back, remembered the solemnity and power connected with it. The second angel's message reached its crescendo on October 22, 1844, and it strongly parallels the message of the fourth angel of Revelation 18.

"Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. Fanaticism disappeared before this proclamation like early frost before the rising sun. Believers saw their doubt and perplexity removed, and hope and courage animated their hearts. The work was free from those extremes which are ever manifested when there is human excitement without the controlling influence of the Word and Spirit of God. It was similar in character to those seasons of humiliation and returning unto the Lord which among ancient Israel followed messages of reproof from His servants. It bore the characteristics that mark the work of God in every age. There was little ecstatic joy, but rather deep searching of heart, confession of sin, and forsaking of the world. A preparation to meet the Lord was the burden of agonizing spirits. There was persevering prayer and unreserved consecration to God." The Great Controversy, 400–401.

The great disappointment of October 22, 1844, marked the end of the 2300-day prophecy given in Daniel 8:14. Thus began the third angel's message.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:9–12.

"I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.' I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform." Counsels to Writers and Editors, 53.
As God led the early pioneers in hammering out the foundations upon which the Advent message is built, He also opened to their view the understanding that their early experience had fulfilled the first and second angels’ messages of Revelation 14, and that now they were living under the proclamation of the third angel’s message.

In time, God also revealed to the early pioneers, through messages given to Ellen White, that they had allowed their first love to die and that they were now in the Laodicean condition, desperately needing the Laodicean remedy described in Revelation 3:18–19. It was revealed that before the fourth angel of Revelation 18 arrived there would need to be a work of reform. This reformation would precede the latter rain, and would consist of a return to the primitive gospel both in doctrinal purity, and in spiritual piety.

Thus the Seventh-day Adventist movement early recognized the need of a work of reformation, typified by the work of Elijah, John the Baptist, Ezra and Nehemiah, and referred to in numerous Bible passages such as Isaiah 58:12:

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”

In the year 1888 God was ready to begin fulfilling all the wonderful Bible types and figures pointing forward to this time of revival and reformation. Sadly though, even as God’s people rejected the message brought to ancient Israel by Joshua and Caleb, so modern Israel rejected “the most precious message” brought by Jones and Waggoner. Adventism was now required to spend its allotted time in the wilderness. During this time God intended them to learn many lessons, among which is that according to the amount of light that one rejects, one is given a corresponding amount of darkness.

“Since 1844 light from the heaven of heavens has beamed from the open door of the temple of God. But it is to be remembered that the greater the light bestowed, the greater the delusion and darkness of those who reject the Word of God and accept fables, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.” The Signs of the Times, November 8, 1899.

The most precious message of 1888 was the greatest light ever offered to mankind. When this message was rejected, not only was the understanding brought by Jones and Waggoner rejected, but also rejected was the holy endorsement that came with it, as proclaimed by Ellen White. The light that we rejected is described in Revelation 18:1:

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.”

Thus in 1888 Adventism officially began its wilderness wandering. By the early 1900s we were reaping the darkness that came from our refusal to receive light. We were experiencing a major financial crisis, and both our medical and publishing work soon received the judgments of God. In February 1902 the Battle Creek Sanitarium burned to the ground. In December of the same year the Review and Herald publishing house was also destroyed by fire. God had counseled us that the medical missionary work was to be the right arm of the message, and that a large part of the work accomplished by the latter rain would be through our publishing work. Yet God brought both these important works to a fiery temporary halt.

Thus we arrive at another event allowed by God to prepare His people for victory in the final crisis. This event was named the Alpha of Apostasy. Recorded within its history is information that will help guide God’s people through the final apostasy, called by Ellen White the Omega of Apostasy. As the name Omega, (the last letter in the Greek alphabet), implies, this is the final apostasy.

Within all the information connected with the Alpha apostasy is one great qualifier necessary to understand the Omega. This qualifier is the one item that those who will not understand are destined to reject. Consider the following:

“The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’ Proverbs. 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.” Selected Messages, book 1, 48.

Those who will be taken in the snare of the last apostasy will not have confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy, but it is within the Spirit of Prophecy that God has preserved the information necessary to identify the Omega of Apostasies.

Those who will be taken in the snare of the last apostasy will not have confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy, but it is within the Spirit of Prophecy that God has preserved the information necessary to identify the Omega of Apostasies. Without the faith to accept the Alpha apostasy as an example of the Omega apostasy, one is in darkness, and will believe a lie.

“Especially solemn is the apostle’s statement regarding those who should re-
sacred history. What was recorded by our prophet in the past is prophetic history today and should be understood by the principle in 1 Corinthians 10:11:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." The failures and mistakes of ancient Israel are not as grievous in the sight of God as are the sins of the people of God in this age. Light has been increasing from age to age, and the present day as well as in ancient times, is to seek diligently to know the will of God, and then be ready to obey that will." The Signs of the Times, November 25, 1880.

Notice in this quotation two significant characteristics of Balaam: lack of doctrinal purity, and lack of character development. As did the Alpha, the Omega will attack the doctrines supporting the Seventh-day Adventist message, especially the doctrines presenting the necessity of character perfection.

Central to the story of the Alpha is the fact that many, especially of our church leadership, did not comprehend what was taking place though it happened right before their eyes. The same blindness afflicts the church during the Omega.

generations that follow have the example of the generations that went before. The Lord does not change, and a sin which He condemned in former generations should be avoided by us. We should heed the admonition that has been given in the past, and lay hold of the promises that are made for the encouragement of the obedient." Review and Herald, May 21, 1895.

As we review the Alpha apostasy we see that Mrs. White was permitted to understand it for the benefit of those "upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Corinthians 10:11. She compares the Alpha, and therefore the Omega, to Balaam. Much can be gleaned from the biblical account of Balaam, found in Numbers 22-25, as an example of the apostasy that will confront God's people just before they enter the Promised Land. We should especially note Balaam's character and lack of doctrinal purity. Consider the following:

"There are many in the world today whose character is represented by that of Balaam. They have a correct knowledge of most of the doctrines of religion, but with these are mingled superstitions and heresies. Satan has a knowledge of the truth, and so do many who are his servants. Excellent words may proceed from their lips; they may claim to possess great faith, and to enjoy much of the divine blessing; but their hearts are destitute of the grace of God. They are not followers of Christ, and do not those things that please Him. The only safety for any, at the Paragraph five of Ellen White's "Decided Action to Be Taken Now" letter, speaks about a doctrine which attacks the truth about God's personality. She states that this error was accepted by the leadership of the church. The next paragraph warns that when this false concept of God is accepted it will destroy the whole Christian economy. She goes on to warn that this doctrine will attack the book of Revelation, downplay the necessity to prepare for the time of trouble, and attack the history of God's people. Certainly the battle that has been raging within Adventism since the early fifties is foreshadowed by this letter.

Paragraph eight also refers to a doctrinal aberration denying the past experience of God's people and attacking the foundations of our message. It raises the question, "Where are the watchmen?"

In paragraph nine God calls for His people to stand up for truth. Paragraph ten gives prominence to the Laodicean message.

Paragraph thirteen is the classic quotation concerning the Alpha apostasy and is laden with types and figures. If we want to understand the Omega of apostasy we should study this paragraph. Rightly understood, it presents enough light on the Omega that all who wish to recognize it may do so. We will dissect this paragraph into its individual points for your consideration.

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result?

1. "The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded.

2. "Our religion would be changed.

3. "The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error.

4. "A new organization would be established.

5. "Books of a new order would be written.

6. "A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced.

7. "The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work.

8. "The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it.

9. "Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement.

10. "The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice.

11. "but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless.

12. "Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure." Selected Messages, book 1, 204-205.

There is certainly more in this letter and in other references to be considered, but enough is unfolded here for us to recognize that the Omega apostasy, as typified by the Alpha apostasy, is in the process of fulfillment. Of course, central to the story of the Alpha is the fact that many, especially of our church leadership, did not comprehend what was taking place though it happened right before their eyes. The same blindness affects the church during the Omega. The primary cause of this blindness is a lack of a "love of the truth" evidenced by the neglect and rejection of the Spirit of Prophecy.

One thing is certain: "Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit." Selected Messages, book 3, 84.

Thus they desert their sure foundation for an underpinning of quicksand. The end result of such a removal need not be described.
I am considering where to sell some furniture as to have more money for missions. Please pray for a good place to do this. We are retired and don't have large funds, but I believe the time is here to sell possessions while we can do so. May God truly be with all of you there at Hope International. 

LW, Oregon

I greatly desire to attend your camp meeting at the close of July 1994. For a number of years I have been subscribing to and reading Our Firm Foundation and have been blessed and encouraged by it. If it is possible could you please let me know very soon so I can rent a room at the Mill Village Motel, for I'm within walking distance of your grounds. I do not drive because of an eye impairment. This camp meeting would be my first at Hope International and I've desired and prayed that one year I could attend.

DB, Canada

I am a member of the church. I have read some of your Firm Foundation magazines and found them to be very enlightening. We have some problems here that we are trying to solve among members, and I believe that your magazines have some answers to them. Praise God.

JP, East Malaysia

Enclosed please find a contribution to the wonderful work you are doing in spreading the truth in these last days. We sincerely appreciate your efforts and are quite anxious to go home to heaven with Jesus soon. Please send us a year's subscription to Our Firm Foundation. We truly gain a blessing from this publication.

CT, Florida

I have waited and prayed for this moment in time when the Lord Jesus Christ will take the open lead by His Spirit-led followers. We are entering the time of the Loud Cry, and there will be no turning back. The Christians in Babylon are in need of the information we have and many a professed SDA is in need of the Spirit that comes by accepting the unadulterated gospel that Paul preached. I am sending an offering, for I expect you to get many requests for the materials you offer. The time is here; only hope we are equal to the demands.

ES, Washington

It was my privilege to meet you and hear your sermons at the camp meeting held at Bangalore, India. I was very much impressed by your presentation of the message and by your lifestyle. I am a retired minister of the Seventh-day Adventist organization, doing independent ministry. All my sons are employed in the SDA organization.

Our ministry visits the sick and prays for them, working among backsliders and bringing them back to the church. We also laid plans to work among the heathen who never heard the name of Jesus and His saving power. There are tribal people living at the foot of the mountains. We are planning to give them primary education so that they can read the Bible.

We need some free tracts and magazines for distribution. I would also like to translate some articles into local languages for which I ask your permission. Above all this we need your prayers and counsel to strengthen this humble beginning.

India

We solicit your prayers and donations (marked "Overseas Literature"). Your contributions will help us answer the insatiable demand from third-world countries for spiritual food.—Editors

I came across a magazine entitled Truth for Today at a friend's library and as such I will like to know more about your publications, sect, and beliefs.

I hope to hear from you soon since I am now in a fix, for I want to serve the true master. But with the spring of so many mushroom churches one should be very careful.

However I am prepared to pay for any amount to know the truth, since worldly knowledge is nothing to me now. If you have prerecorded scripts, sermons, lessons, etc., on both video and audio cassettes, let me know the prices.

SA, Ghana

Responses to the Earth's Final Warning Tabloid

I found a copy of Earth's Final Warning and read it. It is so good I would like more copies to give to others. Please send 10 copies. It is the one with Yeltsin and the Pope and Clinton on the front. I am enclosing $10.

BB, Florida

I would like to receive your publication. A few weeks ago I saw a friend with a copy of Earth's Final Warning. I had no chance to read it. I don't know if it is possible to receive a back issue as well of your publication. Thank you.

FP, New York

Today I read your inspired newspaper for the first time. Yesterday my 16-year-old daughter bent down to fix her pantleg and noticed the newspaper lying on the sidewalk. She picked it up and brought it home. I just finished reading every word and I had to write to tell you what a wonderful work God has committed to your hands.

I have always believed Saturday is the Sabbath, and I thank God for you that you are able to print this material and get it out to the public.

I have been unemployed since February, so I am unable to donate anything now, but I am hungry for the word and humbly request Rome's Challenge and your free Bible course.

My prayers are for you and your ministry to continue to fight the good fight. I believe everything that happens is under God's control, and my daughter finding your paper on the street and bringing it home to me was Providence.

TJ, Canada

July 1994 Our Firm Foundation 11
Decided Action to Be Taken Now

During the night the Spirit of God has been presenting many things to my mind. The experience that was given us at the General Conference held in Battle Creek early in 1901, was of God. Had Dr. Kellogg at that time done thorough work, the terrible experience through which we are now passing would never have been.

God has permitted the presentation of the combination of good and evil in The Living Temple to be made to reveal the danger threatening us. The working that has been so ingeniously carried on He has permitted in order that certain developments might be made, and that it might be seen what a man can do with human minds when he has obtained their confidence as a physician. God has permitted the present crisis to come to open the eyes of those who desire to know the truth. He would have His people understand to what lengths the sophistry and devising of the enemy would lead.

Men have given to our leading physician allegiance that is due to God alone; and he has been permitted to show what self-exaltation will lead men to do. Scientific, spiritualistic sentiments, representing the Creator as an essence pervading all nature, have been given to our people, and have been received even by some who have had a long experience as teachers of the Word of God. The results of this insidious devising will break out again and again. There are many for whom special efforts will have to be put forth to free them from this specious deception.

I am now authorized to say that the time has come to take decided action. The development seen in the cause of God is similar to the development seen when Balaam caused Israel to sin just before they entered the Promised Land. How dangerous it is so to exalt any man that he becomes confused, and confuses the minds of others in regard to the truths that for the last fifty years the Lord has been giving His people!

Few can see the meaning of the present apostasy. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me its meaning, and the result that it will have if allowed to continue. We must now lift our voices in warning. Will our people acknowledge God as the supreme Ruler, or will they choose the misleading arguments and views that when fully developed, make Him, in the minds of those who accept them, as nothingness?

These words were spoken to me in the night season. The sentiments in The Living Temple regarding the personality of God have been received even by men who have had a long experience in the truth. When such men consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil we are no longer to regard the subject as a matter to be treated with the greatest delicacy. That those whom we thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil, should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us.

It is something that cannot be treated as a small matter that men who have had so much light and such clear evidence as to the genuineness of the truth we hold, should become unsettled, and led to accept spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God. These doctrines, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.

During the past night, I have been shown more distinctly than ever before that these sentiments have been looked
upon by some as the grand truths that are to be brought in and made prominent at the present time. I was shown a platform braced by solid timbers—the truths of the words of God. Someone high in responsibility in the medical work was directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform. Then I heard a voice saying, "Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep? How can they be silent? This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God? The time has come to take decided action."

I was instructed to call upon our physicians and ministers to take a firm stand for the truth. We are not to allow atheistic, spiritualistic sentiments to be brought before our youth. God has led us in the past, giving us truth, eternal truth. By this truth we are to stand. Some of the leaders in the medical work have been deceived, and if they continue to hold fanciful, spiritualistic ideas, they will make many believe that the platform upon which we have been standing for the past fifty years has been torn away. These men need now to see with anointed eyes, with clear spiritual vision, that in spite of all men can do, "The foundation of God standeth sure," and "The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Timothy 2:19.

The message to the Laodicean church comes to us at this time with special meaning. Read it, and ask God to show you its import. Thank God that He is still sending us messages of mercy. Those accepting the theories regarding God that are introduced in The Living Temple are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction; for these theories make no effect the plain Word of God.

The tempter is working to gather together at Battle Creek as large a number as possible, hoping that they will receive false ideas of God and His work, and thus make no effect the impressions that God would have made on the minds of those engaged in the medical missionary work and in the gospel ministry. God abhors the great swelling words of vanity that have been spoken by some connected with the Sanitarium. The judgments of God have been visited upon Battle Creek, and those judgments call for humiliation rather than for proud boasting and self-exaltation.

The heavenly messenger turned to those professing to be medical missionar-
ies, and said, "How could you allow yourselves to be led blindfold? How could you so misrepresent the name you bear? You have your Bibles. Why have you not reasoned from cause to effect? You have accepted theories that have led you away from the truths that are to stamp their impress upon the characters of all Seventh-day Adventists. Your leader has been removing the foundation-timbers one by one, and his reasoning would soon leave us with no certain foundation for our faith. He has not heeded the Testimonies that God through His Spirit has given. The worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the marvellous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?

A mind trained only in worldly science fails to discern the deep things of God, but the same mind, converted and sanctified, would see the divine power in the Word.

I am instructed to say that those who would tear away the foundation that God has laid are not to be accepted as the teachers and leaders of His people. We are to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

books of the Bible containing most important instruction are disregarded because they say so much about a personal God. He has not known whether his feet were tending. But in his recent writings, his tendencies toward pantheism have been revealed."

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is only the mind that is cleansed by the sanctification of the Spirit can discern heavenly things.

The Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Let us go to the Word of God for guidance. Let us seek for a "Thus saith the Lord." We have enough of human methods. Brethren, awake to your God-given responsibilities. Your judgment, unless perverted by a long practice of false principles, will discern the deep things of God, given by His Holy Spirit, and your hearts will be made susceptible to the teachings of the Word.

May God bring His people under the deep movings of His Spirit. The Spirit makes efficient the ordinary means of grace. God teaches that His kingdom is to be established in the earth "not by might, nor by power." (Zechariah 4:6) but by His Spirit. The Spirit is the efficiency of His people.

I am instructed to say that those who would tear away the foundation that God has laid are not to be accepted as the teachers and leaders of His people. We are to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Words of power have been sent by God and by Christ to this people, bringing them out from the
world point by point, into the clear light of present truth. With lips touched with holy fire, God’s servants have proclaimed the message. The divine utterance has set its seal to the genuineness of the truth proclaimed.

The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony born in years past. He calls for a revival of spiritual life. The spiritual energies of His people have long been torpid, but there will be a resurrection from apparent death.

In the future, God will call for the gifts and talents of men not now actively engaged in His service. Let these respond to His call putting their trust in the great Medical Missionary. The power that is the life of the soul has not been seen as it must be. It has been smothered for want of spiritual ventilation— the blending of human effort and divine grace. God is calling upon His people to work. He comes to them as they idle away the precious, golden moments, and says, “Go work today in my vineyard” Matthew 21:28.

By prayer and confession of sin we must clear the King’s highway. As we do this, the power of the Spirit will come to us. We need the Pentecostal energy. This will come; for the Lord has promised to send His Spirit as the all-conquering power.

Men may still learn the things that belong to their peace. Mercy’s voice may still be heard, calling, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28–30. It is only when spiritual life is given that rest is found and lasting good secured. We must be able to say, in storm and tempest, “My anchor holds.” He who builds upon any other foundation than that which has been laid, builds upon shifting sand. God calls for a reformation. But he who seeks to bring about a reformation without the aid of the Holy Spirit’s reviving power will find himself adrift. Those who turn from human foolishness and frailty, from man’s seductive arts, from Satan’s planning, to Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, will stand secure upon the platform of eternal truth. □

Battle Creek Letters, 79–83 (October 1903)

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August 10–14 Falkland, British Columbia
No subject in Adventism is more controversial than is the subject of apostasy in relationship to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This fact may be due in part to our varied understandings of what constitutes apostasy. The New World Dictionary says apostasy is "an abandoning of what one has believed in as a faith, a cause or principle." Let us as Seventh-day Adventist laity, leaders and pastors measure ourselves by this definition and ask ourselves, Are we in apostasy?

Soon after 1844 Ellen White wrote:
"Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward." Selected Messages, book 1, 68.

In 1900 she wrote similar words because of the rejection of the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. See Testimonies, vol. 6, 450; The Great Controversy, 458.

Worldliness in the church brought on the rejection of God’s message in 1888. It was much worse than the worldliness of the Jews whom Christ denounced. Ellen White describes the church’s tragic condition in 1882:

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders." Testimonies, vol. 5, 217.

This worldly condition existed because of doubt, unbelief, and disregard of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. In 1882 we were in steady retreat. Can we say we are in a better position today? Can we say that these statements do not apply to us?

"One thing it is certain is soon to be realized—the great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout." Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 7, 57.

Confederacies will increase in number and power as we draw nearer to the end of time. These confederacies will create opposing influences to the truth, forming new parties of professed believers who will act out their own delusive theories. The apostasy will increase. 'Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.' 1 Timothy 4:1. Men and women have confederated to oppose the Lord God of heaven, and the church is only half awake to the situation." Selected Messages, book 2, 383.

The Alpha of Apostasy

Ellen White penned a letter in October of 1903, found on pages 12-14 of this magazine. In this letter she specifically outlines the identifying marks of the Alpha of apostasy. She was told to meet this Alpha of apostasy. And just as she and our pioneers met the Alpha, so we are told to meet the Omega of apostasy.

"Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the Alpha of this danger. The Omega will be of a most startling nature." Ibid., book 1, 197.
During the Alpha of apostasy the iceberg symbolized the destructive power of its pantheistic theories. Our prophet saw in vision the great danger these theories presented to the pillars of the remnant church. God told her to meet them, and she did. Now another iceberg has appeared, but this time there is no living prophet to warn us and to cry out that it is time to meet it. However, we still have the living messages of our prophet to guide us.

"The old truths, given us at the beginning, are to be heralded far and near. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who with clear vision will discern the intricacies of Satan, and will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God." Review and Herald, August 20, 1903.

Our Religion to Be Changed

During the Alpha apostasy we were warned that our religion would be changed. To change our waymarks, the pillars of our faith, we would find it necessary to discredit the Spirit of Prophecy. The Omega of apostasy will be to make of none effect the teachings of the Spirit of Prophecy. This deception is the very last. Ellen White prophesied that this rejection of her work would take place before the end.

"Satan is ... constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Proverbs 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.

"There will be a hatred kindled against the Testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded." Selected Messages, book 1, 48.

"I was shown that many had so little spirituality that they did not understand the value of the Testimonies or their real object. They talked flippantly of the Testimonies given by God for the benefit of His people, and passed judgment upon them, giving their opinion and criticizing this and that, when they would better have placed their hands upon their lips, and prostrated themselves in the dust; for they could not appreciate the spirit of the Testimonies, because they knew so little of the Spirit of God." Testimonies, vol. 5, 672–673.

Satan hates the Spirit of Prophecy. In order to destroy confidence in the landmarks of Adventism, he must first destroy confidence in the Testimonies. Unfortunately he has been in this effort more than moderately successful. This is most readily demonstrated by our turning back from following the Lord's counsels through the Spirit of Prophecy regarding how to operate His health, educational and publishing institutions.

"Let ministers and people remember that gospel truth hardens when it does not save. The rejection of light leaves men captives, bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief. The soul that refuses to listen to the invitations of mercy from day to day can soon listen to the most urgent appeals without an emotion stirring his soul. As laborers with God we need more fervent piety and less self-exaltation. The more self is exalted, the more will faith in the Testimonies of the Spirit of God be lessened. ... Those who trust wholly in themselves will see less and less of God in the Testimonies of His Spirit." Ibid., 681.

As typified during the Alpha in Kellogg's book Living Temple, the Omega of apostasy will be advanced by books of a new order. In the late fifties some of our theologians and leaders reached across the gulf to clasp the hand of the Evangelical world. During meetings with Evangelical leaders Drs. Barnhouse and Martin we compromised our position on two important doctrines, the nature of Christ and the atonement. To convince our newfound Evangelical friends that our compromise was genuine, we produced a book called Questions on Doctrine. A large percentage of this book is good solid Seventh-day Adventist material, but a small percentage is deadly heresy. Very subtly this book altered our position on these landmarks, thus bringing us the blessing of approval which we were seeking from the Evangelical world. A few years later we published the book Movement of Destiny, which seems to excuse the rejection of the righteousness-by-faith message in 1888. In fact, this book attempts to suggest that the 1888 message was received and experienced at that time.

The old truths, given us at the beginning, are to be heralded far and near. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories.

Other injurious books have followed: Perfect in Christ by Helmet Ott, insidiously seeks to destroy the real victory-over-sin message and presents a counterfeit. George Knight's book, From 1888 to Apostasy, attempts to rewrite the history of the rejection of the 1888 message. Recently, Jack Sequeira's Beyond Belief has brought a new heresy to God's people under the guise of professing to be the message that Jones and Waggoner brought. In reality this book denies their message. See Our Firm Foundation, March and April 1994 issues. Yes, books of a new order are among us today. These books are being printed on our own presses, and sold in our own stores.

The Omega, we are told, will present the delusion that a great reformation is taking place. It will also propose a new organization. Those associated with this new organization will try to change the doctrines which are the pillars of our faith. Even in her day the prophet of the Lord saw this heresy developing:

"After the truth has been proclaimed as a witness to all nations, every conceivable power of evil will be set in operation, and minds will be confused by many voices crying, 'Lo, here is Christ; lo, He is there. This is the truth, I have the message from God. He has sent me with great light.' Then there will be a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to tear away.
down the pillars of our faith.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 985.

What are the pillars referred to in this statement? The prophet of the Lord describes them:

“The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God’s people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels’ messages. All are linked together. The evidences of the abiding, ever-living truth of these grand messages, that mean so much to the church, that have awakened such intense opposition from the religious world, are not extinct. Satan is constantly seeking to cast a shadow about these messages, so that the people of God shall not clearly discern their import, their time and place; but they live and are to exert their power upon our religious experience while time shall last.

“The influence of these messages has been deepening and widening, setting in motion the springs of action in thousands of hearts, bringing into existence institutions of learning, publishing houses, and health institutions. All these are instrumentalities of God to cooperate in the grand work represented by the first, second, and third angels, the work of warning the inhabitants of the world that Christ is coming the second time with power and great glory.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 17–18.

The experience of true justification has been deleted from our messages and a counterfeit justification has been introduced in its place. Many are being taught to believe that we are justified even while committing known sin. However, only when we are ready to covenant with God to forsake all sin by the power of the Holy Spirit are we justified. See 2 Corinthians 7:9–10.

“While God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.” Selected Messages, book 1, 366.

It is impossible to overlook the fact that doctrinally we are currently in apostasy. Our colleges and seminaries are teaching our ministers to think and preach like Evangelicals. Very few of our people uphold fully the standards and the principles laid down for us in God’s precious gift, the Spirit of Prophecy.

“Before the last developments of the work of apostasy there will be confusion of faith. There will not be clear and definite ideas concerning the mystery of God. One truth after another will be corrupted.” Signs of the Times, May 28, 1894.

We must not forget the warning Sister White gave us that in the Omega of apostasy nothing will stand in the way of the new movement. Also, leaders, pastors and laity will misinterpret the signs of the times and will cry Peace, peace, when there is no peace.

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” 1 Thessalonians 5:1–5.

Will God be forced to deal with us as He did with the ancient Jewish church? Or as He did with our early denomination in the fires of Battle Creek? That our situation is not hopeless is indicated by the following promise of a revival:

“When purification shall take place in our ranks, we shall no longer rest at ease, boasting of being rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 250.

Brethren, we are a duplicate of ancient Israel—only worse because we have had greater light, as we are told in Testimonies, vol. 1, 129, and vol. 5, 75–76, 456.
Like the Jews, we have mistaken material prosperity and our membership growth statistics to mean that God is blessing us. But read this inspired testimony:

"If numbers were evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for in this world his followers are largely in the majority. It is the degree of moral power pervading the college that is a test of its prosperity. It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our churches, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness." Ibid., vol. 5, 31–32.

"Satan's snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people. Lightness, vanity, love of ease and pleasure, selfishness, and impurity are increasing among us. There is need now of men who are firm and fearless in declaring the whole counsel of God: men who will not sleep as do others, but watch and be sober." Ibid., vol. 5, 160.

The Solution to the Apostasy

"Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His Word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming." The Great Controversy, 464.

Let us not forget the dictionary definition of apostasy. It is abandoning that which we once believed in, "as a faith, a cause, or a principle." The pioneers and Ellen White, who on their knees searched diligently for truth, and who witnessed the miraculous visions of God's delegated messenger, were responsible for the principles of our belief.

God put His seal of approval on these landmarks of our faith. What would they say, if they were alive today, about the church they helped to found at God's direction?

"In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with; but let us not forget that the three great Powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His promises to pass. He will gather from the world a people who will serve Him in righteousness." Testimonies, vol. 8, 254.

We can be encouraged by the assurance that God will take charge of the situation when He takes the reins into His own hands. See Testimonies to Ministers, 300.

"God will carry on His work through wholly consecrated workmen. If His ministers fail of representing Christ, He will turn to others, many of whom have not been prepared for the work by a regular course of study, and will put a message into their lips, even the last message of warning. He will call men from their various employments, and at His bidding they will go forth to proclaim present truth." Review and Herald, December 9, 1902.

When the apostasy reaches a place where there seems to be no human remedy, then God will perform His purifying work.

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3:12.

"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:3.

"I was pointed to the providence of God among His people and was shown that every trial made by the refining, purifying process upon professed Christians proves some to be dross. The fine gold does not always appear. In every religious crisis some fall under temptation. The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church. As a class, their spirits are not steadfast with God. They go out from us because they are not of us; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, many are offended." Testimonies, vol. 4, 89.

We are told that the Omega of apostasy will be of a very startling nature. It will attempt to change our religion, our landmarks and the pillars of our faith. Books of a new order will be published and nothing will be allowed to stand in the way of this new movement. The evidence declares that we are in the Omega of apostasy.

God help us to be faithful to the end, to study as we have never studied before, and to pray as we have never prayed before, that we may be true soldiers for Christ, recognizing and resisting the apostasy. □

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The Sanctuary—Part 3

FROM the facts above set forth [in the previous articles in this series], we see that reckoning the 70 weeks from the decree given to Ezra in the seventh of Artaxerxes, 457 B.C., there is the most perfect harmony throughout. The important and definite events of the manifestation of the Messiah at His baptism, the commencement of His public ministry, the crucifixion, and the turning away from the Jews to the Gentiles with the proclamation of the new covenant, all come in, in their exact place, and like a bright galaxy of messengers of light, cluster around to set their seal to the prophecy and make it sure.

With the seventy weeks we are now done; but there remains a longer period and other important events to be considered. The seventy weeks are but the first 490 years of the 2300. Take 490 from 2300, and there remain 1810. The 490, as we have seen, ended in the autumn of A.D. 34. If to this date we now add the remaining 1810 years, we shall have the termination of the whole period. Thus, to A.D. 34, autumn, add 1810, and we have A.D., autumn, eighteen hundred and forty-four. Thus speedily and surely do we find the termination of the 2300 days, when once the 70 weeks have been located.

The query may here arise in some mind, how the days can be extended to the autumn of 1844, if they commence in 457 B.C., as it requires only 1843 years more, to make the whole number of 2300. Attention to one fact will clear this point of all difficulty; and that is, that it takes 457 full years before Christ, and 1843 full years after, to make 2300; so that if the period commenced with the very first day of 457, it would not terminate till the very last day of 1843. Now it will be evident to all that whatever part of the year 457 had passed away before the 2300 days commenced, just so much of the year 1844 must pass away before they would end. We therefore inquire, at what point in the year 457, are we to commence to reckon? From the fact that the first 49 years were allotted to the building of the street and wall, we learn that the period is to be dated, not from the starting of Ezra for Babylon, but from the actual commencement of the work at Jerusalem; which it is not probable could be earlier than the seventh month (autumn) of 457, as he did not arrive at Jerusalem till the fifth month of the year. See Ezra 7:9. The whole period would therefore extend to the seventh month, autumn, Jewish time, of 1844. (All emphasis by author.)

The question respecting the time has now been examined. The first answer returned to the question of our disappointment in 1844, namely, that we were mistaken in the time, has been reviewed. We have seen that those have fallen into egregious error who have endeavored to disconnect the 70 weeks from the 2300 days, or to remove their date from 457 B.C. The 70 weeks are an inseparable part of the 2300 days. To endeavor to disconnect them is to outrage every principle of interpretation, and to brand a portion of the Word of God as aimless and absurd. Railers at God, and despisers of His Word, may take such a position as this, but Christians, never!

We have found the decree for the restoration of Jerusalem, and the date at which it went forth; and no system of sophistry exists on earth by which it can be made to appear that the 2300 days did not commence at that point and end in 1844.

Thus the original dates come forth vindicated from every encounter; their armor of defense is not marred or broken, but only polished to a brighter luster, by every conflict; and they still stand, as they heretofore have stood, sole and absolute masters of this field of controversy.

James White, husband of Ellen White, was ten years president of the General Conference as well as editor of several church publications.
Our opponents on this view of the prophetic periods, have been wont in years past to meet us like this: “The 2300 days have not ended because the time has passed. Why the time passed in 1844 without the consummation of our hopes, we acknowledge to be a mystery, but the passing of the time is proof that the 2300 days have not ended.”

Time, however, is no respecter of persons nor of theories; and with the formidable scythe which he is represented as carrying, he sometimes demolishes in the most summary manner the grotesque and gossamer theories of men, however dear they may be to their authors and defenders. It is so here. Headless of the wild contortions of those who would fain compel him to stop and fulfill their daring predictions, he has kept on the swift but even tenor of his way until—what? every limit is passed to which the 2300 days can be extended; and thus he has demonstrated that those days have passed. Let not this point be overlooked. Setting aside for a moment the arguments by which they are shown to have ended in 1844, and letting them date from any point where there is the least shadow of ground for thus placing them, or from which any one has ever dreamed of dating them, and the utmost limit to which they would extend has gone by. They cannot possibly be dated at any point which would bring their termination so late as the present time. We therefore say again, Those days have ended!

Adventists! Have you been wont to say, We know that the days have not ended, because the time has passed? It is now our turn to speak. Time has at length arrayed himself on our side of the controversy, and we reply, We know that the days have ended, because time has passed—passed beyond the utmost limits that can be assigned for those days. All then that we ask is that you accede to facts, and admit that those days, as revelation, and history, and time, have demonstrated, are in the past.

But perhaps you are thinking of the conclusion that immediately follows from this admission; for if the days are in the past, and the prophecy holds good, the sanctuary, whatever it is, is being cleansed. But if that is so, the earth cannot be the sanctuary; for no physical change has come over the earth, except, perhaps, increasing signs of infirmity and old age: and no moral change, except a deeper plunge into wickedness and sin, on the part of its fast-degenerating sons and daughters.

If time has demonstrated that the days are in the past, it has also demonstrated that the earth is not the sanctuary—the very point claimed by those who offer this fact as the explanation of our disappointment in 1844. The inquiry then, What is the sanctuary? is now fairly in hand.

What Is the Sanctuary?

This is exclusively a Bible question. With the testimony of the Bible only, then, have we to do. The object of our inquiry can only be, What does the Bible reveal to us respecting the sanctuary? And we shall find its testimony neither brief nor obscure on this important subject. The word occurs in the inspired Scriptures one hundred and forty-six times; and more times than this does it offer us instruction by prediction, definition, or historic record, concerning this wonderful object.

Perhaps no language can better introduce this subject than that of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Hebrews. In chapter 8, he contrasts the two covenants, the first and the second, the old and the new, under the latter of which we now live. In chapter 9, he then speaks as follows: "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat," etc. Verses 1–5.

Let this language of the apostle be carefully considered. It both introduces and settles one great division of this question. It tells us definitely what, for a time, constituted the sanctuary of the Lord. During the period covered by the first covenant, while the tabernacle, ordained as thus plainly described, was in existence, there can be, in the face of these words of Paul, no controversy as to what constituted the sanctuary. Turning to the records of those times, we find a more definite mention of this singular structure, which from its bearings and relations in the temple of divine truth, deserves to be examined with absorbing interest.

Go back to the time when Israel, crowned with deliverance, stood on the shore of the Red Sea, while the Egyptians were perishing at their feet in the returning and angry waters. Listen to that song of triumph which Moses sings, and mark this language, "The LORD is my strength and song, and has become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation." Exodus 15:2. In this we receive the first intimation of that building that was afterward to be erected by the direction of the Lord, that He might dwell among His people. In verse 17 of the same chapter, is the first occurrence of the word sanctuary which we find in the Bible.

Pursuing the sacred record, we find in the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus and onward, more definite information respecting the sanctuary. Here we read the commission which God gave to Moses for the creation of this building. In the third month after their departure from Egypt, the children of Israel came to the wilderness of Sinai. There Moses was summoned up into the mount, to an audience with his Maker. Forty days and nights were consumed in that memorable interview. During this time Moses was shown the pattern of the sanctuary, and all the sacred vessels, and received full instructions in relation thereto.

Into a particular description of the tabernacle, as erected by Moses, we need not here enter. It is minutely set forth in Exodus, chapters 25–31. Suffice it to say...
that it was a structure of extraordinary magnificence, formed of upright boards overlaid with gold. It was thirty cubits in length, about ten in width, and ten in height. At the east end, which was the entrance, there were five pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, having hooks of gold and sockets of brass. Over the tabernacle, thus erected, were thrown four different coverings. The first and inner covering was composed of fine linen, embroi-
and the cherubim were likewise of pure gold, on either end of the mercy seat. It was above the ark, over the mercy seat, between the cherubim, that God manifested His presence, and from whence He communicated with His people. See Exodus 25:22. And so David prays, “Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.” Psalm 80:1.

It will be observed that neither the holy nor Most Holy Place, had any wind-
dered with figures of cherubim in blue, purple, and scarlet. By this would be formed a ceiling of surpassing beauty and magnificence. The second covering was made of goats’ hair; the third of rams’ skins dyed red; and the fourth and last of badgers’ skins. A richly embroidered curtain suspended from the five pillars overlaid with gold, that stood at the entrance upon the east, formed the door of the tabernacle.

The sacred tent was divided into two apartments by means of a veil suspended from four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, set in sockets of silver. In what proportion the sanctuary was thus divided we are not informed: but it was undoubtedly the same that was afterward observed in the temple, See 1 Kings 6, in which two-thirds of the space was allotted to the first apartment, and the remaining one-third to the second.

In the first apartment or holy place were three things worthy of notice: the golden candlestick, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. The candlestick was of solid gold, the table of show-bread and the altar of incense, of shittim wood, but overlaid throughout with pure gold. In the second apartment, or Most Holy Place, were also three things to claim attention: the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim. The ark was a chest of shittim wood, two cubits and a half in length, a cubit and a half in breadth, and the same in height. It was overlaid within and without with pure gold. The mercy seat was the cover of the ark, of solid gold, dow; hence in the first apartment there was need of the candlestick with its seven lamps; and in regard to the second, where God dwelt, Solomon said, “The Lord said that He would dwell in the thick darkness.” 1 Kings 8:12.

How impressive must have been the scene presented by the interior of this building! There were its walls, having all the appearance of massive and solid gold, and reflecting in a thousand directions the light of the seven lamps of the golden candlestick; there were the table of show-bread, and altar of incense, glittering in its light like burnished gold; and there was the curtain that formed the gorgeous ceiling, with its mystic figures of cherubim in blue, purple, and scarlet, adding its beauty to the brilliant scene. While in, beyond the second veil, was the glorious Shekinah, or visible manifestation of God’s glory, into the awful presence of which, except the high priest’s entrance once every year, no man could venture and live.

Before the door of the tabernacle were placed the brazen laver, and the altar of burnt offering, and around the whole was erected the court with its curtains of fine-twined linen.

In the second year after Israel had departed from Egypt, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the taberna-
cle was reared up. And Moses spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and he put the testimony (the tables of the Ten Commandments) into the ark, and the mercy seat upon it, and brought it into the tabernacle, and set up the veil; he placed the table of show-bread and golden candlestick in the first apartment, and lighted the lamps before the Lord; he put the golden altar of incense before the veil, and burnt sweet incense thereon; and on the altar, before the door of the tabernacle, he offered the burnt offering and the meal offering as the Lord commanded. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Exodus 40. He had now taken possession of His dwelling place, in the midst of His people.

We have now before us the sanctuary as Moses erected it in the wilderness of Sinai, 1490 years before Christ. With its ark of the covenant, its mercy seat, and its glorious Shekinah, it constituted the heart and center of Israel’s religious worship, under that typical system.

The children of Israel being at this time in the period of their wanderings, the sanctuary as first given to them was adapted to their condition. It was so constructed that it could be easily taken down and borne with them in their journeys, and immediately erected wherever the divine presence, which accompanied them in a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, should direct them to pitch their camp. See Numbers 9:15–23.

The Levites were consecrated to the service of the sanctuary and were commanded to bear it and all its sacred vessels, when the camp set forward. Thus it was with them during the forty years in which they journeyed in the wilderness. During this time, this building which God claimed as His dwelling place, and where His service was performed, is fifty-six times called the sanctuary, in the following instances: Exodus 25:8; 30:13, 24; 36:1, 3–4, 6; 38:24–27; Leviticus 4:6; 5:15; 10:4; 12:4; 16:33; 19:30; 20:3; 21:12 (twice), 23 (plural); 26:2; 27:3, 25; Numbers 3:28, 31–32, 38, 47, 50:4, 12, 15 (twice), 16; 7:9, 13, 19, 25, 31, 37, 43, 49, 55, 61, 67, 73, 79, 85–86; 8:19; 10:21; 18:1, 3, 5, 16; 19:20.

From its entrance into Canaan, it is easy to trace the history of this building, till it was embodied in the larger and more glorious structure of the temple of Solomon, when the children of Israel had become settled in their own land, and the sanctuary had a permanent location. We trace it down to the period when it was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, and suffered to remain in ruins during the 70 years of the Babylonish captivity. From the time it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, at

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Exodus 40. He had now taken possession of His dwelling place, in the midst of His people.
the close of that captivity, we follow it to the days of Herod, by whom it was taken down and rebuilt, greatly enlarged and beautified, 19 B.C. We come to the days of the Saviour, who solemnly affirmed to the Jews, that their house was left unto them desolate. We behold its beautiful veil which divided between the holy and Most Holy Place, rent in twain from top to bottom, amid the solemn scenes of the crucifixion, when the great sacrifice for the world was offered up, which rendered null and void all the typical services of the earthly temple. We trace it, after this event, through its brief and nominal existence, to the year A.D. 70, when the ungovernable violence of the Roman soldiers involved it in a ruin from which it has never since arisen.

This was the sanctuary of the first covenant. There can be no doubt on this point with any who yet have confidence in the Bible, either as a divine revelation, or even as a secular history. It is directly declared to be the sanctuary, by the apostle Paul; and of the one hundred and forty-two times of the occurrence of the word in the Old Testament, it refers in almost every instance to this building. Here, then, we occupy common ground with all parties. We have here a common basis on which to build further arguments on this subject. It is in the question, What is the sanctuary of the new covenant? or, in other words, What is now the sanctuary? that the great controversy is involved. This is our next inquiry. And we think we shall find the sanctuary of this covenant no less definitely defined and located than the sanctuary of the first.

The Sanctuary of the New Covenant

We have referred to the old covenant and taken a brief survey of its sanctuary, the center of the typical worship of that system. But that covenant was not always to last. The Lord commissioned His prophet to declare, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Jeremiah 31:31. This covenant was confirmed by our Lord according to the prediction, Daniel 9:27, the last seven years of the 490 or the last week of the seventy—by Himself in person the first half of that week, and after His crucifixion, by His apostles the remainder of that term. See Hebrews 2:3.

Only 490 years of the long period of 2300 were allotted to the first covenant, and the Jewish church. At the end of that period the act of confirming the covenant with that people, had, as prophesied, been finished, the services of that sanctuary had, virtually, forever ceased, and the Jewish church no longer had pre-eminence as the children of God above any other people. The sanctuary prolonged even its nominal existence but a few years after this; but yet 1810 years of the 2300 remained; and it is at the end of this period that the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14 is to be cleansed. This must refer to the sanctuary of the new covenant; hence the argument is conclusive that this covenant has a sanctuary with its ordinances of divine service also.

As we pursue our inquiries to ascertain what constitutes the sanctuary of this dispensation, the opinions that already exist on this subject, demand a word of attention. If they are sound and true, there is no occasion to deviate from them; and unless they can be shown to be fallacious, the introduction of any new position will appear not only without occasion but without warrant.

Should the reader inquire for the positions that have obtained more or less credit upon this question, four prominent views would be set before him. It is claimed by some that this earth is now the sanctuary. Others, of more enlarged views, contend that this earth is but the first apartment of the sanctuary, while all heaven is the second. A third class claim that it is the land of Canaan which is now the sanctuary; while a fourth take the word in a more spiritual, but no less authenticated sense, and apply it to the church.

If we would form correct views on this question, we must keep constantly before us the relation which the sanctuaries of the two covenants sustain to each other. By keeping our eyes steadfastly fixed upon this, it will be almost as hard to arrive at wrong conclusions, as it would be easy were we to lose sight of it.

The true sanctuary is the pattern from which the earthly tabernacle was erected: and ... whatever object we may find of which this earthly sanctuary was a true type or figure, that object is the sanctuary of the better covenant.

sanctuary is the pattern from which the earthly tabernacle was erected: and that whatever object we may find of which this earthly sanctuary was a true type or figure, that object is the sanctuary of the better covenant under which we now live, and the cleansing of which the unerring word of the Lord locates at the termination of the 2300 days. We are therefore prepared for the following questions:

1. Is the earth the sanctuary?

To this question we reply emphatically in the negative. It is not.

This fact was made apparent in the argument on the 2300 days, in which it was shown that those days have ended, but that yet nothing is done toward a renovation of the earth, either moral or physical. But there are other considera-
tions showing the absurdity of the claim that the earth is the sanctuary which should not be passed by unnoticed:

1. The word sanctuary occurs 146 times in the Bible and is not in a single instance applied to the earth. Now if it was really the intention of the Holy Ghost to teach us that the earth was the sanctuary, it seems that it ought, at least once, to have called it so.

2. The definition of the term, sanctuary, according to Walker, Webster, Cruden and the Bible, is, A holy place, a sacred place, a dwelling place for the Most High: but every one knows that the earth is neither a dwelling place for God, nor yet a holy, or sacred place. This fact alone should forever exclude the idea of its being the sanctuary.

3. But take into consideration the typical and antitypical natures of the sanctuary, and the absurdity of this view will appear in a still stronger light. The earthly sanctuary was a type or figure of the true; but pray tell us in what respect it prefigured this rolling earth. Can it for a moment be supposed that Moses, when in the mount, was shown this earth, as the pattern from which he was to erect the sanctuary, and that the nearest resemblance he could make of it, was an oblong building ten cubits in width, and three times that number in length? And we might pursue this train of thought still further and inquire, What on the earth answers as antitype to the golden candlestick? What to the altar of incense? And what to the table of shewbread?

But we need not spend time longer to write, nor trouble the reader longer to read, concerning a view so manifestly absurd.

But if the view that the earth is the entire sanctuary involves such apparent folly, what shall we say of that view which makes it only a part of that building? Both these views are indeed of the earth, earthly. The absurdity of the former is equally involved in the latter, while this goes a degree deeper, in making all heaven only the second apartment, and may be described, in the language of Pollok, as "A strange belief, that leans its idiot back on folly's topmost twig." We will not detain the reader with any view so baseless and chimerical.

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**Bulletin Board**

**The Final Work**—Now available in Spanish

Many people have expressed appreciation for Vernon Sparks' book entitled The Final Work, which is a study of the Spirit of Prophecy counsels regarding medical missionary work and its relationship to the final work of the Third Angel's Message. This book is now available also in Spanish. "I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work." Counsels on Health, 533.

Price: $3.50 (plus shipping and tax*)

**The Earth's Final Warning Tabloid**

We have incorporated some of our readers' suggestions on how to improve the layout and content of Earth's Final Warning. By the time you read this announcement, we expect to have mailed close to one million tabloids, covering large portions of the States of Idaho and Alaska as well as many cities around the United States. We have simplified the prices for the tabloid as follows: 1-10 copies, 38¢ each; 11+, 16¢ each; 600+, 10¢ each; 3000+, 8¢ each. Shipping: Please add 10% ($1.50 minimum) for destinations within the United States. Inquire for foreign destinations.

Bulk mailings: Send Earth’s Final Warning to every address in the zipcode of your choice for only 17¢ per address. Please request our Bulk Mail Information sheet.

**Our Firm Foundation Subscription Rate**

The subscription price for a 12-month subscription to addresses in the United States is now $16.50. We praise the Lord that this time is the first that the subscription has been raised since the beginning of Our Firm Foundation. Subscription prices for foreign countries are listed on page 3. We will continue to offer discounts for quantity gift subscriptions: 10 or more gift subscriptions, 25% off; 20 or more, 50% off.

*Please add 10% ($1.50 minimum) for destinations within the United States. Inquire for foreign destinations. Washington residents please add 7.6% sales tax. All prices are in US currency.

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arrive at some perfect point which was attained by the Advent pioneers then Jesus would immediately return.

It is, however, our belief that no individual can ever experience the third angel’s message without experiencing the first and second angels’ messages. For this reason those who had an experience in the proclamation of these first two messages were to have their writings preserved and reprinted. See Counsels to Writers and Editors, 26-27. We believe in this context that it is important that we be “Historic Adventists.”

But the problem of apostasy encompasses a much broader field than just our corporate failure to completely follow God’s blueprint for our health and educational systems, our lifestyles and standards, our administration and evangelism, tragic though this failure is. It also encompasses our failure to build upon the firm foundation of truth established by our forefathers. It encompasses too our subsequent rejection of present truth which has made us as guilty of “all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias” (or, we could add, the reputation of the contemporary messenger, Ellen White, whom God sent to modern Israel) as were the Jews upon whom Jesus pronounced the series of woes in Matthew 23.

Christ was saying that to reject present truth is to be guilty not only of rejecting that truth, but also of rejecting all truth given in past ages. Apostasy, then, assumes a much broader application than the mere rejection of God’s contemporary message and messenger; for we see that to reject past truth is to be in disobedience to present truth, and to reject present truth is to be in disobedience to past truth.

Could it be that the question which really needs to be asked is not “Can we stay together in the days ahead?” but rather, “Are we presently faithful and will we choose to remain faithful in the days ahead?”

God has never asked us individually or corporately to “survive” the crisis prophesied to confront the remnant church in the closing days of this earth’s history. He only asks that we remain faithful and obedient to Him and that we follow all the light of truth which He has shed upon our path.

It is our prayer that this issue of Our Firm Foundation, rather than being perceived as “just some more of that negative propaganda designed to generate more support for their ministry,” will be perceived as an effort to aid our dear church to unite upon a sure foundation of truth. We ask our readers to join the editors in prayerfully considering whether we each have chosen, by God’s power, to bring our lives into harmony with all the truths which God has graciously given us, so that we may offer ourselves an offering in righteousness as we meet the crisis to come.

The Editors

Echos of Stephen
Continued from 5

through them the people could obtain a clearer conception of the divine Being. This class were foremost in rejecting the preaching of Noah.... But as sin became general, it appeared less and less sinful, and they finally declared that the divine law was no longer in force; that it was contrary to the character of God to punish transgression.3

The sophistication and modern appeal of these concepts can hardly be understated.

The worship of the golden calf at Sinai was announced by Aaron as “a feast to the Lord.” Exodus 32:5. Apparently those who led out in this apostasy had no thought of totally rejecting the worship of the true God. This pattern continued throughout Old Testament history, as dark wrongdoing hid itself beneath a veneer of presumed allegiance to God. See Jeremiah 7:4; Micah 3:11.

The New Testament Sequel

In His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, Christ linked the apostasy of the Jews in His day with the apostasy of their Old Testament ancestors: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. . . . That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.” Matthew 23:29–32, 35.

The Jews of Jesus’ time had clearly failed to learn the lessons of their history—and thus, in the words of Santayana, they were condemned to repeat that history. But the full comprehension of their crimes was not imposed on their consciousness until after the death of Christ, when Stephen delivered his defense before the Sanhedrin. See Acts 7:2–53. The failure of the Jewish leaders to fully understand what they had done in putting Christ to death is reflected in Jesus’ own words, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. Stephen told the Jews what in fact they had done, detailing how the history of their apostasy, their murder of the prophets and resistance to divine appeals, had ultimately brought about the staining of their hands with the Messiah’s own blood. See Acts 7:52.

Samuel Coleridge once described the lessons of history as “a lantern on the stern which shines only on the waves behind us.”4 Commenting on these words, historian Barbara Tuchmann writes, “The image is beautiful but the message misleading, for the light on the waves we have passed through should enable us to infer the nature of the waves ahead.”5 Little wonder that Ellen White observes, “We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”6

Perhaps the most profound lesson of the biblical record is that evil has frequently not been obvious, that subtle departures from truth and purity have often characterized the church’s transgressions. Never can the modern church afford to be without a pointed awareness of this lesson from the sacred past.

References
1 All Bible texts are from the King James Version.
3 Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, 95-96.
5 Ibid.
6 Ellen White, Life Sketches, 196.
The Medical Missionary Corner

"Christ stands before us as the pattern Man, the great Medical Missionary—an example for all who should come after." Loma Linda Messages, 61.

The servant of the Lord tells us that "soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work." Counsels on Health, 533. Also in The Review and Herald, January 7, 1902, she said: “At baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we were set apart to engage in the very work that Christ came to the world to do. What was He?—In the highest sense He was a missionary, and He was a healing missionary.” This new column will feature timely information and counsel regarding how we can better experience and share our divinely given health message as an integral part of the three angels’ messages.

The Editors

Go Forward

IAM commissioned to say that the prosperity of the medical missionary work is in God’s order. This work must be done; the truth must be carried into the highways and byways. Ministers and church members should awake to the necessity of cooperating in this work.

With earnest, untiring energy, those who have felt the burden of the Christian Help work have testified by their works that they are not content to be mere theoretical believers. They have tried to walk in the light. They have put their belief into practice. They have combined faith and works. They have done the very work the Lord has specified should be done, and many souls have been enlightened, and convicted, and helped.

The indifference among our ministers in regard to health reform and the medical missionary work is surprising. Even those who do not profess to be Christians treat the subject with greater respect than do some of our own people, and these are going in advance of us.

Why, I inquire, are some of our ministerial brethren so far behind in proclaiming the exalted theme of temperance? My brethren, the word given to you is, “Take hold of the work of health reform; go forward.” If you think that the medical missionary work is assuming undue proportions, take the men who have been working in these lines with you into your fields of labor, two here, and two there. Receive these medical missionaries as you would receive Christ, and see what work they can do. You will not find them dwarfs in religious experience. See if in this way you cannot bring much of Heaven’s vital current into the churches. See if there are not some who will grasp the education they so much need, and bear the testimony, “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:4–6. Our great need is unity, perfect oneness in God’s work.

The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth to the sick and to the well. It combines the medical missionary work and the ministry of the Word. By these combined agencies, opportunities are given to communicate light, and to present the gospel to all classes and all grades of society. God wants the ministers and the church members to take a decided, active interest in the medical missionary work.

To take people right where they are, whatever their position or condition, and help them in every way possible—this is gospel ministry. Those who are diseased in body are nearly always diseased in mind, and when the soul is sick, the body also is affected. Ministers should feel it a part of their work to minister to the sick and afflicted whenever opportunity presents itself. The minister of the gospel is to present the message, which must be received if the people are to become sanctified and made ready for the coming of the Lord. This work is to embrace all that was embraced in Christ’s ministry.

Those who understand physiology and hygiene will, in their ministerial labor, find it a means whereby they may enlighten others in regard to the proper and intelligent treatment of the physical, mental, and moral powers. Therefore those who are preparing for the ministry should make a diligent study of the human organism, that they may know how to care for the body, not by means of drugs, but from nature’s own laboratory. The Lord will bless those who make every effort to keep themselves free from disease, and lead others to regard as sacred the health of the body as well as of the soul.

The ambassadors of Christ, those to whom have been committed the living oracles of God, can be doubly useful if they know how to help the sick. A practical knowledge of health reform will better qualify men and women to proclaim the message of mercy and retribution to the world.

Ellen G. White
The Review and Herald, January 14, 1902.
Apostasy From the Time of the Apostles to the Reformation  
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4. The Sabbath

There is no mandate in the writings of Scripture for the observance of the first day of the week as a special day of worship. However, even before the third century, there were those who were advocating first-day sacredness. There are a number of reasons for this bias. First, the Christians in Rome kept Sunday as their primary day of worship. Rome had to coerce most of Europe to accept Sunday sacredness and the battle to do so was a momentous one. It was not until the seventh century that Spain accepted Sunday sacredness. In the same century, urged on by his queen, the king of Northumbria, at the counsel of Wilby in A.D. 664, capitulated to Sunday sacredness. At the time, Northumbria was the strongest kingdom in England. It was not until the eleventh
terrible persecution of the Jews, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, often affected the Christians since they were considered a sect of the Jews. It made life very difficult for Christians, even if they themselves were Gentiles. Second, it was convenient to choose Sunday as the day for sacred worship because this day was commonly the day of worship of the pagans. Thirdly, the mystical and philosophic concepts of the Western Roman Church opened the way for reinterpretation of Scripture, which was necessary to arrive at a belief in Sunday sacredness.

However, even long after 321 B.C., when Constantine proclaimed the day of the sun as the day of rest from all labor, most of the Christian world was reluctant to make this change. Satan, in his desperate effort to destroy the sovereignty of Christ led some churches to begin to observe both Sabbath and Sunday as days of rest and worship. Of course, it could have been argued that putting aside two days for worship was an even greater acknowledgement of God, but Satan played his deceptive game well.

Eventually one day became a feast day and one a fast day. Those who urged the claims of Sunday sacredness held Sunday as a feast day and Sabbath as a fast day. It does not take much reasoning to recognize that overwhelmingly the people preferred the feast day to the fast day.

At the end of the fourth century the Christians in Milan still kept the Sabbath as their primary day of worship, while the and twelfth centuries that Wales and Scotland capitulated. But even after this, scattered throughout Europe were faithful students of the Word, who recognized the sacredness of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Along with the change of the Sabbath, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul became the greatest symbol of the pagan intrusion into the Christian church.

A long with the change of the Sabbath, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul became the greatest symbol of the pagan intrusion into the Christian church.

5. The Concept of the Uniting of Church and State

Constantine was the first of the Roman emperors to embrace Christianity. Here was a Roman emperor who was able to make edicts involving the day of worship. Thus, step by step, the alliance between church and state took place. When in A.D. 533, in the dying moments of the Roman Empire, Emperor Justinian bestowed the imperial title of Pontifex Maximus upon the bishop of Rome, John II, the union of church and state became almost complete. It was completed five years later when the Goths were driven out of Rome. Pope Virgilius, was then able to assume the full power of that title. From henceforth the bishopric of Rome became a religio-political bishopric, and the sovereign power of the Papacy was secured.

When evaluating the development of paganistic influences upon Christianity, one cannot ignore the enormous influence of Augustine. He was unable to cast off all the pagan concepts which he had imbibed in his youth. His theological concepts were to seriously influence the Christian church as he eventually became the most influential theologian of his era. Many of the great theological errors of the Roman Catholic Church were either instigated by Augustine, or were developed by subsequent theologians who were determined to formulate a consistent theology that would incorporate Augustinian heresy.

With his pagan mindset, Augustine could not understand the concept of free choice. He saw God as absolute, and in total control; a God who permitted man to have freedom of choice was incomprehensible to Augustine. He discovered in the Bible that some would be saved in the kingdom of heaven, and some would be lost. To accommodate this truth into his theological concepts, Augustine introduced the doctrine of predestination. The error of predestination was vigorously challenged in his lifetime. In response, Augustine argued that it is a miracle of the grace of God that any of us should be saved. Thus he suggested that we, as erring humans were in no position to question the justice of God because He preordained some to eternal salvation and others to eternal damnation.

This error of predestination logically led to the concept of once-saved-always-saved. God, being absolute and unchangeable, arbitrarily decided those who were preordained to salvation. These saved ones could never be lost. Those who were preordained to eternal destruction could never be saved. Naturally, this belief gave a presumptuous security to those who believed they were preordained to be saved.

On the other hand, this concept also led to questions concerning the proclamation of the gospel. Why spread the message? Why evangelize? Why proselytize? If God's arbitrary will has preordained men either to salvation or damnation, what was the purpose of evangelizing? The answer that satisfied some was simply, Because the Bible mandate it. Even so, while the Papacy ruthlessly suppressed opposition to its mandates in Europe, it fostered little true evangelism.

Augustine's prophecies upheld the view that the relationship of man to God was incidental to his salvation. The dogma of once-saved-always-saved quickly brought about the incorporation of the sin-and-live theology. No longer was victory over sin of any consequence to salvation. Augustine vigorously argued that it is not possible to gain victory over sin even in the power of Christ. It will be noticed that each one of these unscriptural conclusions is a logical deduction from
Augustine’s original false premise, based upon his heathen beliefs, that God does not permit man to have the power of free choice.

Augustine also popularized the concept of original sin, declaring that man was guilty, not only of his own sin, but, more important, he was guilty of the very sin of Adam. Sin was a state of being, not dependent upon man’s desecration of the Decalogue. However, he did suggest that sin was evident in the acts of one’s life. Initially he claimed that sex was the original sin. He had fathered an illegitimate child, which exposed his long battle with sexual desire. This weakness may well have left Augustine in search of a theological excuse for his sinful failures. Later he broadened the concept of original sin to include other areas of transgression.

Augustine perceived the flesh and the spirit in resolvable conflict. Never did he see the triumph of the spirit over the flesh. Augustine’s view of original sin created a dilemma when he considered the incarnation of Christ. If we were sinners just because we were born, then this would infer that Christ also was a sinner, for He also was born as we are. Of course, this thought was intolerable. The Bible plainly described Christ as, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee.” Luke 1:35.

Christ could never be described as sinful. Therefore Augustine was forced to conclude logically that Christ possessed an altogether different nature from that of man. Thus he postulated that Christ possessed the nature of an unfallen man. In doing this he ignored the plainest evidence of Scripture to the contrary. Since he declared Christ to have the human nature of an unfallen man, the Catholic Church was led to espouse the blasphemous doctrine of the immaculate conception. This concept was fully incorporated into Catholic Church dogma only in the nineteenth century. Step by theological step, Augustine’s false theology led to the incorporation of numerous unscriptural doctrines, which received acceptance into the teaching of the Catholic Church. But by this time the value of tradition was considered great, especially in the Western Christian Church, and therefore acceptable.

Then another dilemma arose. Christ was now far removed from man. By placing Christ’s human nature above our own, it was difficult to accept Christ as our Mediator since, according to Augustine’s view, He had not been tempted in the way fallen man was tempted and tempted. Neither could there be any expectation that even in Christ’s power humans could gain victory over sin. Surely if man had a human nature inferior to His, as Augustine postulated, it would not be possible for man to experience constant victory over sin such as Jesus had while on earth.

Augustine’s view was that Christ’s sinless life was achieved because He had a great advantage over us, since He possessed an unfallen nature, while we were cursed with a fallen nature. Jesus ceased to be, truly, our Example, in the ultimate sense. Jesus thus was not in a position to succor those who were tempted; therefore the church was compelled to propose other mediators than Jesus. These were men and women who, most assuredly, did experience and suffer and yield to like temptations as did other human beings.

Later the mother of Jesus was claimed to be a mediator. Then numerous saints were created by the church; and these also became recognized as mediators. Finally, upon the priests, who demonstrated themselves to be every bit as given to sin as their parishioners, was bestowed the role of mediator between God and man. One step at a time, the church, in accepting these pagan Christian parents of that generation, imagining that their children were tormented in eternal fire, does not bear contemplation.

The church quickly realized that it had to supply a solution to this anxiety. Limbo was invented. Limbo certainly was not heaven, but neither was it hell. It was something of an intermediate place. But even this view did not placate the anguish of parents who would never see their little ones again, so the sacrament of infant baptism was introduced into Catholic dogma. It is evident that most of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church that have their origin in paganism, were fully developed by the end of the fifth century.

Down through the centuries that were to follow, faithful men and women determined not to capitulate to the dictates of Rome. Those who refused to yield to Rome, and to its apostate and paganistic practices, were hunted and persecuted. But never was Rome able to stamp out the platform of truth. Eventually, Reformers such as Wycliffe in England, Huss and Jerome in Bohemia, Luther and Melanchthon in Germany, Zwingli and Calvin in Switzerland, and Knox in Scotland were

As we look back on the long period of spiritual darkness between apostolic times and the Protestant Reformation, Seventh-day Adventists recognize that they are the inheritors of the faith of worthy and courageous men and women.

concepts, was forced by logical deduction, to add error to error in order to substantiate the false premises of Augustine.

It soon became a dictum of the church that original sin separates man from eternal life. By the very act of being conceived, man was condemned to eternal torment. This question led to another, “How can the guilt of original sin be removed?” The solution to which the church fathers arrived was that guilt was removed by the act of baptism. The question that immediately followed centered the fate of the unbaptized. The answer was terrifying—they were condemned to an eternally burning hell. It is not difficult to imagine the impact of such a concept upon parents whose infants had died unbaptized. The infant mortality rate at the time was high. The anguish of sincere
By Every Word

WHEN the fullness of the time came for God’s chosen people to possess the Promised Land, the earthly Canaan, God gave them a prophet, a messenger. Through Moses, the Lord restored to mankind a knowledge of His law—the Ten Commandments, which are a revelation of His character. This law, the foundation of the government of heaven, is immutable. It is as enduring as eternity. The Ten Commandments were to be the basis of all belief and the judge of all behavior of God’s people.

Love is the essence of God’s character. Love is the essence of the great law of His universe. In order that intelligent beings may better understand how to obey His law of love God transcribed it in Ten Commandments. The first four describe our duties to God and the last six explain our duties to man.

God knew that the children of Israel would be unable to understand how the Ten Commandments were to affect every facet of their lives, enabling them to fully reflect His character. It was God’s plan for the children of Israel to share with the world His plan of salvation from slavery to sin. But He knew they could not accomplish this task with their limited understanding of the Ten Commandments.

A Lesser Light

For this reason God gave them a lesser light through the writings and the ministry of His messenger Moses. In addition to the greater light—the Ten Commandments—God gave Moses detailed instructions on how as individuals and as an organization they were to be His representatives and do His work on earth.

God instructed Moses in the minute details of the construction of the tabernacle and in the operation of the sacrificial system. God communicated to the children of Israel His will regarding their diet, proper sanitation, care for the sick, care for the poor, how to witness to the world, and the setting up and operating of His institutions, the cities of refuge.

Moses began receiving the testimonies of Jesus for the children of Israel when the law was spoken from Mount Sinai, but apparently he did not finish recording them in a book until the year of his death forty years later. See Exodus 18:19–20; Deuteronomy 31:24; Patriarchs and Prophets, 466. When finished, the book of the law of Moses was placed in the side of the ark as a witness to the covenant between Israel and God. See Deuteronomy 31:26.

God’s will for almost every facet of their individual and corporate lives and labor was revealed to the children of Israel through His messenger Moses. The Ten Commandments were the basis of the Jewish economy, but their application to the details of life was spelled out in the lesser light of the law of Moses.

“The Decalogue was supreme; the ‘book’ containing ‘the words of this law’ (Deuteronomy 31:24) was an amplification and application of its principles to the economy of Israel.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1064.

The law of Moses along with the moral law were God’s truth and would be revealed to the children of Israel. Both the greater and the lesser lights were to be obeyed. See Deuteronomy 5:31–32. Neither was to be added to or to be subtracted from. See Deuteronomy 4:2. The possession of and obedience to both the greater and the lesser lights made Israel the greatest nation upon the earth. See Deuteronomy 4:6–8.
Every seven years the testimonies of Moses and the Ten Commandments were to be publicly read. Deuteronomy 31:9-11. Men, women, children and even the strangers in the land were to be in the audience that “they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 31:12.

The parents were to do everything possible to teach to their children the writings of the prophet as well as the words of God from Sinai. “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 6:7.

Yes, God revealed His will both through His law and through His prophet so that ancient Israel might know and obey Him. “And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.” Deuteronomy 4:13-14.

The forty years of wandering in the wilderness were to help the Israelites to decide in their own hearts whether they would obey God or not. See Deuteronomy 8:1-2. The wilderness sojourn was also to teach them that their temporal and eternal welfare depended upon their obedience “to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Deuteronomy 8:3.

It is well-documented in Scripture that Israel repeatedly failed to keep their covenant promise to obey God. Over and over God sent prophets to call them back to obedience to both the greater and the lesser lights of truth—“to the law and to the testimony.” Isaiah 8:20. Jeremiah especially emphasized the importance of obeying the will of God as given to them in the testimonies of Moses.

“Jeremiah called their attention repeatedly to the counsels given in Deuteronomy. More than any other of the prophets, he emphasized the teachings of the Mosaic law and showed how these might bring the highest spiritual blessing to the nation and to every individual heart. ‘Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,’ he pleaded, ‘and ye shall find rest for your souls.’ Jeremiah 6:16.” Prophets and Kings, 411.

Yes indeed, God’s ability to fulfill His promise to incorporate ancient Israel into His spiritual kingdom was wholly dependent upon their willingness to obey Him in every particular. Their success in fulfilling the entire purpose of their movement depended upon their obeying fully the writings of the prophets as well as the Ten Commandments.

Ultimately Israel was judged by the law and by the testimonies. Because they had not lived and worked in harmony with them it was evident that there was no longer any light in them. Thus Christ was forced to reject Israel as His special light set upon a hill.

Just as the lesser-light writings of Moses did not replace, but rather illuminated the law, so also the writings of Ellen White as a lesser light do not replace, but rather provide a better understanding of the Bible.

Types and Antitypes

“One of the greatest parallels consisting of types and antitypes is found in what we call the Exodus and Advent movements of ancient and modern Israel. The Lord delivered ancient Israel from the bondage of Egypt and led them through the wilderness into the earthly Canaan, or the ‘Promised Land.’ The Exodus from Egypt and the experiences of Israel were typical of the gathering of modern Israel out of the darkness of modern Egypt and spiritual Babylon to lead them into the heavenly Canaan. These are the two greatest religious movements of all history. Both arose in fulfillment of prophecy and accomplish their work in harmony with a divine purpose and move forward under the leadership of the God of heaven.” Taylor G. Bunch, The Exodus in Type and Antitype, 3.

Just as the Lord brought ancient Israel out of literal Egypt by a prophet (Hosea 12:13), so also He is leading spiritual Israel out of spiritual Egypt by His messenger Ellen G. White. Through the ministry of Ellen White, Christ used our pioneers to restore to mankind a fuller knowledge of His law and of the scriptural truths lost during the Dark Ages. As the writings of Moses were given as an “amplification and application” of the principles of the Ten Commandments for the Jewish economy, so the writings of Ellen White are given to modern Israel to provide them with a clearer understanding of the Bible. Her writings reveal how biblical principles are to apply to our daily lives and to the work done for God by Seventh-day Adventists today. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 665; Selected Messages, book 3, 30-31, 90.

Just as Moses claimed that His messages were the word of God, so also Ellen White referred to her messages “as the word of God, given in the Testimonies of His Holy Spirit.” Publishing Ministry, 172. She also stated that her writings are “the Testimonies of the Spirit of God,” Manuscript Releases, vol. 12, 201; “messages given of God,” Ibid., vol. 9, 198; “the Lord’s messages of light,” Review and Herald, December 18, 1888; “reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God,” Selected Messages, vol. 1, 48; and “light that God has given,” Testimonies, vol. 5, 691.

Even as He did through Moses, the Lord gave through Ellen White detailed instructions about how we personally and corporately are to live and work for Him. Through the Spirit of Prophecy the Lord has given us “commandments, statutes and judgments” regarding our health habits, how to care for the sick, how to dress, how to carry on our social relationships, how to witness to the world and how to set up and to operate His institutions.

Just as the lesser-light writings of Moses did not replace, but rather illuminated the law, so also the writings of Ellen White as a lesser light do not replace, but rather provide a better understanding of the Bible. In His every communication Christ subjects Himself to all of His previous communications. The Holy Spirit Himself is to be tested by His previous communications—“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. God never changes. (Malachi 3:6) He never contradicts Himself. See Selected Messages, book 1, 162.
A Covenant of Obedience

Modern Israel, just as was ancient Israel, is under God's covenant of obedience. "To us the invitation is given, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty' (2 Corinthians 6:17-18). Thus God has declared His covenant of obedience." *The Upward Look*, 144.

As did ancient Israel we hold a singularly exalted station. "Commandment-keeping Adventists are occupying a peculiar, exalted position. John viewed them in holy vision, and described them. 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Revelation 14:12.

The Lord made a special covenant with ancient Israel contingent upon their faithfulness: 'Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.' Exodus 19:5-6. And He thus addresses His commandment-keeping people in these last days: 'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.' 1 Peter 2:9." *Review and Herald*, September 7, 1886.

All who seek Eden restored must live and work by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.

"If Adam and Eve had lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God they never would have fallen, never lost the right to the tree of life. All who will live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God now will be brought back to the Eden home." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 232.

To disobey one word of God's is to place ourselves on Satan's side of the great controversy.

Whenever men choose their own way, they place themselves in controversy with God. They will have no place in the kingdom of heaven, for they are at war with the very principles of heaven. In disregarding the will of God, they are placing themselves on the side of Satan, the enemy of God and man. Not by one word, not by many words, but by every word that God has spoken, shall man live. We cannot disregard one word however trifling it may seem to us, and be safe." *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 52.

The Final Apostasy

Satan well knows that God's people always have had great difficulty accepting and obeying messages God sends through a contemporary prophet. He also well knows that neglect or rejection of only one word that God sends is to join his side. Therefore "Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish' Proverbs 29:18. Satan will work ingenuously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 48.

Yes, Satan's final deception for modern Israel is to somehow cause us to believe that God's counsels and instructions sent through Ellen White are not as inspired, reliable or relevant as His messages sent through previous messengers. Satan wants us to believe that the most recent testimonies from the Lord we can slight, neglect, even disobey and reject and God will still fulfill His portion of the covenant, use us to finish His work, and save us at last in His kingdom.

We are told that the Omega of apostasy—the last apostasy—would be of a most startling nature. "Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the Alpha of this danger. The Omega will be of a most startling nature." Ibid., 197.

What could be more startling than for the descendants of Adam and Eve to believe that they can, while in disobedience to God, be restored to the Eden from which Adam and Eve were expelled for disobeying a seemingly minor command of God?

What could be more startling than for God's chosen people, at the end of six thousand years of the great controversy,
to be so deceived as to believe that despite their continuing disobedience to God, which places them on Satan's side of the controversy, they can still be taken to the heaven from which Satan was cast out at the beginning of the controversy? Such an occurrence would only confirm Satan's claim that complete obedience to God is impossible, and/or unnecessary. Satan would thus be the victor in the great controversy.

What could be more startling than for many Seventh-day Adventists to believe that they can enter the Promised Land even while they are in many ways disobeying the Testimonies of Jesus as given through Ellen White, and are falling for Satan's final deception for God's remnant people? In actuality, none who remain deceived by Satan, none who remain on his side, can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Fatal Deceptions

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has the task of giving the three angels' messages to the whole world. These messages call all mankind to complete obedience to the Creator. It is just as fatal for us as it was for Solomon to believe that while we are in disobedience to God, He can or will use us to give to the whole world the loud cry calling for obedience to Him.

“Solomon flattered himself that his wisdom and the power of his example would lead his wives from idolatry to the worship of the true God, and also that the alliances thus formed would draw the nations round about into close touch with Israel. Vain hope! Solomon's mistake in regarding himself as strong enough to resist the influence of heathen associates was fatal. And fatal, too, the deception that led him to hope that notwithstanding a disregard of God's law on his part, others might be led to revere and obey its sacred precepts.” Conflict and Courage, 192.

It is also a deadly error to have great light as did Chorazin and Bethsaida but to neither appreciate nor receive it.

“The most terrible thing that could come to us as people is the fatal deception that was the ruin of Chorazin and Bethsaida. They had great light, great privileges and blessings. Jesus was with them, but they did not appreciate or receive the light He gave them. They were not made better by it.” The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 172.

It is a bubble blown by Satan that we can turn from the Lord's counsels and develop our own safe methods of doing His work. The sooner we as people burst this bubble, the better it will be for our institutions.

“Do those who know the truth and have a knowledge of God suppose that men who have turned away from truth and righteousness are filled with a sense of their own importance, can invent safe methods for carrying on the work? This is what it means, and the sooner this bubble blown by Satan is burst, the better it will be for the healthfulness of all our institutions. When the very heart of the work is diseased, its action must be uncertain, fitful, unreliable. It is time we had an investigation before as many people as possible. All who are helping to sustain the work should get together and understand its inward workings.” Manuscript Releases, vol. 17, 232-233.

A s Seventh-day Adventists we cannot plead ignorance of God's will... If we ignore or reject God's counsels, this may well be defined as an act of insubordination, which will affect our relation to the coming of the Lord.

As late as 1973, our church leaders acknowledged that our ongoing disobedience to the Spirit of Prophecy is insubordination and is cause for the delay in finishing the Lord's work and for the delay in Christ's second coming.

“As church leaders at this Annual Council we have faced honestly the fact that there are inconsistencies between the church's preaching and its practices, and to allow these inconsistencies to continue will automatically delay the completion of the church's mission and the coming of Christ.

“God has in love sent to the Seventh-day Adventist Church inspired counsels that illuminate and apply the words of Scripture. These counsels cover about every conceivable facet of Christian experience and witness. As Seventh-day Adventists we cannot plead ignorance of God's will concerning His expectations, either for the individual or for the church. If we ignore or reject God's counsels, this may well be defined as an act of insubordination, which will affect our relation to the coming of the Lord. In the words of reality includes all of the above. One thing is certain, the Omega of apostasy involves everything that we do as individuals do, say, or believe that is contrary to the testimonies of the Lord as given through Ellen G. White. This insubordination is the final deception foisted upon us by Satan.

By Every Word

Oh, that modern Israel might recognize that disobedience to God's prophet today is what it has always—apostasy!

Oh, that we might individually and corporately be willing to surrender our self-willed ways of living and working for the Lord and seek to hearken unto the statutes and judgments of the Spirit of Prophecy to do them that we might live and go in and possess the land which the Lord our God giveth us! See Deuteronomy 4:1.

Oh, that modern Israel might learn that which ancient Israel failed to learn, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"! Matthew 4:4.
You are pondering a Bible verse when the question comes up, “I wonder what Ellen White said about this?” But the effort of searching out a passage from among the dozens of books in your library would be too great an interruption in your study, and you continue to the next text. None of us can imagine what personal blessings are missed when we pass by the Spirit of Prophecy’s insights into the deep meaning of Scripture.

This Bible gives you instant access to the added light of the Spirit of Prophecy. Prominent comments are printed at the bottom of each page. And a marginal reference guides you directly to other statements made in Sister White’s books. Nothing could be more convenient. Anyone equipped with the Spirit of Prophecy Study Bible can instantly bring valuable insights to his or her Bible study group or Sabbath school class.

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